

Tablet of the Seven Questions

Bahá'u'lláh

Translated



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Tablet of the Seven Questions

(Lawḥ-i-Haft Pursish)

In the Name of the Lord of Utterance, the All-Wise

All praise be to the sanctified Lord Who hath illumined the world through the splendours of the Daystar of His grace. From the letter “B” He hath made the Most Great Ocean to appear, and from the letter “H” He hath caused His inmost Essence to be made manifest. He is that Almighty One Whose purpose the might of men can never hope to frustrate and the flow of Whose utterance the hosts of kings are powerless to halt.

Thy letter was received, and We perused it and heard thy call. Within it were enshrined the precious pearls of love and the hidden mysteries of affection. We beseech the peerless Lord to enable thee to assist His Cause and to lead those who are sore athirst in the wilderness of ignorance to the water of life. His might, in truth, is equal to all things. That which thou didst ask of the Ocean of Knowledge and the Orb of Insight hath met with His acceptance.

The first question: “In what tongue and towards what direction doth it behove us to worship the one true God?”

The beginning of all utterance is the worship of God, and this followeth upon His recognition. Sanctified must be the eye if it is to truly recognize Him, and sanctified must be the tongue if it is to befittingly utter His praise. In this day the faces of the people of insight and understanding are turned in His direction; nay every direction inclineth itself towards Him. O lion-hearted one! We beseech God that thou mayest become a champion in this arena, arise with heavenly power and say: “O high priests! Ears have been given you that they may hearken unto the mystery of Him Who is the Self-Dependent, and eyes that they may behold Him. Wherefore flee ye? The



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Incomparable Friend is manifest. He speaketh that wherein lieth salvation. Were ye, O high priests, to discover the perfume of the rose garden of understanding, ye would seek none other but Him, and would recognize, in His new vesture, the All-Wise and Peerless One, and would turn your eyes from the world and all who seek it, and would arise to help Him.”

The second question concerneth faith and religion. The Faith of God hath in this day been made manifest. He Who is the Lord of the world is come and hath shown the way. His faith is the faith of benevolence and His religion is the religion of forbearance. This faith bestoweth eternal life and this religion enableth mankind to dispense with all else. It verily embraceth all faiths and all religions. Take hold thereof and guard it well.

The third question: “In what manner shall we deal with the people of this age, who have each chosen to follow a different religion and who each regard their own faith and religion as excelling and surpassing all the others, that we may be shielded from the onslaught of their words and deeds?”

O lion-hearted one amongst men! Regard the afflictions endured in the path of God as comfort itself. Every affliction suffered for His sake is a potent remedy, every bitterness is naught but sweetness and every abasement an exaltation. Were men to apprehend and acknowledge this truth, they would readily lay down their lives for such affliction. For it is the key to inestimable treasures, and no matter how outwardly abhorrent, it hath ever been and will continue to be inwardly prized. We accept and affirm what thou hast said, for the people of the world are indeed bereft of the light of the Orb of justice and regard it as their enemy.

If thou desirest to be freed from affliction, recite thou this prayer which hath been revealed by the Pen of the All-Merciful: “O God, my God! I testify to Thy unity and to Thy oneness. I beseech Thee, O Thou Possessor of names and Fashioner of the heavens, by the pervasive influence of Thine exalted Word and the potency of Thy supreme Pen, to aid me with the ensigns of Thy power and might, and to protect me from the mischief of Thine enemies who have violated Thy Covenant and Thy Testament. Thou art, verily, the Almighty, the Most Powerful.” This invocation is an impregnable stronghold and an indomitable army. It conferreth protection and ensureth deliverance.

The fourth question: “Our Books have announced that Sháh Bahrám will come, invested with manifold signs, to guide the people aright...”

O friend! Whatsoever hath been announced in the Books hath been revealed and made clear. From every direction the signs have been manifested. The Omnipotent One is calling, in this day, and announcing the appearance of the Supreme Heaven. The world hath been illumined with the splendours of His revelation, yet how few are the eyes that can behold it! Beseech the peerless and incomparable Lord to bestow a

penetrating insight upon His servants, for insight leadeth to true knowledge and is conducive to salvation. Indeed, the attainments of man's understanding are dependent upon his keenness of sight. Were the children of men to gaze with the eye of understanding, they would see the world illumined with a new light in this day. Say: The Daystar of knowledge is manifest and the Luminary of insight hath appeared. Fortunate indeed is the one who hath attained, who hath witnessed, and who hath recognized.

The fifth question concerneth the Bridge of Şirát, Paradise, and Hell. The Prophets of God have come in truth and have spoken the truth. Whatsoever the Messenger of God hath announced hath been and will be made manifest. The world is established upon the foundations of reward and punishment. Knowledge and understanding have ever affirmed and will continue to affirm the reality of Paradise and Hell, for reward and punishment require their existence. Paradise signifieth first and foremost the good-pleasure of God. Whosoever attaineth His good-pleasure is reckoned and recorded among the inhabitants of the most exalted paradise and will attain, after the ascension of his soul, that which pen and ink are powerless to describe. For them that are endued with insight and have fixed their gaze upon the Most Sublime Vision, the Bridge, the Balance, Paradise, Hellfire, and all that hath been mentioned and recorded in the Sacred Scriptures are clear and manifest. At the time of the appearance and manifestation of the rays of the Daystar of Truth, all occupy the same station. God then proclaimeth that which He willeth, and whoso heareth His call and acknowledgeth His truth is accounted among the inhabitants of Paradise. Such a soul hath traversed the Bridge, the Balance, and all that hath been recorded regarding the Day of Resurrection, and hath reached his destination. The Day of God's Revelation is the Day of the most great Resurrection. We cherish the hope that, quaffing from the choice wine of divine inspiration and the pure waters of heavenly grace, thou mayest attain the station of discovery and witnessing, and behold, both outwardly and inwardly, all that which thou hast mentioned.

The sixth question: "After relinquishing the body, that is to say, after the soul hath been separated from the body, it hasteneth to the abode hereafter...."

In reference to this theme there appeared some time past from the Pen of divine knowledge that which sufficeth the men of insight and imparteth the greatest joy to the people of understanding. Verily, We say: The soul is gladdened by goodly deeds and profiteth from the contributions made in the path of God.

The seventh question regardeth the name, lineage, and ancestry of the Holy One. Abu'l-Faḍl-i-Gulpáygání, upon him be My glory, hath written in this regard, based on the Sacred Scriptures, that which bestoweth knowledge and increaseth understanding.

The Faith of God is endowed with penetrating might and power. Erelong that which hath flowed from Our tongue will outwardly come to pass. We beseech God to bestow upon thee the strength to assist Him. He, verily, is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful. Wert thou to obtain and peruse the Súriy-i-Ra'ís and the Súriy-i-Mulúk, thou wouldst find thyself able to dispense with thy questions and wouldst arise to serve the Cause of God in such wise that the oppression of the world and the onslaught of its peoples would fail to deter thee from aiding Him Who is the ancient and sovereign Lord of all.

We implore God to confirm thee in that which will exalt and immortalize thy name. Make thou an effort, that haply thou mayest obtain the aforementioned Tablets and acquire therefrom a share of the pearls of wisdom and utterance that have issued from the treasury of the Pen of the All-Merciful. The glory of God rest upon thee, upon every steadfast and unwavering heart and upon every constant and faithful soul.

