

O my Lord! I have drawn nigh unto Thee, in the depths...

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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O my Lord! I have drawn nigh unto Thee, in the depths of this darksome night, confiding in Thee with the tongue of my heart, trembling with joy at the sweet scents that blow from Thy realm, the All-Glorious, calling unto Thee, saying:

O my Lord, no words do I find to glorify Thee; no way do I see for the bird of my mind to soar upward to Thy Kingdom of Holiness; for Thou, in Thy very essence, art sanctified above those tributes, and in Thy very being art beyond the reach of those praises which are offered Thee by the people that Thou hast created. In the sanctity of Thine own being hast Thou ever been exalted above the understanding of the learned among the Company on high, and forever wilt Thou remain enwrapped within the holiness of Thine own reality, unreached by the knowledge of those dwellers in Thine exalted Kingdom who glorify Thy Name.

O God, my God! How can I glorify or describe Thee inaccessible as Thou art; immeasurably high and sanctified art Thou above every description and praise.

O God, my God! Have mercy then upon my helpless state, my poverty, my misery, my abasement! Give me to drink from the generous cup of Thy grace and forgiveness, stir me with the sweet scents of Thy love, gladden my bosom with the light of Thy knowledge, purify my soul with the mysteries of Thy oneness, raise me to life with the gentle breeze that cometh from the gardens of Thy mercy — till I sever myself from all else but Thee, and lay hold of the hem of Thy garment of grandeur, and consign to oblivion all that is not Thee, and be companioned by the sweet breathings that waft during these Thy days, and attain unto faithfulness at Thy Threshold of Holiness, and arise to serve Thy Cause, and to be humble before Thy loved ones, and, in the presence of Thy favored ones, to be nothingness itself.

Verily art Thou the Helper, the Sustainer, the Exalted, the Most Generous.

O God, my God! I beg of Thee by the dawning of the light of Thy Beauty that hath illumined all the earth, and by the glance of Thy divine compassion's eye that considereth all things, and by the surging sea of Thy bestowals in which all things are immersed, and by Thy streaming clouds of bounty raining down gifts upon the essences of all created things, and by the splendors of Thy mercy that existed before ever the world was — to help Thy chosen ones to be faithful, and assist Thy loved ones to serve at Thine exalted Threshold, and cause them to gain the victory through the battalions of Thy might that overpowereth all things, and reinforce them with a great fighting host from out of the Concourse on high.



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

O my Lord! They are weak souls standing at Thy door; they are paupers in Thy courtyard, desperate for Thy grace, in dire need of Thy succor, turning their faces toward the kingdom of Thy oneness, yearning for the bounties of Thy bestowals. O my Lord! Flood Thou their minds with Thy holy light; cleanse Thou their hearts with the grace of Thine assistance; gladden their bosoms with the fragrance of the joys that waft from Thy Company above; make bright their eyes by beholding the signs and tokens of Thy might; cause them to be the ensigns of purity, the banners of sanctity waving high above all creatures on the summits of the earth; make Thou their words to move hearts which are even as solid rock. May they arise to serve Thee and dedicate themselves to the Kingdom of Thy divinity, and set their faces toward the realm of Thy Self-Subsistence, and spread far and wide Thy signs, and be illumined by Thy streaming lights, and unfold Thy hidden mysteries. May they guide Thy servants unto gentle waters and to the fountain of Thy mercy that welleteth and leapeth in the midmost heart of the Heaven of Thy oneness. May they hoist the sail of detachment upon the Ark of Salvation, and move over the seas of Thy knowledge; may they spread wide the pinions of unity and by their aid soar upward to the Kingdom of Thy singleness to become servants whom the Supreme Concourse will applaud, whose praises the dwellers in Thine all-glorious realm will utter; may they hear the heralds of the invisible world as they raise their cry of the Most Great Glad-Tidings; may they, in their longing to meet Thee, invoke and pray unto Thee, intoning wondrous orisons at the dawn of light — O my Lord Who disposest all things — shedding their tears at morningtide and even, yearning to pass into the shadow of Thy mercy that endeth never.

Help them, O my Lord, under all conditions, support them at all times with Thine angels of holiness, they who are Thine invisible hosts, Thy heavenly battalions who bring down to defeat the massed armies of this nether world.

Verily art Thou the Mighty, the Powerful, the Strong, the All-Encompassing, the One Who hath dominion over all that is.

O holy Lord! O Lord of loving-kindness! We stray about Thy dwelling, longing to behold Thy beauty, and loving all Thy ways. We are hapless, lowly, and of small account. We are paupers: show us mercy, give us bounty; look not upon our failings, hide Thou our endless sins. Whatever we are, still are we Thine, and what we speak and hear is praise of Thee, and it is Thy face we seek, Thy path we follow. Thou art the Lord of loving-kindness, we are sinners and astray and far from home. Wherefore, O Cloud of Mercy, grant us some drops of rain. O Flowering Bed of grace, send forth a fragrant breeze. O Sea of all bestowals, roll towards us a great wave. O Sun of Bounty, send down a shaft of light. Grant us pity, grant us grace. By Thy beauty, we come with no provision but our sins, with no good deeds to tell of, only hopes. Unless Thy concealing veil doth cover us, and Thy protection shield and cradle us, what power have these helpless souls to rise and serve Thee, what substance have these wretched ones to make a brave display? Thou Who art the Mighty, the All-Powerful, help us, favor us; withered as we are, revive us with showers from Thy clouds of grace; lowly as we are, illumine us with bright rays from the Daystar of Thy oneness. Cast Thou these thirsty fish into the ocean of Thy mercy, guide Thou this lost caravan to the shelter of Thy singleness; to the wellspring of guidance lead Thou the ones who have wandered far astray, and grant to those who have missed the path a haven within the precincts of Thy might. Lift Thou to these parched lips the bounteous and soft-flowing waters of heaven, raise up these dead to everlasting life. Grant Thou to the blind eyes that will see. Make

Thou the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak. Set Thou the dispirited ablaze, make Thou the heedless mindful, warn Thou the proud, awaken those who sleep.

Thou art the Mighty, Thou art the Bestower, Thou art the Loving. Verily Thou art the Beneficent, the Most Exalted.

O ye loved ones of God, ye helpers of this evanescent Servant! When the Sun of Reality shed its endless bounties from the Dawning-Point of all desires, and this world of being was lit with that sacred light from pole to pole, with such intensity did it cast down its rays that it blotted out the Stygian dark forever, whereupon this earth of dust became the envy of the spheres of heaven, and this lowly place took on the state and panoply of the supernal realm. The gentle breeze of holiness blew over it, scattering abroad sweet savors; the spring winds of heaven passed by it, and over it, from the Source of all bestowals, were wafted fruitful airs that carried boundless grace. Then the bright dawn rose, and there came tidings of great joy. The divine springtime was here, pitching its tents in this contingent world, so that all creation leapt and danced. The withered earth brought forth immortal blooms, the dead dust woke to everlasting life. Then came forth flowers of mystic learning, and, bespeaking the knowledge of God, fresh greenery from the ground. The contingent world displayed God's bounteous gifts, the visible world reflecting the glories of realms that were hidden from sight. God's summons was proclaimed, the table of the Eternal Covenant was readied, the cup of the Testament was passed from hand to hand, the universal invitation was sent forth. Then some among the people were set afire with the wine of heaven, and some were left without a share of this greatest of bestowals. The sight and insight of some were illumined by the light of grace, and there were some who, hearing the anthems of unity, leapt for joy. There were birds that began to carol in the gardens of holiness, there were nightingales in the branches of the rose tree of heaven that raised their plaintive cries. Then were decked and adorned both the Kingdom on high and the earth below, and this world became the envy of high heaven. Yet alas, alas, the neglectful have stayed fast in their heedless sleep, and the foolish have spurned this most sacred of bestowals. The blind remain shrouded in their veils, the deaf have no share in what hath come to pass, the dead have no hopes of attaining thereto, for even as He saith: "They despair of the life to come, as the infidels despair that the dwellers in the tombs will rise again."^[1] {id="3i" type="par" language="en"} [1]: Qur'án 60:13.

As to you, O ye loved ones of God! Loose your tongues and offer Him thanks; praise ye and glorify the Beauty of the Adored One, for ye have drunk from this purest of chalices, and ye are cheered and set aglow with this wine. Ye have detected the sweet scents of holiness, ye have smelled the musk of faithfulness from Joseph's raiment. Ye have fed on the honeydew of loyalty from the hands of Him Who is the one alone Beloved, ye have feasted on immortal dishes at the bounteous banquet table of the Lord. This plenty is a special favor bestowed by a loving God, these are blessings and rare gifts deriving from His grace. In the Gospel He saith: "For many are called, but few are chosen."^[1] That is, to many is it offered, but rare is the soul who is singled out to receive the great bestowal of guidance. "Such is the bounty of God: to whom He will He giveth it, and of immense bounty is God."^[2] {id="3j" type="par" language="en"} [1]: Matthew 22:14. [2]: Qur'án 57:21

O ye loved ones of God! From the peoples of the world, against the Candle of the Covenant discordant winds do beat and blow. The Nightingale of faithfulness is beset by renegades who

are even as ravens of hate. The Dove of God's remembrance is hard pressed by mindless birds of night, and the Gazelle that dwelleth in the meadows of God's love is being hunted down by ravening beasts. Deadly is the peril, tormenting the pain.

The beloved of the Lord must stand fixed as the mountains, firm as impregnable walls. Unmoved must they remain by even the direst adversities, ungrieved by the worst of disasters. Let them cling to the hem of Almighty God, and put their faith in the Beauty of the Most High; let them lean on the unfailing help that cometh from the Ancient Kingdom, and depend on the care and protection of the generous Lord. Let them at all times refresh and restore themselves with the dews of heavenly grace, and with the breaths of the Holy Spirit revive and renew themselves from moment to moment. Let them rise up to serve their Lord, and do all in their power to scatter His breathings of holiness far and wide. Let them be a mighty fortress to defend His Faith, an impregnable citadel for the hosts of the Ancient Beauty. Let them faithfully guard the edifice of the Cause of God from every side; let them become the bright stars of His luminous skies. For the hordes of darkness are assailing this Cause from every direction, and the peoples of the earth are intent on extinguishing this evident Light. And since all the kindreds of the world are mounting their attack, how can our attention be diverted, even for a moment? Assuredly be cognizant of these things, be watchful, and guard the Cause of God.

The most vital duty, in this day, is to purify your characters, to correct your manners, and improve your conduct. The beloved of the Merciful must show forth such character and conduct among His creatures, that the fragrance of their holiness may be shed upon the whole world, and may quicken the dead, inasmuch as the purpose of the Manifestation of God and the dawning of the limitless lights of the Invisible is to educate the souls of men, and refine the character of every living man — so that blessed individuals, who have freed themselves from the murk of the animal world, shall rise up with those qualities which are the adornings of the reality of man. The purpose is that earthlings should turn into the people of Heaven, and those who walk in darkness should come into the light, and those who are excluded should join the inner circle of the Kingdom, and those who are as nothing should become intimates of the everlasting Glory. It is that the portionless should gain their share of the boundless sea, and the ignorant drink their fill from the living fount of knowledge; that those who thirst for blood should forsake their savagery, and those who are barbed of claw should turn gentle and forbearing, and those who love war should seek instead for true conciliation; it is that the brutal, their talons razor-sharp, should enjoy the benefits of lasting peace; that the foul should learn that there is a realm of purity, and the tainted find their way to the rivers of holiness.

Unless these divine bestowals be revealed from the inner self of humankind, the bounty of the Manifestation will prove barren, and the dazzling rays of the Sun of Truth will have no effect whatever.

Wherefore, O beloved of the Lord, strive ye with heart and soul to receive a share of His holy attributes and take your portion of the bounties of His sanctity — that ye may become the tokens of unity, the standards of singleness, and seek out the meaning of oneness; that ye may, in this garden of God, lift up your voices and sing the blissful anthems of the spirit. Become ye as the birds who offer Him their thanks, and in the blossoming bowers of life chant ye such melodies as will dazzle the minds of those who know. Raise ye a banner on the highest peaks of

the world, a flag of God's favor to ripple and wave in the winds of His grace; plant ye a tree in the field of life, amid the roses of this visible world, that will yield a fruitage fresh and sweet.

I swear by the true Teacher that if ye will act in accord with the admonitions of God, as revealed in His luminous Tablets, this darksome dust will mirror forth the Kingdom of heaven, and this nether world the realm of the All-Glorious.

O ye loved ones of the Lord! Praise be to Him, the unseen, welling bounties of the Sun of Truth encompass you on every side, and from every direction the portals of His mercy stand ajar. Now is the time to take advantage of these bestowals, and benefit therefrom. Know ye the value of this time, let not this chance escape you. Stay ye entirely clear of this dark world's concerns, and become ye known by the attributes of those essences that make their home in the Kingdom. Then shall ye see how intense is the glory of the heavenly Daystar, and how blinding bright are the tokens of bounty coming out of the invisible realm.

