O thou exalted bough of the divine Lote-Tree! ...When...

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

نسخه اصل فارسی

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O thou exalted bough of the divine Lote-Tree! ...When thou art disdained and rejected by the wicked doers be not cast down; and at the power and stiffneckedness of the presumptuous be neither vexed nor sick at heart; for such is the way of heedless souls, from time out of mind. “O the misery of men! No Messenger cometh unto them but they laugh Him to scorn!”[^1] {.dropcap id="16b" type="par" language="en"} [1]: Qur’án 36:29.

Indeed, the attacks and the obstructiveness of the ignorant but cause the Word of God to be exalted, and spread His signs and tokens far and wide. Were it not for this opposition by the disdainful, this obduracy of the slanderers, this shouting from the pulpits, this crying and wailing of great and small alike, these accusations of unbelief leveled by the ignorant, this uproar from the foolish — how could news of the advent of the Primal Point and the bright dawning of the Daystar of Bahá ever have reached to east and west? How else could the planet have been rocked from pole to pole? How else could Persia have become the focal point of scattering splendors, and Asia Minor the radiating heart of the beauty of the Lord? However else could the flame of the Manifestation have spread into the south? By what means could the cries of God have been heard in the far north? How else could His summons have been heard in the continents of America and of Africa the dark? How else could the cockcrow of Heaven have penetrated those ears? How else could the sweet parrots of India have come upon this sugar, or nightingales have lifted up their warblings out of the land of ‘Iráq? What else could set the east and west to dancing, how else could this Consecrated Spot become the throne of the Beauty of God? How else could Sinai behold this burning brightness, how could the Advent’s flame adorn that mount? How else could the Holy Land be made the footstool of God’s beauty, and the holy vale of Towa[^1] become the site of excellence and grace, the sacred spot where Moses put off His shoes? How could the breaths of heaven be carried across the Vale of Holiness, how could the sweet-scented, airy streams that blow out of the Abhá gardens ever be perceived by those that dwell on the Verdant Isle? How else could the pledges of the Prophets, the joyous tidings of the holy Seers of old, the stirring promises given unto this Sacred Place by the Manifestations of God, ever have been fulfilled? {id="16c" type="par" language="en"} [1]: Qur’án 20:12. Also referred to as the ‘Sacred Vale’

How else could the Tree of Anísá have been planted here, the flag of the Testament be flown, the intoxicating cup of the Covenant be lifted to these lips? All these blessings and bestowals, the very means of proclaiming the Faith, have come about through the scorn of the ignorant, the opposition of the foolish, the stubbornness of the dull-witted, the violence of the aggressor. Had it not been for these things, the news of the Báb’s advent would not, to this day, have reached

even into lands hard by. Wherefore we should never grieve over the blindness of the unwitting, the attacks of the foolish, the hostility of the low and base, the heedlessness of the divines, the charges of infidelity brought against us by the empty of mind. Such too was their way in ages past, nor would it be thus if they were of those who know; but they are benighted, and they come not close to understanding what is told them.[^1] {id="16d" type="par" language="en"} [1]: cf. Qur'án 4:80.

Wherefore doth it befit thyself, an offshoot of the Holy Tree of God, branched out from that mighty Trunk — and it behooveth ourselves as well — so to burn, through the sustaining grace of the Ancient Beauty — may my life be offered up for His Most Holy Shrine — with this kindled flame out of heaven, that we will light the fire of God's love from pole to pole. Let us take for our example the great and sacred Tree of the exalted Báb — may my life be offered up for Him. Like Him let us bare our breasts to the shafts of agony, like Him make our hearts to be targets for the spears decreed by God. Let us, like candles, burn away; as moths, let us scorch our wings; as the field larks, vent our plaintive cries; as the nightingales, burst forth in lamentations.

Even as the clouds let us shed down tears, and as the lightning flashes let us laugh at our coursings through east and west. By day, by night, let us think but of spreading the sweet savors of God. Let us not keep on forever with our fancies and illusions, with our analyzing and interpreting and circulating of complex dubieties. Let us put aside all thoughts of self; let us close our eyes to all on earth, let us neither make known our sufferings nor complain of our wrongs. Rather let us become oblivious of our own selves, and drinking down the wine of heavenly grace, let us cry out our joy, and lose ourselves in the beauty of the All-Glorious.

O thou Afnán of the divine Lote-Tree! We must strive, each one of us, to become as fecund boughs and to yield an ever sweeter and more wholesome fruit, that the branch may prove itself to be a continuation of the root, and the part be in harmony with the whole. It is my hope that out of the bounty of the Greatest Name and the loving-kindness of the Primal Point — may my soul be offered up for Them both — we shall become the means of exalting the Word of God around the world; that we may ever render services unto the Source of our Cause and spread over all the canopy of the true and holy zeal of the Lord. That from over the fields of grace, we may make zephyrs to blow, bringing to man the sweet scents that come from the gardens of God. That we may make of this world the Abhá Paradise, and change this nether place into the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is true that every one of God's servants, and in particular those who are on fire with the Faith, have been allotted this task of servitude to Almighty God; still, the duty imposed upon us is greater than that which hath been laid upon the rest. To Him do we look for grace and favor and strength.

All praise and thanksgiving be unto the Blessed Beauty, for calling into action the armies of His Abhá Kingdom, and sending forth to us His never-interrupted aid, dependable as the rising stars. In every region of the earth hath He supported this single, lonely servant, at every moment hath He made known to me the signs and tokens of His love. He hath cast into a stupor all those who are clinging to their vain illusions, and made them infamous in the sight of high and low. He hath caused those who run after their fads and fancies to become objects of general reproach, and hath exposed the arrogant to public view; He hath made those of the friends who

proved infirm of faith to serve as a warning to every beholder, and hath caused the leaders of those who waver to love but themselves and sink down in self-conceit. Meanwhile, by the power of His might, He hath made this broken-winged bird to rise up before all who dwell on earth. He hath shattered the serried ranks of the rebellious, and hath given the victory to the hosts of salvation, and breathed into the hearts of those who stand firm in the Covenant and Testament the breath of everlasting life.

Convey thou the greetings of Abhá to each one of the Afnán, branched from the Holy Tree. The glory rest upon thee and upon all the Afnán who remain faithful and true to the Covenant.