

Lawh-i-Aḥbab- **Provisional Translation** - the original text of which has been published in *Áthár-i-Qalam-i-A'lá*, vol. 1 (1996 ed.), pp. 89-104 (selection no. 2).

What follows is my provisional translation (in other words, *not* official or authorized; see [here](#) for more) of a Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh known as the Lawḥ-i-Aḥbáb (“Tablet of the Friends” or “Tablet of the Loved Ones”), the original text of which has been published in *Áthár-i-Qalam-i-A'lá*, vol. 1 (1996 ed.), pp. 89–104 (selection no. 2). This is one of many Works identified by Shoghi Effendi as a “[Best-Known Writing of Bahá'u'lláh](#).”

Steven Phelps has summed up the Tablet succinctly: “Addresses various followers with words of advice and encouragement, calling them to be united, to be detached from the things of the world, and to promote the cause of God, and lamenting the Bábís and others who have rejected His message” (“The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh,” published in *The World of the Bahá'í Faith* (Routledge, 2022), p. 66).

The Lawḥ-i-Aḥbáb was revealed in honor of Mullá Şádiq Muḩaddas *Khurásání*, surnamed Ismull'áhu'l-Aşdaq, who is addressed at the beginning of the Tablet, but many of the subsequent sections are intended for other believers—several of whom are named explicitly—while others are addressed to Bahá'ís more generally, the Bábís (“the people of the Bayán”), members of the Muslim clergy, and all of humanity collectively.

According to Steven Phelps, the Lawḥ-i-Aḥbáb was revealed in the “Early ‘Akká” period, spanning 1868–1873 (*The World of the Bahá'í Faith*, p. 66), while the Leiden List dates it more narrowly to c. 1870–71 (see entry no. 47 [here](#)). Due to the considerable length of this Tablet, I have divided my translation of it below into paragraphs for ease of reference.

—Adib Masumian  
21 June 2023

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[¶ 1]

This is the Lawḥ-i-Aḥbáb; it hath been revealed by God, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful

In the Name of God, the Most Holy, the Most Glorious

This is a Tablet from Us unto him who, when he heard the Call coming from the direction of His Lord, the All-Glorious, replied, “Yea, O God of all who are in heaven and on earth!”, in order that the verses of his Lord might attract him once again, drawing him to a station where he will hear the voices of all things extolling God, the Maker of all names, and shall bear joyful tidings unto the kindreds of the world through the mention of his Lord, the King of eternity, both privily and openly. Counsel Our servants to remember thy Lord, the Sovereign of the Return.

[¶ 2]

Say: O people! The Day is come and the Kingdom is God's, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the All-Compelling. This is not a Day for remaining seated; arise in such wise that all created things will, in truth, rise up thereby. This beseemeth the one who, with all his affections, hath turned toward the Cynosure of the world. How oft hath a standing soul been accounted as one seated in the sight of

thy Lord, and how many a possessor of life hath been reckoned indeed as one dead! He who hath quaffed the choice wine of everlasting life from the hands of the bounty of his Lord, the All-Merciful, is verily one standing—and this do I swear by thy Lord, the All-Glorious, the All-Bounteous! This rising up shall not be followed by sitting, if one be firm in the Cause of God, Who layeth low the necks of humankind. By My life! Slumber shall never overtake him, even should he be asleep, but the people are heedless and veiled. Whenever he resteth, his innermost tongue declareth, “Lo, the All-Bountiful is come overshadowed with clouds!” And whensoever he ariseth, he pointeth, with the finger of certitude, in the direction of the Adored One, and exclaimeth, “This is the Dawning-Place of the signs of your Lord, the Almighty, the Source of eternal light!” How numerous are the speakers regarded as silent, and how many the silent numbered with those who have spoken in truth! To this hath the All-Merciful borne witness; He, verily, is the All-Glorious, the All-Knowing. Whoso uttereth this Most Great Remembrance is, in truth, a proclaimer amidst the peoples, while he who rejecteth it is indeed a mere prattler, though he be the most eloquent of speakers. Thus hath it been decreed by thy Lord, the Possessor of all names and attributes.

[¶ 3]

Beware lest calamity deter thee from the remembrance of thy Lord, the Creator of earth and heaven. Follow thy Lord under all circumstances; unto this hast thou been bidden in the Scriptures and Tablets. When He entered the Prison, He purposed to impart, unto the rulers of the world, the messages of His Lord, so they may all know that calamities failed to hinder the Greatest Name when He came from the heaven of revelation invested with power and sovereignty. We revealed unto each and every one of them a Tablet that shineth resplendent between heaven and earth.<sup>[1]</sup> Well is it with the one that hath read them and declared, “All might is God’s, the Omnipotent, the All-Powerful, the All-Subduing!” Seek thou the aid of thy Lord under all conditions. Soon will the true believers behold the banners of revelation in every direction.

[¶ 4]

Great is thy blessedness, O thou who bearest Our Name, Aşdaq [“the Most Truthful”], inasmuch as thou hast remained faithful to the Testament of God and His Covenant in the Day wherein the faces of humanity have been illumined with the lights of the Countenance of thy Lord, and the eyes of them that have turned to God with humility and repentance been solaced. Conquer the cities of people’s hearts with this Most Great Remembrance, and be thou, among the various kindreds, a summoner to this Name, through Which every tribe hath been seized with trembling, and the Rock hath cried out with the loudest of shouts, “Lo, the Unconstrained is come with sovereign majesty and might!”

[¶ 5]

By My life! Were one to turn, with all his heart, toward the Cynosure of all existence, he would assuredly discover the sublime scent of holiness wafting from this garment, through which the fragrances of the All-Merciful have been diffused throughout the land. Many a man of learning hath remained veiled in this Day, while many an uneducated one rushed forth until he entered the Kingdom of his Lord, the All-Possessing, the Most High! How frequently hath one endowed with insight been debarred by vain imaginings, and yet how often hath a mere youth shattered idols through the sovereign might of his Lord, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the All-Knowing! Happy is he who hath been so enraptured by the sweet savor of the divine verses that he hath rent the veils asunder and arisen to proclaim, “O people! The Self-Subsisting is come; behold, O men of understanding!”

[¶ 6]

Blessed art thou, for thou hast been remembered at all times in the presence of thy Lord, the Most Merciful, and in every year hath been revealed for thee that which hath solaced the eyes and made the spirits to soar. God Himself hath heard what thou didst ask and desire; nothing escapeth His knowledge. Potent is He to do whatever He willeth unto whomever He pleaseth; He, verily, is the All-Glorious, the Ever-Forgiving. Rely thou on Him in all thine affairs. It would be seemly for thy will to be what God hath willed, for thou art the first name in the Book. We have ordained for thee and for thine offspring what shall cause you to be remembered in the realm of creation. Indeed, for thee have We decreed what thou hast been unable to comprehend in this Day. By My life! Couldst thou but understand it, thou wouldst fall prostrate upon the ground and exclaim, "Praise be to Thee, O Thou Whose grace hath encompassed all things!", and such ecstasy would overcome thee that it would seize the reins of patience from thy grasp. I swear it by My Self, supreme over the whole of creation! Remain steadfast in such wise that if the ungodly should compass thee round, with the swords of hate drawn against thee, thou wouldst cry out in their midst with a snow-white face and crimson visage.<sup>[2]</sup>

[¶ 7]

O people! Stand ye in awe of this Day, for lo, the Creator of all things is come with His Name, the Most Glorious; He calleth aloud from the direction of the Prison and summoneth all humanity unto God, the Subduer of the winds.

[¶ 8]

O Supreme Pen! Make mention of him who hath turned to God, the Lord of all names, that he may read the verses of his Lord and be of them that have attained. Do Thou mention the one named 'Alí-Aşghar, who hath set his face toward the Most Sublime Vision in a Day whereon the Supreme Ordainer hath come with manifest sovereignty. We previously revealed unto thee a Tablet through which the hearts of the ardent lovers took flight, and now once again as a token of grace from Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Knowing. Glorified is He Who speaketh at all times among the concourse of creation and summoneth them to the Straight Path; verily, those who repudiate it are of no consequence. Numbered indeed are they with the heedless!

[¶ 9]

Say: Fear ye God, O people of the Bayán! Follow Him before Whose Countenance the verses have prostrated themselves, and in Whose presence the haughty have lowered their necks. Beware lest ye lay claim to what hath not been ordained for you by your Lord, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised. By Him Who is the Truth! The Cause hath reached its culmination, and that which was promised you in the Books of God, your Lord and the Lord of all worlds, hath been made manifest. Lo, He hath come in truth, and by Him hath the eye of the world been solaced; blessed is the one who hath turned to Him with a radiant heart. Spread not disorder on the earth; We, verily, have adorned it with justice through this grace which hath appeared from the horizon of the bounty of your Lord, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

[¶ 10]

Be ye helpers to the Cause of God. Take heed that ye not transgress the bounds fixed in the Books of God. Thus have We bidden Our servants in a Tablet sealed with the seal of your Lord, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. We have chosen to bear afflictions for the rehabilitation of the world and the unification of those who dwell upon it. Beware lest ye say such things as will divide the Cause. This is the counsel given you by your Lord, the Forgiving, the Merciful.

[¶ 11]

Beautify yourselves with the ornament of servitude unto God, the True One, that every quarter may be suffused with those lights which shine from the horizon of this heaven, whereby this Mighty Name hath been lifted up. It is through servitude that the station of humanity becometh apparent; thereby do people's faces turn to the Dayspring of the verses of your Lord, the All-Glorious, the Most Generous. How many are the servants who, upon seeing that the Cause had been exalted, laid claim to what left in vain the wish of their Lord, the Omnipotent! Thereupon were unleashed the tempestuous gales of tests, convulsing those pretenders, and when the gentle breezes of assurance blew forth, they raised cavils against God, the Lord of the Day of Reckoning. Thus have We recounted this tale unto thee, that thou mayest bear in mind those who every day carve out an idol and devote themselves unto it. Far indeed have they strayed in their error!

[¶ 12]

Arise to assist the Cause of thy Lord with thy speech and utterance. Thus hath commanded thee the All-Merciful in His Tablets; He, verily, ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth. Take heed lest thou be saddened by the cruelty of the oppressors or deterred by the ascendancy of the infidels. Erelong shall God lay hold on them with a power born of Him, just as He seized kindreds before them. Thy Lord is, in truth, severe in His punishment, and the kingdom will remain unto Him, supreme as He is over all worlds.

[¶ 13]

Say: O people! This is the day for hearing; hearken ye to the voice coming from the Crimson Tree upon the Luminous Spot: "Verily, there is none other God but Me, the One, the Incomparable, the Almighty, the Beauteous!" Cast all things behind your backs, then turn, with all your hearts, toward the Dawning-place of inspiration. Better is this for you than what hath been fashioned between heaven and earth.

[¶ 14]

Say: It is not for anyone to test God in this Revelation, rather God testeth whomsoever He willeth. Fear God and follow not every misbelieving doubter. Choose ye what God hath chosen through His bounty, and make not your faith dependent upon your selfish desires, rather upon what hath appeared and shone resplendent from the horizon of grace. Thus were ye bidden in the Bayán by the All-Merciful, did ye but know it. Say: Are ye not sufficed by what hath appeared in this Revelation? By God! Its power is all-pervading and its sovereignty is manifest; its verses have beamed with brilliance and its clear tokens dawned forth. Well is it with the one that hath turned to it and been enraptured by the breeze of God in this effulgent and radiant Day.

[¶ 15]

Amongst the people are those who desired from God what He ordained not for them, and who, upon beholding it, were convulsed and reckoned with the contemptible. Some appeared before the divine Countenance; the All-Merciful shone upon them with the lights of His beauty, whereupon did they humble and prostrate themselves, exclaiming, "Praised be Thou, O Lord of the worlds!" Still others among the people are those who, when they heard the call coming from the direction of divine decree, set their faces toward God, the Lord of all names. In this wise have We expounded the matter for thee as a token of Our grace. Yield thanks to thy Lord and be of them that render Him praise.

[¶ 16]

Know thou, moreover, that when We wished to proclaim Our Cause, We fashioned Badī' through a word on Our part and then breathed into him Our breath.<sup>[3]</sup> When We finished creating Him, he rushed forth like an erupting volcano bearing the epistle<sup>[4]</sup> of thy Lord, the Unconstrained, unto the place ordained in the Preserved Tablet. In that epistle We so demonstrated Our might that the limbs of the iniquitous were made to tremble, and in it We revealed, through every mode, what hath moved understanding souls to soar high. Shouldst thou come upon it, peruse it and meditate on what was revealed therein, that thou mayest become apprised of the power thy Lord wielded notwithstanding that He was imprisoned in the most desolate of lands and lay beneath the sword of the oppressors. When thou hast read it, say, "Lauded be Thy Name, O my God! Verily, Thy Will hath encompassed all creation and Thy power dominated all things. Thou fearest not the ascendancy of them that have turned away from Thee. Thou doest as Thou wilt through Thy sovereignty and ordainest as Thou pleasest through Thine utterance. No place is there for anyone to flee except unto Thee, nor any habitation save the shade of Thy mercy. No God is there but Thee, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise."

[¶ 17]

O Pen of the Most High! Alter these verses once again, in order that they may fill the peoples of the world with ecstasy. Potent indeed art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee; no God is there but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

[¶ 18]

Proffer unto Kázim, then, the wine of divine verses, that it may attract him to the Kingdom of names and attributes, and draw him to a station wherein he will see naught but God, the Almighty, the All-Loving. Detach thyself, for the sake of My love, from all else but Me, that thou mayest behold My Kingdom and My might. Thus hast thou been bidden by God, the All-Glorious, the Best-Beloved. Beware lest thou be saddened by the doings of humanity or kept back from the Most Sublime Vision. Forsake what pertaineth unto them and place thy trust in God, the Lord of what hath been and shall be. Shouldst thou be overtaken by the exhilaration of the wine of understanding, arise in My Name, the Most Merciful, among the kindreds of the earth, then summon the people, with wisdom and utterance, to this glorious Being.

[¶ 19]

Say: Fear ye God, O people! The Day is come, and what was mentioned in the Scriptures hath been made manifest. Take heed that ye not follow every misbelieving outcast. All things are crying out between earth and heaven, "Lo, the veils are rent asunder, and the Promised One is come!" Beware lest corrupt desire prevent you from being guided. Abandon idle fancy, for the Object of all knowledge is come with evident sovereignty.

[¶ 20]

O My loved ones! Be ye so united in the Cause of God that the winds of dissension shall never blow in your midst. Unto this have ye been bidden in the Tablets, and this is what is best for you, little as ye know it. Rise up to assist the Cause of God in such wise that all the hosts of the earth shall not frighten you. Such is the decree that hath been ordained in the Preserved Tablet.

[¶ 21]

Many a standing soul hath been hindered from acceptance, and many a seated one hath hastened till he attained. Happy are the people who comprehend. How oft hath a person endued with insight been obstructed by veils, and how frequently hath a blind one beheld and exclaimed, "Praise be to Thee, O Lord of the visible and the invisible!" Verily, they who accept shall be extolled by the denizens of Paradise. Soon will they see themselves in the loftiest heights. Thy Lord is indeed the True One, the Knower of things unseen.

[¶ 22]

Say: O people! He is, in truth, the Most Great Sign among you and the Beauty of God—the Exalted, the Most High—in your midst, if ye but understand. He is the wrath of God upon them that repudiate Him and the sweet savor of the All-Merciful unto those who turn toward Him. Say: Unto whom are ye fleeing? Have ye imagined there to be any refuge for yourselves? Nay, by His most radiant beauty, could ye but apprehend! Say: Nothing shall profit you in this Day, even should ye cling to all the means of heaven and earth, unless ye set your faces to the Dayspring of grace through this Name, supreme over all them that see and all that are seen. Blessed is the sleeper roused by the call of God and the ignorant one that hath turned to the divine Countenance, and woe betide every sage shut out as by a veil!

[¶ 23]

O Pen of the Ancient of Days! Make mention of the people, and then him who hath attained to this resplendent Light shining from the horizon of the Will of his Lord, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful.

[¶ 24]

O Mihdî! Harken to the voice that issueth from the Court of grandeur and proceedeth from this divine Lote-Tree, upraised on this Luminous Spot through the Name of thy Lord, the Most Glorious: "No God is there but Him, the Omnipotent, the Unconstrained!" Follow the Cause of God according to what hath been revealed in His Book, and then, with all thy heart, set thy face toward His Countenance, turning away from every ungodly doubter.

[¶ 25]

Say: O people! Rejoice in these days wherein the Most Merciful hath come down in the clouds of His testimony, and His Face shone forth uncovered and unveiled. Happy is the one that hath soared in the atmosphere of the All-Merciful, and the heart that turned toward Him with humility and repentance. Detach thyself from the dictates of thy desires and cleave tenaciously to the Sure Handle. Better is this for thee than the kingdoms of heaven and earth, and none comprehendeth this but the people of understanding. Thus have We made the wine of inner meaning and exposition to flow in the rivers of wisdom and utterance. Verily, thy Lord is the Almighty, the Ever-Forgiving. Take heed lest sundry veils prevent thee from the remembrance of thy Lord, the All-Glorious, the Most Bountiful. Make mention of thy Lord through this Most Great Remembrance with a fiery rapture. They who remain heedless of this Day have disbelieved in God, the Lord of Lords.

[¶ 26]

Say: O concourse of divines! Relinquish the pen of corrupt desire. By God! The Pen of the Most High moveth by the leave of your Lord, the Exalted, the All-Glorious. Listen, therefore, to what the Tongue of majesty and grandeur is crying out between earth and heaven. Renounce human learning, then, for the Object of all knowledge is come in His Name, the Self-Subsisting, invested

with power and sovereignty. Shall what is with you avail ye aught? No, by the Opener of every door! Where are to be found those who lived before you? Ponder ye, O people of insight! Blessed is the learned one who hath rent asunder the most grievous veil with his face set toward the Scene of transcendent purity. Such a one is, in truth, among the most exalted of created things in the sight of Him Who is the True One, the Most High. Erelong will perish the world and that wherein ye pride yourselves, while glory and power shall remain for them that have turned to this Face before Which every neck hath lowered itself. Well is it with the possessor of insight whom the veils have failed to hinder, and with the cognizant one who hath broken the idol of vain imagining in the Name of his Lord, the Most Powerful, the All-Subduing.

[¶ 27]

Say: O people of the earth, die in your wrath! The day is fast approaching when the banners of the Cause will be hoisted in every city, and the lands of the world illumined with its light. Thus have We imparted unto thee what will enrapture the hearts of humanity, that thou mayest thank thy Lord at morn and eventide.

[¶ 28]

O Most Mighty Pen! Bestir Thyself to make mention of Ḥusayn, that the remembrance of the Ancient King may draw him to this Glorious Vision. Harken thou to the voice of this Wronged One coming from the Court of His Name, the Self-Subsisting: "I, verily, am the Exile, the Banished!" O Ḥusayn! The Ḥusayn of yore<sup>[5]</sup> hath wept sore over My separation and bitterly lamented the afflictions that have befallen Me in the Path of God, thy Lord and the Lord of all worlds. Yield thanks unto God that thou hast attained to these days, wherein hath dawned the Sun of Beauty from the horizon of glory in such wise that it can never be obscured by the clouds of the people of perdition or the veils of glory. Happy are they that have attained! Blessed is the strong one who hath seized the Book with a power born of his Lord, Who layeth low the necks of humankind, and forsaken them that have disbelieved in God, the One, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise. It behoveth every person to endeavor in the Cause of their Lord, not strive for what their passions may crave. This is the decree ordained for the people of Bahá in a Tablet sealed by the finger of thy Lord, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. Beware lest sorrows deter thee from the mention of thy Lord, the Most Merciful. Be thou an extoller of My Name amidst the kindreds of the earth.

[¶ 29]

Say: O people! The All-Glorious is come overshadowed with clouds and the decree is God's, the Sovereign Lord, the Mighty, the Gracious. Shouldst thou see one who hath turned away, say, "Woe betide thee, O thou who hast joined partners with God! Soon wilt thou find thyself in manifest loss." Is it seemly to harbor doubt after the appearance of clear tokens? Nay, by the Revealer of verses, couldst thou but know it! Every testimony hath prostrated itself before My testimony, and proof itself circled round the All-Merciful; well is it with them that observe. Lo, the Rock hath been stirred to movement by the shout of thy Lord, and the atoms of all that dwell in heaven and on earth are crying aloud this Greatest Name, but the people are fast asleep, wrapped in the veils of their own selves. Blessed is the one who hath turned, heard, and exclaimed, "Unto Thee be praise for having manifested Thy Beauty, O Best-Beloved of all who are in heaven and on earth!"

[¶ 30]

Render Me aid, O My loved ones, with deeds that will diffuse the fragrance of holiness amongst the denizens of the world. Subdue ye, then, the dwellers of the earth with my Name and My sovereignty. This befitteth the one who hath clung to this sanctified and radiant Hem. Shouldst thou encounter a

possessor of insight, share with him this Tablet, that it may solace his eyes and number him with them that have attained. And as for him that hath imbibed a love of the Calf, [6] I swear by My life that he is indeed of those who shall be left behind, unless he arise in this Name and loudly proclaim amid the peoples this Remembrance of God, this Source of Wisdom. Say: He it is with Whose Name the Tablets have been adorned and for Whose mention the Bayán was revealed, little as ye know it. Take heed that ye not perpetrate what will move the spirit of Bahá to wail in lamentation among the Concourse on High, and cause tears to flow from the eyes of the near ones. Cast evil suggestions behind your backs and turn toward the Cynosure of all existence with snow-white faces. Better is this for you than what you possess, could ye but discern it. Your belief availeth Us not, nor doth your rejection harm Us. To this testify all created things, and beyond them the Tongue of God Himself, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. From the horizon of calamity do We, verily, summon all humanity unto God. He that accepteth hath attained, while he who denieth is reckoned with the oppressors. Such is what have We sprinkled upon thee from the ocean of bounty; when it hath reached thee, say, "Praised be Thou, O Desire of them that have recognized Thee!"

[¶ 31]

O Pen of Revelation! Make mention of the dyer. Say: The day for dyeing is come. Happy is the one who hath colored themselves with the dye of God, and this, verily, is one's detachment from all else but Him. Thus hath it been decreed by the Supreme Pen at the behest of thy Lord, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise. Dye thou the servants with the Name of the Lord of creation. Unto this hast thou been bidden by thy Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised.

[¶ 32]

Say: O people! Fear ye God and follow not those outwardly pious ones who cling to the cord of names and invoke them day and night, and yet who, when the Creator of those names came in the clouds of light, disbelieved in Him until they eventually pronounced judgment against Him with evident oppression. Thereby have they made themselves well deserving of the verdict of chastisement. Erelong will they return to their abode, and wretched shall be the abode of the ungodly! How many a veiled woman hath believed in the Possessor of all creation, and how many the wearers of turbans who have rejected God, the Lord of the Day of Reckoning! Many are the unschooled who have quaffed the river of knowledge from the hands of grace, and many the learned who have been left in the wilderness of error. Thus hath been ordained unto every soul its due recompense. Thy Lord is, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Powerful.

[¶ 33]

Say: O people! This is none other than your Lord, the All-Merciful. Lo, He is come with testimony and proof; turn ye toward Him and follow not every wicked repudiator. This is the day wherein the visages of those who turn away from the divine Countenance have been darkened with shame, while the faces of them that look to Him have been illumined.

[¶ 34]

Say: O people of the Bayán! Fear ye God and object not to Him through Whom the lights of understanding have shone forth in the contingent realm, and in Whose Name the Faithful Spirit hath cried aloud. Amongst the infidels are them that say, "He hath rejected the Unseen." Say: Silence thy tongue, O thou who hast joined partners with God! Verily, the Unseen speaketh through this most wondrous and incomparable Tongue. Every atom beareth witness that there is none other God but Him, and that He who speaketh is, in truth, the Manifestation of His Essence, the Dawning-place of His verses, the Dayspring of His Revelation, and the Source of His Cause in the midst of humanity.

Others among the infidels say, “Can the All-Merciful come before the creation of the Bayán hath been completed?” Say: Through My Revelation have all things attained their consummation, did ye but know it. It is in My Name that the Bayán was revealed. By My life! Had it not been for My Revelation, the creation of that Book would have never been completed, even had it remained for as long as earth and heaven endured. Fear ye God and follow not the idle fancies of the deniers. Say: I am indeed a cloud of bounty unto what was planted in the Bayán, and unto it have We been even as vernal breezes. Through My Revelation hath the firmament of the Bayán been upraised and embellished with brilliant stars and resplendent Words. Unto this attesteth the whole of creation, visible and invisible alike, save for those whose faces are seen to be soiled with the dust of hell. Blessed is the face illumined with this Light, and the heart enraptured by the verses of his Lord, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

[¶ 35]

The hearts of humankind were created to recognize Me, their tongues to praise Me, and their eyes to behold My Beauty—and lo, He hath dawned from the horizon of the Prison with such conspicuous glory that the veils interposed by the hearts of the oppressors have failed to obscure Him. Happy art thou, for the Pen of the Most High hath moved to make mention of thee at the bidding of thy Lord, the All-Glorious. By My life! This, verily, is a token of God’s bountiful favor.

[¶ 36]

O Most Mighty Pen! Mention thy servant Ḥusayn, who hath believed in the Lord of all nations, that he may turn, with all his heart, to the Most Sublime Vision. O Ḥusayn! We have revealed unto thee several Tablets, and now once again, that thou mayest thank thy Lord, the Supreme Ordainer.

[¶ 37]

Say: O members of the human race! In what direction are ye fleeing? No refuge is there for you in this Day, unless ye forsake what ye possess and cleave tenaciously to the Cord of God, the Most Holy, the Most Luminous. He is, in truth, the Most Great Sign in your midst and God’s testimony unto them that dwell in heaven and on earth. Indeed, He is that hidden Mystery through Which God tormenteth those who have disbelieved and denied; verily, His is the most afflictive and painful wrath. Say: Toward whom are ye rushing on, O people of error? Hasten to Him with all your hearts, for with Me is your ultimate abode. Lo, the lights of the divine Countenance have shone forth from the horizon of Revelation; well is it with the one that hath fixed his gaze thereon, and woe betide whosoever hath glowered and scowled thereat.

[¶ 38]

Say: This is He concerning Whose mission God established a covenant at the very inception of the Bayán ere He had established the covenant of its Author.<sup>[7]</sup> Unto this testify what hath been revealed in the Books and Tablets. Say: This is the Day wherein the Most Merciful hath shed His splendor upon the world of being; blessed are they that have turned their sight thereunto. He hath appeared in such wise that He can never be hindered by the repudiation of the rejecter, nor obscured by the veils of them that have acted wantonly toward God and disbelieved in Him. By My life! Whoso tasteth the sweetness of the mention of his Lord, the All-Merciful, shall soar on the wings of certitude above all creation. Unto this beareth witness every knowledgeable and thoughtful person. Drink ye the living waters of wisdom and utterance from what hath flowed out of this Pen, through Which the decree of destiny hath been recorded. When We revealed the verses, they exclaimed, “These, verily, are calumnies!” And when We demonstrated what bewildered the minds and hearts, they declared, “This

is naught but powerful sorcery!"<sup>[8]</sup> Beware lest thou be saddened by the insinuations of the people. Cast them behind thy back! Soon will the odors of torment waft upon them, and the true believers shall behold them even as hollow tree-stumps.<sup>[9]</sup> Where are the palaces of them that disbelieved in God? Lo, We have returned them to their graves! Thy Lord is, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. When the divine Countenance dawned forth from the horizon of grace, the sun was eclipsed and the moon cleft asunder. They who have turned away from God are afflicted with torment and suffering in hell, while those who turn to Him are extolled by the Concourse on High, and their names are mentioned in a written Tablet. Blessed is the pen which hath moved to mention Me, and from which hath appeared such things as have upheld My Cause. Woe betide whosoever hath rejected the Cause of God after it was exalted and made manifest!

[¶ 39]

O Pen of the Most High! Turn Thine attention to Thy servant, 'Alí-Riḍá, then adorn him with Thy glorious and sublime remembrance, that he may soar on the wings of ecstasy in this atmosphere which God hath sanctified from the idle fancies of the infidels. Follow the Faith of God and walk in His ways. Unto this hast thou been bidden in a lucid Tablet. We, verily, have inhaled from thee the fragrance of love, on account of what We revealed unto thee from the land wherein We raised up the Best-Beloved of the worlds. Yield thanks unto God for this bounty and recognize the magnitude of this great station. Take heed lest anything keep thee back from God. Magnify the praise of thy Lord among His heedless servants, and make such mention of Him as will waken the slumbering. This behoveth the one that hath set his face toward the Cynosure of understanding souls. How many a worshiper hath worshiped God day and night, and yet, when He came in truth, they disbelieved in their Lord, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise! Numerous indeed are the servants who circle round in the cities and make pilgrimage to the sites where the Embodiments of My names are buried, and yet who, when the Dayspring of those names and their sovereignty appeared, rejected and repudiated Him. They are assuredly of the lost! Well is it with the detached one who hath immersed himself in the Most Great Ocean, Which hath surged through this Name that God hath made the King of all names unto the dwellers of heaven and earth. Render thanks to thy Lord, inasmuch as the Countenance of the loving-kindness of thy God—the Almighty, the All-Praised—hath turned unto thee. Thus have We revealed the verses and sent them to thee, that thou mayest read them and be numbered with the grateful.

[¶ 40]

Make mention, moreover, of Muḥammad-'Alí,<sup>[10]</sup> who hath believed in God, the Glorious, the Incomparable, that the sweet savors of revelation may attract him and sanctify him from this world and whatsoever is in it as he setteth his face toward the kingdom of his Lord, the Almighty, the Most Generous. Sell thou all things but My love. By God! It can never be rivaled by the repositories of them that abide on the earth or any treasury that the world can boast. Protect the pearl of the love of the Most Merciful within thy heart through this glorious and sublime Name, then conceal it from them that have acted treacherously against the Cause of God. Thus biddeth thee this Wronged One, the Exile. Beautify thy face by turning it, thy heart by inclining it, and thy tongue by praising thy Lord, the All-Beauteous. Be not saddened by them from whom thou inhalest the stench of rejection; leave them to entertain themselves with their cavilings.<sup>[11]</sup> Verily, they walk even as the wrath of God followeth them from behind. Such is the decree ordained in the Preserved Tablet. Mention thy Lord in such wise as to enrapture all things; this beseemeth the one who hath set his face toward God with a pure and radiant heart. Blessed is the one endued with insight who hath recognized, the attentive listener who hath heard, and the tongue that hath uttered this Remembrance of God, this Source of Wisdom. Happy is the ignorant one who hath turned, with all his heart, to the Cynosure of the world, and woe betide the sage debarred from this bounty that hath encompassed the whole of creation. Be thou so steadfast in the love of thy Lord that neither the veils of vain imaginings nor the clamoring of oppressors will ever hinder thee. Put thy reliance in God at all times, and when thou

hast read this Tablet, say, "Praise be to Thee, O Well-Beloved of the hearts of such as are devoted to Thee!"

[¶ 41]

O Pen of holiness! Make mention of Tá' before Qáf and Yá' [i.e., Taqí], that he may delight in what hath been recounted by the Pen of the All-Glorious, and exclaim, "Magnified be Thy Name, O Thou by Whose light the earth and the heavens have been illumined!" Hearken to the voice coming from the Tree of the heart, situated upon the shores of love in the Luminous Spot: "There is, in truth, none other God but Him, the All-Powerful, the Pardoner!" Rejoice, for thou hast been mentioned by the Pen of Revelation, through Which the winds have been subdued. Sorrow not on any account; in all thine affairs, trust in thy Lord, the Almighty, the Unconstrained. Verily, He hath ordained for His loved ones what no pen is capable of mentioning.

[¶ 42]

O loved ones of the Most Merciful! Persevere in the Cause with such staunchness that ye may never be deterred by the ascendancy of the rulers or the fury of their vassals. This befitteth every person who hath turned toward the divine Countenance detached from every direction. Impart to others what ye have understood from the Cause of your Lord, the All-Merciful. Thus have We exhorted you in the Books and Tablets. As ye teach the Cause, cleave tenaciously to wisdom and utterance. In this wise are ye taught by the Lord of Revelations. Do ye perceive what ye behold to have any endurance? No, by My Name, which ruleth over all that dwell on earth! Comport yourselves with My virtues, that from them may be diffused the fragrance of sanctity in all directions.

[¶ 43]

Be not saddened by the calamities that have befallen thee. We, verily, were with thee when thou wast in the clutches of the oppressors. Thy Lord is indeed the Omnipotent, the Omniscient. Nothing whatever escapeth His knowledge; with Him is cognizance of all things in the Book. For thee did He ordain, by reason of what thou didst endure in His Path, what solaceth the eyes of humankind. Such is what We have revealed unto thee from the verses of thy Lord, that thou mayest render thanks at eventide and at dawn.

[¶ 44]

O Pen of might! Remember those righteous servants of Thine whose names have not been mentioned in this Tablet, that they may yield thanks to their Lord God day and night. O My loved ones in that land! I swear by My life that the glances of your Lord are directed toward you, and that the Tongue of grandeur moveth to make mention of you, O concourse of companions! Ye are they who set their faces unto the divine Countenance on that Day wherein all eyes stared up with terror, and ye recognized your Lord when the people were veiled in their heedlessness. Erelong will the dwellers of the earth pride themselves on your names and bitterly lament what befell you at the hands of them that disbelieved in God, He Who causeth the dawn to break. Let nothing sadden you; rely on Him in all your affairs. He is, in truth, with His servants who have remained faithful to the Covenant. Glory rest upon you, O loved ones of God, on the part of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. If your names have been omitted from this Epistle, We, verily, have mentioned them in a Tablet that God hath made the Mother of all Tablets. Rejoice, inasmuch as your names were remembered before the Throne when its Lord lay in the grip of the wicked.

[¶ 45]

Lauded be Thy Name, O My God! Thou knowest that, while imprisoned, I have summoned Thy loved ones to the direction of Thy bestowals purely for Thy sake, and that, at a time when the ungodly have surrounded Me on all sides, I continue to remember Thee, O Thou Who art the Lord of all Names and Attributes! I beseech Thee to aid Thy servants to help Thy Cause and exalt Thy Word. Assist them, moreover, to do what will manifest the holiness of Thine Essence amidst Thy creatures and the sanctity of Thy commandments amongst Thy creation. O Lord! Illumine the eyes of their hearts with the light of Thy knowledge, and adorn their bodies with the ornament of Thy most excellent Names in the Kingdom of Thine invention. Powerful indeed art Thou to do whatsoever Thou wilt. No God is there but Thee, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.

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[1] Authorized English translations of these Tablets have been published in *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*.

[2] In his Persian-language monograph on the meanings of various colors in the Bahá'í framework, Vahid Rafati explains, on the basis of various Bahá'í texts, that the color white symbolizes the Will of God (*Alván dar Áthár-i-Bahá'í*, pp. 36–41), while the color red represents divine decree and also martyrdom (ibid., pp. 48–62).

[3] The story of Áqá Buzurg Nishápúrí, entitled Badí', has been discussed in Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 176–92.

[4] Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh, known as the *Lawh-i-Sultán*, an authorized translation of which is published in *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*.

[5] The Imám Ḥusayn.

[6] An allusion to the golden calf of Mosaic times, “the Calf” is an epithet applied in the Bahá'í Writings to certain people, such as Mírzá Yaḥyá, who laid claim to revelation from God and misguided others.

[7] “Bear Thou witness that, through this Book, I have covenanted with all created things concerning the mission of Him Whom Thou shalt make manifest, ere the covenant concerning My own mission had been established” (The Báb, quoted in *God Passes By*).

[8] cf. Qur'án 54:2.

[9] cf. Qur'án 54:20.

[10] Originally “Nabíl-'Alí.” Bahá'u'lláh often used Nabíl as a synonym for Muḥammad, since the two names share an Abjad value of 92.

[11] cf. Qur'án 6:91.