Bahai Scriptures

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BAHA'I SCRIPTURES
Selections from the Utterances of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha
Edited by Horace Holley

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Transliteration of Words in "Baha'i Scriptures"

The following terms were changed from an outdated form
to one reflecting typical transliterations found in modern
Baha'i works:

Akdas = Aqdas
Beha = Baha
Baha-El-Abha! = Baha'u'l-Abha!
Beyan = Bayan

El-Beyan = the Bayan
El-Masjid-El-Aska = the Masjid al-Asqa [the Further Mosque in Jerusalem]

Hosein = Husayn
Irak = Iraq
Ishrakat = Ishraqat

Kitab'l'Akdas or Kitab El Akdas or KITAB-EL-Aqdas = Kitab-i-Aqdas
Kitab-el-Ah'd = Kitab-i-'Ahd
Kitab-el-Ighan = Kitab-i-Iqan
Koran = Qur'an

Kurrat-el-Ayn = Qurratu'l-Ayn

Mohammed = Muhammad
Ra'is = Suriy-i-Ra'is
Rizwan = Ridvan
Sadrat-El-Muntaha = Sadratu'l-Muntaha
Tajalliat = Tajalliyat
Teheran = Tihran

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BAHA'I SCRIPTURES

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INTRODUCTION

Since the occasion when mention of the Baha'i Cause was first made in this country - at the Congress of Religions held in the Columbian Exposition in 1893 - interest in the Baha'i principles and teachings has steadily increased. Sufficient foundation had been laid by 1912, when 'Abdu'l-Baha came to America, to prepare for his message a cordial, sympathetic and reverent reception in the liberal synagogues, churches, new thought centers, universities and societies organized for scientific, ethical, economic and political progress in numerous cities.

The succeeding years - so fateful for the destiny of civilization, so disturbing to every social institution and so challenging to the noblest and most disinterested faculties of soul, mind and heart - have served to deepen and extend that preliminary interest and build upon that foundation a permanent spiritual structure in many lives. The years since 1912, in fact, have thrown an ever-clearer light upon the need, in the world's consciousness, for precisely those principles and teachings so perfectly embodied in 'Abdu'l-Baha and so definitely associated with his life and work.

To one who has acquainted himself with the Baha'i writings, evidences of the penetration of their fundamental influence are revealed in increasing measure from day to day and throughout the world. The leaders of religion, science and practical affairs are beginning to manifest an attitude of universality and a spirit of unity which seems a direct reflection of the light 'Abdu'l-Baha cast upon the manifold problems of living and the fundamental problem of life. Day by day the realization deepens in all conscious men and women that in this age new forces are seeking expression - forces so mighty that the difference between understanding and misunderstanding is the immediate crisis between the alternatives of a new, worldwide and spiritualized civilization and a further, even more disastrous undoing of the things that are.

It is upon the plane of understanding that the power of the <pvi> Baha'i writings operates, in that are of being which lies beyond the personal desire, the personal thought, the personal will. Their operation is to restore in the individual, whatever his race, class, creed, profession or temperament, that

eternal vision of the oneness of God whose evolving expression is directly the development of the soul, and indirectly the harmonious organization of mankind. Compared to other writings of this age, the Baha'i Scriptures are as light compared to the reflection of light from surfaces more of less luminous or opaque. This essential quality of illumination, as distinct from the subject illuminated, and of vision, as distinct from the subject visioned, reveals anew the very sources of man's spiritual being, and discloses, also, the predominant forces working to mold the character of the new day.

The purpose of the book is to bring together, in convenient form and helpful arrangement, that portion of the Baha'i writings already available in various books, magazines and also manuscript translation, selecting from them sufficient material to supply the reader and student a larger perspective upon these principles and teachings than any single work has yet accomplished in the English language. While it is inevitable that most, if not all the Baha'i writings will one day undergo re-translation, and be presented in a worthier and more permanent form than is possible at the present time, nevertheless the need of a suitable compilation now urgently exists, and it is hoped that the present work will at least serve as one link in the chain of effort whereby the Baha'i writings are carried from their source in the "most great prison" of Akka to the mind and heart of the self-imprisoned race.

In this country at least, the Baha'i message of the unity of religions, the reconciliation of science and religion, and the promulgation of Universal Peace, is established upon a recognition of the fact that in 'Abdu'l-Baha a new spirit of universality had manifested its vital, penetrative essence. Not so well understood is the fact that the root and source of 'Abdu'l-Baha's utterances, the foundation of his being, attested on every possible occasion by him, was entire devotion to the utterances and the being of his father, Baha'u'llah. This inner and spiritual relationship, likened by Baha'u'llah to that of the root and the "greatest branch" or trunk of a tree, is brought out in the present volume through the method adopted to organize its contents not only by chapters <pvii> but also by parts or "books"; the first book containing the words of Baha'u'llah - the Baha'i Scriptures in essence - the second book containing the words of 'Abdu'l-Baha - the authoritative interpretation of the Baha'i Scriptures and their direct application to the fundamental problems of the age. By this method the utterances of 'Abdu'l-Baha are established in clearest relationship to their source, and consequently their purpose; moreover the utterances of Baha'u'llah are established in relationship to all the Scriptures which have gone before: whose unfoldment, whose reinforcement they are.

While for the purpose of the student acquainting himself with the Baha'i writings for the first time, an outline at least of the historical conditions under which they were successively revealed would seem highly desirable, even essential, to the fullest understanding of their significance and most intimate sympathy for their application, nevertheless it will be found that this need is met in the process of reading the Baha'i message itself. Chapter Seven contains

an address by 'Abdu'l-Baha which had for its theme the history of the Baha'i Cause; and numerous references to that history will also be found in other passages. Moreover, inspiring as the actual record of those events are, the principal matter is not to realize the Baha'i Scriptures as a detail in history so much as a source of light whereby history itself is illumined.

"How wonderful that the Well Beloved is manifest as the sun, while strangers are in search of vanities and wealth! Yea, He is concealed by the intensity of manifestation, and He is hidden by the ardor of emanation!"

HORACE HOLLEY
New York City
February 12, 1923

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SOURCES

The present compilation has not been made with any thought of establishing a text, nor of even securing a polished and adequate English translation. From the literary point of view, the text embodied in this volume must be considered as a king in rags, since the Arabic and Persian originals are declared by all who have had access to them to be of the most exalted beauty and the most moving force.

On that sea the editor has no power to sail. His effort has been entirely confined to the intention of re-creating, as fully as possible through the use of available texts, some sense of that organic unity from which all the Baha'i writings came, and to place in the student's hands a more fully organized Baha'i work than has yet been published. In its sequence alone does the present volume contain the results of any particular study and accumulated labor.

For the most part, the contents have been taken from the publications of the Baha'i Publishing Society, to the efforts of which we are indebted to the spread of these writings in America. As yet, few original Baha'i writings have reached the public through any other channel, notable exceptions to which are "Abbas Effendi, His Life and Teachings" by Myron Phelps, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, and "A Traveller's Narrative, Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Bab," translated by Edward G. Browne, and published with the Persian original by the University Press, Cambridge, England. It is in this incomparable translation, in fact, that the English reader draws most closely to the spirit and power of the original utterance. The Tablet to the Shah, contained in Chapter Two of the present compilation, shows on comparison with Professor Browne's translation to have been based in part at least upon his exquisite rendering.

Tablets contained in "Baha'i Scriptures" hitherto unpublished (so far at least as the editor is aware) are found in Chapters Two, Five and Eight, and for this material acknowledgment is made <px> to the kindness of many friends who contributed manuscripts, especially Mrs. I.D. Brittingham, Mary Hanford Ford, A.W. Randall, Miss Martha Root and Miss Juliet Thompson.

For the omission of many fundamental teachings (or rather interpretations) given by 'Abdu'l-Baha to American audiences during 1912, explanation might well be called for were it not for the fact that the complete text of those addresses has been published since this compilation came into being. <pxi>

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PART ONE
THE GLORY OF GOD
"This Day is the Day of God, and God alone is
speaking in it; and none should be mentioned
save Him."

<p3>

BAHA'I SCRIPTURES

CHAPTER ONE
INTERPRETATION OF THE HOLY BOOKS

I

In the Name of Our Lord, the Exalted, the Supreme!

1. Sanctify yourselves, O people of the earth, that perchance ye may attain to the station which God hath ordained for you and enter the tabernacle which God hath elevated in the Heaven of the Bayan.

The quintessence of this chapter is that travellers in the path of faith and seekers for the cup of assurance must sanctify and purify themselves from all

material things; that is, the ear from hearing statements, the heart from doubts which pertain to the veils of glory,[1]the soul from dependence upon worldly belongings, the eye from contemplating mere transitory words. They should thus proceed, trusting in God and relying upon Him, so that they may become fitted for the splendors of the effulgences of the Suns (Manifestations) of divine knowledge and wisdom; recipients of the invisible and infinite bounties. For should a servant desire to make the words, deeds and actions of other servants, learned or ignorant, the standard for knowing God and His chosen ones, he shall never enter the Ridvan of the knowledge of the Lord of Might nor attain to the fountains of the <p4> knowledge and wisdom of the King of Oneness; neither shall he reach the bourne of immortality nor partake of the cup of nearness and good pleasure.
[1 Veils intervening between man and the Truth of god, which must be rent before the real light of that Truth is seen. One of these veils is literal interpretation of the Divine Texts, preventing true understanding of Revelation, such as the statement of the ascent of Christ into Heaven, His descent, the station of Muhammad as the "Seal of the Prophets," etc.]

2. Consider the former days; how people both high and low were awaiting the Manifestations of Oneness in the holy temples, so that they were at all times and moments in anticipation and expectancy, praying and supplicating that perchance the breeze of the divine mercy might blow and the beauty of the Promised One step from the pavilion of the invisible into the court of appearance. But when the clouds of generosity lifted and the doors of favor opened and the Sun of the Invisible appeared from the horizon of power, they denied Him and avoided his meeting which was identical with the meeting of God. These details are recorded in the Heavenly Books.

3. Now reflect a moment as to the cause of this rejection by the people, after their seeking and anxiety. They even denied and opposed in such manner that tongue and pen fail and are unable to explain. Not one of these Manifestations of Holiness and Dawning-places of Singleness hath appeared without being subjected to the contradictions, denials and antagonism of the people. As it is said, "O misery of men! No Messenger cometh unto them but they laugh him to scorn." (K.S. 36) It is said in another place: "Each nation hatched ill designs against their Messenger that they might get him into their power; and they disputed with vain reasoning, that they might thereby invalidate the truth." (K.S. 40)

Likewise the revealed Words which have descended from the clouds of the eternal power and from the realm of divine might are beyond the limit of the knowledge and comprehension of the servants. This is allotted to abstracted souls from the holy eternal Table sent down (from Heaven). Should ye become aware of the affliction of the Prophets and the motive and reason of the contradiction of those Divine Suns by the servants, ye will be cognizant of many things. The more ye consider the contradictions of the Day-springs of the suns of the attributes of Oneness by the people, the more firm and strong ye will become in your religion and in the Cause of God. Accordingly some of the stories of the

Prophets are briefly recorded in these Tablets, to demonstrate and make evident that in all times and ages, they inflicted upon the Appearances of Power and Dawning-places of <p5> Might that which the pen is ashamed to relate. Perchance these statements may enable some of the people to avoid the perplexity arising from contradiction and denial by the learned and ignorant of the age, and thus increase their assurance and faith.

4. The beauty of the "Friend" (Abraham) was unveiled and the standard of Guidance was hoisted. He invited the people of the earth unto the light of righteousness. Although He diligently admonished them, no fruit but jealousy and heedlessness resulted. But those who were entirely devoted to God soared with the wings of assurance unto the station which God hath exalted beyond all comprehension. It is well known from the history of His Holiness (Abraham) how He was surrounded by enemies, until the fire of jealousy and contradiction was kindled. After the story of the "fire" they expelled that Divine Lamp from the city, as is recorded in all the books and epistles.

5. Then His time passed and the turn of Moses came. His Holiness appeared with the rod of command and with the white hand of knowledge from the Paran of divine love. He came with the serpent of power and eternal majesty out of the Sinai of light into the court of manifestation, summoning all in the world to the kingdom of life and to the fruits of the tree of faithfulness. The oppositions made by Pharaoh and his people exerted themselves to extinguish that fire of the divine tree with the water of denial and opposition; heedless that the fire of the divine wisdom is never quenched by material water not the lamp of supreme power extinguished by contrary winds. Nay rather, in such a case water produces conflagration and the wind insures preservation, were ye to perceive with discerning sight and walk in the good pleasure of God.

6. Now reflect upon these things, and as to the cause of such differences; that when a true Manifestation appeared in the world from the horizon of the placeless, such corruption, confusion, oppression and revolution would arise in all parts of the world. All the Prophets during their appearance, announced to the people the coming of another Prophet and recorded a sign for the subsequent Manifestation, as stated in the Books. Why, then, notwithstanding the search and expectation of the people for the Holy Manifestation and the mention of signs in the <p6> Books, should such things occur in the world as oppressing, antagonizing and persecuting the Prophets and chosen ones during every age and cycle? As it is written, "Whenever a Messenger cometh unto you with that which your souls desire not, ye proudly reject him; accusing some of imposture and slaying others." (K.S. 2)

Now consider what was the reason of these deeds and why they acted in this manner toward the Aspects of the beauty of the Glorious One. The same thing which led to the contradiction and heedlessness of the servants in those days causes the negligence of these servants now. If we say that the divine proofs were not perfect and complete and therefore cause contradictions, this is pure anathema, because it is far from the bounty of the Bounteous and remote from the abundant Mercy to choose one soul from among all the servants, for the

guidance of His creatures, without bestowing upon Him sufficient and perfect proofs: at the same time punishing people for not believing in Him. Nay, the generosity of the King of Existence hath embraced all the contingent beings through the appearance of the Manifestations of Himself. His abundance never ceases for a moment and the showers of His mercy from the clouds of Providence are never restrained. Consequently these things proceed only from limited souls who move in the valley of pride and haughtiness and wander in the deserts of remoteness; who follow their own suppositions and whatever they hear from their religious doctors. Therefore they accomplish nothing but opposition and seek no result but rejection.

It is evident to every one endowed with perception, that had those servants during the appearance of each manifestation of the Sun of Truth, sanctified and purified their eyes and hearts from whatever they had seen, heard and conceived, they undoubtedly would not have been deprived of the divine beauty and withheld from the sanctuary of nearness and union with the Dawning-places of Holiness. As in every age they compared the proof with knowledge acquired from their religious doctors and found it to be at variance with their limited understandings, these unseemly actions proceeded from them in the world of appearance.

The religious doctors of every age have been the cause of preventing the people from the shore of the Sea of Oneness, for the reins of the people were in their control. Some among <p7> them have hindered the people by love of leadership and some by lack of wisdom and knowledge. Thus every Prophet hath quaffed the cup of martyrdom and soared to the loftiest horizon of might, through the sentence and sanction of the divines of the age. What oppressions have been inflicted by the leaders of the time and divines of the age upon the Kings of Existence and the Essences of Desire! Satisfied with these limited and transient days, they were debarred from the everlasting realm, their eyes deprived from witnessing the lights of the beauty of the Beloved and their ears from hearing the wonderful melodies of the Nightingale of Desire. Therefore the condition of the divines of every age is recorded in all the Heavenly Books; as it is said: "O ye people of the Book, why do ye reject the Signs of God, while ye are the witnesses of them?" (K.S. 3) Also, "O ye people of the Book, why do ye clothe truth with vanity, and knowingly hide the truth?" (K.S. 3) Also, in another place, "Say, O people of the Book, why do ye bar the path of God?" (K.S. 3)

It is evident that the "people of the Book" who barred mankind from the right path were the divines of that age, whose names and records are contained in all the writings and understood from most of the verses and traditions, were ye to see with the eye of God.

7.

So gaze with divine insight into the horizons of the supreme knowledge and into the souls of the perfect words of eternity, that all the mysteries of the spiritual wisdom may appear without "veils of glory" and become manifest from

behind the covering of favor and bounty.

The contradictions of people and their controversies have resulted wholly from their lack of knowledge and understanding.

For example, they could not comprehend and attain to the truth of the explanations given by the beautiful Countenances of the True One concerning the signs of the subsequent Manifestation.

Notwithstanding this they have sought interpretation of the Book from the people of veils and did not acquire knowledge from its fountainhead.

For instance, when the day of Moses had passed and the lights of Jesus pervaded the world from the dawn of spirit, the Jews objected that the one who is promised in the Pentateuch must promote and fulfil the laws of the Pentateuch, whereas this youth of Nazareth who calls himself the Messiah of God hath abolished the laws of divorce and of the Sabbath, which are the greatest laws of Moses; and moreover the signs of <p8> the Manifestations have not yet appeared.

Thus the Jews are still expecting the appearance recorded in the Pentateuch.

How many of the holy Manifestations of Unity and Dawning-places of the Light of Eternity have appeared since Moses in the world of creation, while the Jews have been and are still veiled by their satanic, egotistical veils and their selfish erroneous opinions!

They still await the time when this fictitious temple will appear according to their understanding of the given signs.

Consequently God hath punished them for their sin, stripped them of the spirit of faith and caused them to suffer the fire in the depths of hell on account of their ignorance of the texts recorded in the Pentateuch concerning the signs of the subsequent Manifestation.

Since they did not understand the reality of these signs and as such things did not outwardly appear, they were therefore deprived of the beauty of Jesus, did not attain to the meeting of God and were of those who await.

Thus the nations by their adherence to similar inventions arising from improper notions, have deprived themselves of the pure, clear and flowing fountains.

8. It hath been evident and clear to the possessors of knowledge that when the fire of the love of Jesus burned the veils of Jewish limitations, and the authority of His Holiness, even in the outward sense, was partially recognized, that Beauty of the Invisible spoke of separation to some of His spiritual companions and enkindled the fire of yearning, saying: "I go and I come again." And in another place he said: "I go and another will come who will tell you all that I have not told you and will finish all that I have said." These two statements are in reality one, were ye to witness the Manifestations of Oneness with the eye of God.

9. To one who views with ideal perception, the Book of Jesus as well as His

Cause were in fact confirmed at the time of the "Seal of the Prophets" (Muhammad). In name, Muhammad said "I am Jesus," even ratifying the signs, records and Book of Jesus as being from the presence of God. In this sense there is neither any difference in them nor in their Books, inasmuch as both have arisen by the command of God, speaking the praise of God. The Books of both declared the ordinances of God. For this reason Jesus said, "I will go and come again." Even as the sun: If the sun to-day says "I am the sun of yesterday," it is true; and yet if according to daily sequence, it says: "I am other than the sun of yesterday," this is also true. Likewise <p9> consider the days: If it be said that all the days are the same, it is correct and true; and if it be said that according to name and designation they differ from each other, this also is true as thou seest. For though they are the same, yet in each one there is a name, quality and designation which is different from the other. By the same method and explanation, understand the stations of separation, difference and oneness of the Holy Manifestations, so that thou mayest comprehend the interpretations of the words of the Creator of the names and attributes, concerning separation and union. Thus wilt thou fully discover the answer to thy question why that Eternal Beauty hath, in various instances, called Himself by a different name and title.

10. Afterward the companions and disciples of His Holiness (Jesus) asked Him concerning the sign of the Return and the Manifestation, and at what time this sign shall appear. The same question was asked that peerless Countenance upon several occasions, and His Holiness in each instance mentioned a certain sign, as recorded in the four Gospels.

This oppressed one now speaks of one of these instances, thus conferring the hidden benefits of the tree of reward for the sake of God, upon His servants; so that the mortal temples may not be deprived of the immortal fruits and may perchance attain to a sprinkling of the never-failing rivers of the Lord of Glory. This is a food whereby brilliant souls and minds find eternal life and this is that table of which it is spoken: "O our Lord, cause to descend upon us food from Heaven." (K.S. 5) This food is never withheld from those who deserve it and is never exhausted. It grows continually from the tree of grace and descends from the heavens of justice and mercy.

Alas that man should withhold himself from this excellent gift and deprive himself of this eternal bounty and perpetual life! Therefore let him appreciate the value of this ideal food; perchance the dead bodies may receive new life through the wonderful favors of that Sun of Truth and faded souls may develop into the incomparable Spirit. O my brother, effort is needful while yet the days remain, in order to taste the cups of eternity. The breeze of life from the city of the Beloved will not blow continually; the river of explanation will not forever flow, and the doors of the Ridvan will not always remain open. The time <p10> will come when the Nightingales of Paradise will fly from the holy garden to divine nests; then thou wilt neither see the beauty of the rose nor hear the melody of the Nightingale! Therefore while the Dove of Eternity is singing and rejoicing, and the divine springtime is in splendor and adornment,

avail thyself of the opportunity and deprive not the ear of the heart, of its melody. This is the advice of this servant to the beloved of God. Whosoever wisheth, let him advance, and whosoever wisheth, let him deny; verily God is independent of him and of that which he may see and witness.

These are the melodies sung by Jesus the son of Mary with glorious notes in the Ridvan of the Gospel, as to the signs of the subsequent Manifestation. When they asked concerning these signs, He answered them, according to the first book ascribed to Matthew (xxiv, 29-31):

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not five her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the earth shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet."

The same statements are recorded in the other three Gospels ascribed to Mark, Luke and John.

As the doctors of the Gospel did not understand the meanings of these statements and the purport deposited in these words, but adhered to their literal sense, they were therefore withheld from the river of the Muhammadic Bounty and the cloud of Ahmadic Grace.

The ignorant ones of that community, relying upon their learned men, were likewise prevented from beholding the beauty of the King of Glory.

For these mentioned signs did not become manifest at the appearance of the Ahmadic Sun.

Finally that Essence of Life returned to the eternal place of His dominion.

Centuries passed and times rolled by.

Another blow of spiritual breath was breathed into the Divine Trumpet and dead souls came forth out of the tombs of heedlessness and error into the land of guidance and the place of favor.

Still that community is expecting the time when these signs shall appear and the promised Temple (Christ) shall arise, that they may assist Him, expend possessions in His way and sacrifice lives in His path.

By similar <p11> suppositions, other communities are kept afar from the Kawther of the significances of the infinite mercy of God and are occupied with their own imagination.

Besides this passage, there is another statement in the Gospel:

Heaven and earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away."

For this reason the people of the Gospel say the decree of the Gospel shall

never be abolished and that whenever the promised Face appears with all the signs, He must confirm and establish the law enacted in the Gospel, so that no other religion may remain in the world.

To them this is one of the confirmed and indisputable facts.

They believe that even should one appear with all the promised signs and declare against the literal law of the Gospel, they must not obey or accept him, nay rather, they must scoff at him and charge him with infidelity.

This was witnessed when the Muhammadic Sun appeared.

Had they asked with all meekness from the Appearances of Oneness in every Manifestation, the meanings of these words revealed in the Books, - through the non-attainment unto which all people are veiled from the furthermost destination and the Sadratu'l-Muntaha, - they would have been surely directed to the lights of the Sun of Guidance and acquainted with the mysteries of knowledge and wisdom.

Now this servant explains a sprinkling of the meanings of these statements, so that the possessors of perception and intuition may thereby comprehend all the symbols of the divine words and the allegorical explanations of the Holy Manifestations; and thus be not debarred on account of the (impressive) majesty of the words, from the Sea of the Names and Attributes and veiled from the Lamp of Unity which is the place of the manifestation of the Essence.

As to the words - "Immediately after the tribulation of those days" - this signifies the time when the people become afflicted with hardship and distress.

This is when the traces of the Sun of Truth and the fruits of the tree of knowledge and wisdom disappear from among mankind and the reins of the people fall into the hands of the ignorant; when the doors of unity and knowledge - the essential purpose of the creation of man - are closed; when knowledge is changed into superstition and guidance into adversity, just as it is witnessed in this day that the reins of every party are in the hands of an ignorant one who leads them in whatever way he desires.

Among them nothing remains <p12> of the Adored One but a name and of the Desired One but the letter.

To such an extent have the winds of desire and self prevailed, that they have extinguished the lights of reason and conscience within the hearts.

Although the doors of the divine knowledge are opened by the keys of the Supreme Power, and the essences of the being of things are enlightened and illumined through the knowledge-light and holy bounties, to such an extent that within everything a door of knowledge is opened and within every atom traces of the sun are visible, yet notwithstanding that these manifestations of knowledge have pervaded the world, they have considered the door of knowledge closed, and the rains of mercy withheld.

Holding fast to supposition, they are kept afar from the firm strong handle of

knowledge.

They seem to have intrinsically no desire for knowledge and its door, nor think of its appearance.

For in supposition and imagination they have found doors to bread, and in the appearance of the Manifestor of knowledge they see nothing except the sacrifice of life.

So they naturally flee from this and hold fast to the other.

Although they know the divine command is one, yet from every direction a decree emanates and from every place an order is brought forth.

No two are found who agree upon the same command, for they seek no God but desire and follow no path but error.

They deem leadership the ultimate accomplishment of the aim and account pride and haughtiness as final attainment to the Beloved.

They consider selfish deceptions preferable to the divine decrees.

They have turned aside from submission and resignation and are occupied with plots and hypocrisies; preserving these attitudes with all power and strength, lest a blemish find access to their dignity or a flaw appear in their honor.

Should an eye be illumined by the collyrium of divine enlightenments, it would behold a number of wild beasts preying upon the dead bodies of the servants.

What tribulations and distress could be greater than these mentioned conditions?

For if one wishes to seek a truth or knowledge, he knows not to whom to refer nor from whom to enquire, because opinions are different and paths are many.

This tribulation and distress is one of the signs of every Manifestation, and unless it happens, the Sun of Truth does not become manifest, because the morn of the appearance of guidance dawns after the night of error. Therefore the traditions and records contain all these statements, that infidelity will cover the <p13> world, darkness prevail and similar things as mentioned. For the sake of brevity this servant does not undertake to mention the texts of these traditions, as they are well-known.

As to the words - "The suns shall be darkened and the moon shall cease to give her light and the stars shall fall from heaven":

- The purport of "sun" and "moon" as mentioned in the words of the Prophets is not confined to the phenomenal sun and moon which are seen; nay rather, they have intended for "sun" and "moon" manifold meanings. In every instance they intend a certain meaning applicable thereto. For example, one meaning of the "sun" is the "Suns of Truth" which dawn from the Day-spring of Pre-existence and transmit bounty to all the contingent beings. These Suns of Truth are the Universal Manifestations of the Divinity in the world of His attributes and names. As by the command of the real Adored One the development of material

things such as fruits, trees, colors, minerals and whatever exists in the phenomenal world is through the assistance of the phenomenal sun, so the trees of unity, the fruits of oneness, the leaves of abstraction, the flowers of knowledge and assurance and the myrtles of wisdom and utterance appear through the training of the Ideal Suns. Therefore when these Suns arise, the world is renewed, the rivers of life flow, the seas of beneficence move, the clouds of grace gather and the breezes of bounty blow upon the temples of beings. Through the heat of these Divine Suns and Ideal Fires the heat of the love of God is produced in the pillars of the world; and through the favor of these abstracted Spirits the immortal spirit of life is conferred upon the bodies of the mortal dead.

The phenomenal sun is in reality a single sin of the splendor of that Ideal Sun which hath neither comparison, likeness, equal nor peer. All things are supported through Its existence, are manifest through Its bounty and will return to It. All things have appeared from It and are restored to the treasures of Its command. All contingent beings originated from It and revert to the depositories of Its order. If in explanation and mentioning, these (Suns) are only designated by some of the names and attributes, as you have heard and hear, this is intended for the understanding of weak and imperfect minds. Otherwise they have been eternally sanctified from every name and will be purified from every attribute. The essences of names have no access <p14> to the court of their holiness and subtleties of attributes have no approach to the kingdom of their might. God is too glorified for His chosen ones to be known except by their own selves, or that His friends should be described by any other than their own beings. He is exalted far above what the servants mention in description of them and lofty above their comprehension of them!

Therefore it is shown that in the primary sense "sun", "moon" and "stars" signify the Prophets, the saints and their companions, through the light of whose knowledges the worlds of the visible and invisible are enlightened and illumined. In another sense by "sun," "moon" and "stars" is intended the divines of the former Dispensation, at the time of the subsequent Manifestation and in whose hands are the reins of the religion of the people. If they are illumined by the light of the subsequent Sun in His Manifestation, they will be acceptable, radiant and shining; otherwise they will be declared as darkened, even though they are apparently guides. For all these states, including belief and unbelief, guidance and error, happiness and misery, light and darkness are dependent upon the approval of that Ideal Sun of Divinity. If in the Day of Judgment (Day of a new Manifestation). any one of these divines is declared faithful by the Source of Wisdom, he can truly be regarded as possessing knowledge, light and faith, and as having attained the food pleasure of God. Otherwise ignorance, rejection, infidelity and injustice will be applied to him.

In another sense the words "sun," "moon" and "stars" are applied to the ordinances and instructions enacted in every religion. As in every subsequent Manifestation the established, chining, clear and fixed ceremonies, customs and

instructions of the preceding Manifestation are abolished, they symbolically mentioned them by the names "sun" and "moon."

Briefly; this is the purpose of the symbolisms in the words of the divine Manifestations. Consequently the application of these meanings to "sun" and "moon" in the mentioned instances is confirmed and demonstrated through revealed verses and recorded traditions. Therefore by the "darkness of the sun and moon" and the "falling of the stars" is intended the aberration of the divines and the abolition of the ordinances established in a religion, of which the Manifestation of a Dispensation speaks through <p15> these symbols. Only the righteous have a portion of this cup and only the just partake thereof.

It is certain that during every subsequent Manifestation, the "sun" of the teachings, ordinances, commands and prohibitions established in the preceding Manifestation, - the "sun" and "moon" of teachings and command under which the people of that age are enlightened and guided, - become darkened, that is, their influence and efficiency vanish. Now consider, had the people of the Gospel understood the purpose of "sun" and "moon" or inquired concerning t from the Manifestor of divine knowledge, without contradiction or obstinacy, the meanings thereof would have necessarily become clear and they would not have been confined in the darkness of egotism and desire. Yea, since they did not acquire the knowledge from its mine and source, they perished in the fatal valley of unbelief and error, and are not yet aware that all the signs appeared and the promised Sun dawned from the horizon of Manifestation, while the sun and moon of former knowledges, ordinances and teachings were darkened and disappeared.

O my brother, take the step of the soul, that thou mayest in a moment traverse the distant valleys of separation and remoteness, enter the Ridvan of union and nearness and in a breath attain to the divine Souls. These stages can never be travelled nor the destination reached by the step of the body. Peace be upon these who follow the truth in truth and stand in the path of command upon the shore of knowledge in the name of God.

In like manner through these clear, firm, well-founded and direct explanations understand the "cleaving of heave" which is one of the signs of the hour of Resurrection: As it is said:
"When the heaven shall be cloven asunder." (K.S. 82) By this is meant the heaven of religions elevated during every Dispensation and cloven asunder in every subsequent Manifestation, that is, abolished and annulled. I swear by God that to one who carefully considers, the cleaving asunder of this heaven is greater than the cleaving of the phenomenal heaven. Reflect a little; a long-established religion, under which all have grown and developed; by the shining ordinances of which they have been trained for long periods; hearing nothing from their fathers and ancestors except its mention, so that the eyes see only the effectiveness <p16> of its commands and ears hear only its ordinances; then afterward one appearing, severing and separating all these through divine power and strength, nay rather, abolishing them. Consider whether this is of greater importance than that which these worthless creatures

have imagined concerning the cleaving of heaven. Moreover, consider the difficulties and afflictions of these Countenances in executing the laws of God in face of all in the earth, without a worldly helper or assister. Notwithstanding the persecutions inflicted upon these pure, high and blessed Beings, they endure with the utmost power and suffer with infinite strength.

In like manner understand the meaning of the "changing of the earth." Upon whatever hearts the clouds of mercy of that heaven poured down the shower of beneficence, the earth of those hearts was changed into the earth of knowledge and wisdom. What myrtles of unity have grown in the gardens of these hearts and what anemones of realities of knowledge and wisdom bloom from these shining breasts! If the earth of these hearts is not changed, how is it that men not instructed in one letter, without seeing a teacher or entering a school, speak words and knowledge which no one can apprehend? They seem to have been moulded from the clay of eternal knowledge and kneaded with the water of intuitive wisdom. Therefore it is said, "Knowledge is a light which god sheds in whatsoever heart He willeth." It is this kind of knowledge which is praiseworthy; not the limited learnings produced by veiled and obscured imaginations, which men often steal from each other, then glory over their fellow-creatures.

O that the breasts of the servants might be purified and sanctified form the traces of these limitations and dark words, that they may perchance attain to the splendor of the lights of the Sun of Knowledge and Significances and to the essences of the mysteries of intuitive wisdom.

Consider, if these barren soils of being had not been transformed, how should the mysteries of unity and the essences of divinity have appeared and become visible in them? Therefore it is said in the Qur'an: "In that day, the earth shall be changed into another earth." (K.S. 14)

Even the material earth is also changed through the breezes of <p17> the generosity of that King of Existence, were ye to reflect upon the mysteries of Manifestation!

These are the mysteries of the words which are clearly unfolded and unveiled that thou mayest comprehend the morn of significances and extinguish the lamp of superstition, fancy, doubt and suspicion through the power of reliance and severance, and light the new lamp of knowledge and assurance in the recess of mind and heart.

11. The purpose of these allegorical words and enigmatic references which emanate from the Sources of Command is to test the servants as mentioned, so that the soil of excellent and shining hearts may be distinguished from barren and mortal soils. This has always been the Divine Law among the servants, as revealed in the Books.

Were ye to reflect a little, ye would find doors of significances and explanations opened in this subject and statement, and behold all the knowledge and the mysteries thereof without veils.

These things are only for the purpose of training and delivering the souls from the cage of self and desire, for that Ideal King in Himself hath forever been independent of the knowing of the beings, and in His identity will ever be exalted above the adoration of contingent things.

A single breeze of His affluence honors all the world with the robes of wealth, and a mere drop of the sea of His generosity favors all the existence with eternal life.

Bur as the purpose is to distinguish between truth and falsehood, sun and shadow, therefore at every instant tests sent from the presence of the Lord of Might pour down like copious rain.

Were people to ponder a little over the former Prophets and their manifestation, the matter will become so easy to them that they will not be veiled by reason of deeds and words which are contrary to their egotism and desire.

They will burn every veil with the fire of the Sadrat of knowledge and rest upon the throne of quiescence and composure.

For example, Moses the son of Amran, one of the great Prophets and the possessor of a Book, one day in the earlier part of His Dispensation, before His Mission, was passing through the market.

Two men were striving with each other, one of whom begged help from Moses.

His Holiness assisting him, killed his opponent, as recorded in the Book.

This report was published throughout the city and fear fell upon His Holiness, <p18> according to the text of the Book.

Finally He received the message: "O Moses, verily, the magistrates are deliberating concerning thee, to put thee to death." (K.S.

28) Whereupon He left the city and remained in the service of Shoeb (Jeth-ro) in Midian.

Upon His return He arrived at the "Blessed Valley" - the wilderness of Sinai - where He witnessed the manifested light of the King of Unity from the tree "Which is neither of the East nor of the West."

He heard the soul-cheering spiritual voice from the enkindled fire of divinity and was appointed to guide the Pharaohic souls; to deliver the people from the valley of egotism and desire and lead them to the heart-rejoicing plains of spirit and guidance; to conduct all in the creation from the perplexity of remoteness to the abode of the peace of nearness, through the Salsabile of severance.

When He entered the house of Pharaoh and delivered that for which He was appointed, Pharaoh loosed his tongue in abuse, saying: "Art thou not he who committed murder and became an infidel?"

This was spoken by the Lord of Glory as having been said by Pharaoh to Moses:

"Yet hast thou done thy deed which thou hast done and thou art a faithless person."

He said: "I did it indeed and I was one of those who erred: wherefore I fled from you because I feared you; but my Lord hath bestowed command upon me and hath appointed me one of His Messengers." (K.S.

26)

Reflect upon the tests of God and upon the wonders of His trials; how He chose from among His servants and appointed to the greatest guidance a man known to be a murderer and who himself confessed his injustice, as recorded in the verse; a man evidently brought up for thirty years of less in the house of Pharaoh and supported by his food and nourishment! This notwithstanding that mighty king (God) had the power to prevent Moses from committing murder, so that he should not be known by this name among the servants, causing dismay in hearts and avoidance by people.

Likewise the case of Mary - how that excellent countenance longed for death in her perplexity, because of the importance of the matter. For it is shown in the blessed verse that after the birth of Jesus, Mary lamented with these words upon her lips: "Would that I had died before this and had become a thing forgotten and lost in oblivion." I swear by God that hearts are melted and souls quiver when hearing these words. This <p19> agitation and grief was caused by the reproach of enemies and the censure of the people of unbelief and insolence. Now reflect; what answer could Mary give to the people? How could it be explained to them that a child whose father was unknown, was of the Holy Ghost? So this chaste one of eternity took her child and returned to her house. When the eye of the multitude fell upon her, they said: "O sister of Aaron, your father was not a bad man and your mother was not unchaste." (K.S. 19)

Consider this mighty test and most great trial. Notwithstanding all this, god conferred Prophethood upon that Essence of Spirit (Jesus) who was known among the people as fatherless, and appointed Him His proof to all in the heavens and earth.

Behold how the King of Creation causes the affairs of the Manifestations to appear contrary to the wish and desire of the servants. When thou art acquainted with these essences of mysteries thou wilt be informed of the purpose of that Beloved One and discover the words and deeds of that powerful King to be alike; so that whatever is seen in His words shows forth in His deeds. Consequently these deeds and words are outwardly a punishment for the evil-doers, while inwardly a mercy for the just. To one who perceives with the eye of the heart, the words revealed from the Heaven of Will are as one with the actions proceeding from the Kingdom of Power; and are understood to be the same. This hath already been mentioned.

12. Now, O my brother, if such things should happen or such events take place in this age, consider what the people would do! I swear by the Educator of Existence and the Revealer of Words that they would at once declare (those

concerned) infidels and condemn to death. Should a hundred thousand cries be raised, it would not enter a single ear that a fatherless one had been appointed to Prophethood or a murderer had given utterance to "verily I am God," from the Tree of Fire. Where would they listen to one who announced that a Jesus had appeared through the breath of the Holy Spirit or that a Moses had been appointed by the irresistible Command?

If the eye of justice be opened, it will be seen from all these explanations that similar happenings and their consequences are evident in this day. Although such conditions have not appeared during this Manifestation, yet people clinging to the imaginations <p20> of rejected souls have made charges and inflicted calamities the like of which hath never appeared in the world of creation.

God is great!

When explanation reached this point, spiritual fragrance wafted from the dawn of sublimity and the breeze of morning blew from the city of the Sheba of eternity.

Its breath conferred fresh glad tidings upon the soul and an immeasurable expansion upon the spirit!

It spread a new carpet and brought precious and innumerable gifts from that traceless Beloved for whose lovely stature the robe of mention is short and for whose shining figure the mantle of explanation is inadequate.

It unfolds the allegory of meanings without word and reveals the mysteries of explanation without tongue.

It teaches lamentation and mourning to the nightingales of the foliage of separation and absence; instructs them in the rule and ceremony of love and loving, and in the mystery of heart-surrender.

It imparts the mode of ravishment and charm to the wonderful flowers of the Ridvan of nearness and union, confers the mysteries of truths upon the anemones of the garden of love and deposits its minute allegories and their subtleties in the breasts of the lovers.

It hath shown such favor at this hour that the Holy Spirit envies greatly.

It hath given to a drop the waves of a sea and endowed a mote with the splendor of a sun.

Bounties have reached such a measure that the beetle seeks to attain the musk-sac and the bat hath chosen residence in the face of sunshine.

It hath raised the dead from the graves of the body through the breath of life; seated the ignorant in the high station of knowledge and established the unjust upon the summit of justice.

The world of existence is impregnated with all these favors, awaiting the time when the trace of this invisible Providence shall appear in the earth, lead the

exhausted athirst to the clear Kawther of the Beloved and enable wanderers in the wilderness of remoteness and death to reach the tent of nearness and life of the Beloved. Who will sow these seeds of holiness in the fround of the heart? And in the garden of whose soul will the anemones of invisible realities bloom? In a word; the Sadrat of love in the Sinai of love is too intensely enkindled to be quenched and exhausted by waters of explanation. Seas fail to allay the thirst of this fish, and this bird of fire can only abide in the fire of the face of the Beloved. Therefore, O brother, light the lamp of spirit with the oil of wisdom in the recess of the heart and protect it <p21> by the glass of knowledge, that the breath of polytheistic souls may not extinguish it nor prevent its shining.

Thus have we illumined the horizon of the heaven of utterance with the lights of the suns of knowledge and wisdom, so thy heart may thereby be tranquillized and thou mayst become of those who soar upon the wings of assurance in the sky of the love of their Lord the merciful!

13. As to the words - "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven" - He says that after the eclipse of the Sun of divine Knowledge and the falling of the stars of the established ordinances, - after the darkening of the Moon of Knowledge - which is the educator of the servants - and disappearance of the landmarks of guidance and prosperity, - after the morn of faithfulness and peace is obscured, then shall the sign of the son of Man appear in heaven. By "heaven" is meant the phenomenal heaven. For preceding the appearance of that firmament of the heavens of justice and the floating of the Ark of Guidance upon the sea of grandeur, a star becomes visible in the sky, which announces the manifestation of "Most Great Orb" to the people of the heavens. Likewise a star appears in the heaven of significance, which announces that "Most upright and precious dawn" to the people of the earth. These two signs have appeared in both the outward heaven and inward heaven preceding the Manifestation of every Prophet, as hath been heard. One was the "Friend of the Merciful" (Abraham). Before the appearance of His Holiness, Nimrod had a dream and summoned the soothsayers. They warned him of the rise of a star in the sky. Likewise a man appeared in the earth who announced the Manifestation of His Holiness Abraham the Prophet.

After Him, was the story of the "Interlocutor of God" (Moses)_. The soothsayers of that period warned Pharaoh that a star had risen in the sky, indicating the birth of a child in whose hand was his destiny and that of his people. Also a wise man appeared, who in the evenings consoled and assured the children of Israel, announcing good tidings to them, as recorded in the books.

When the Manifestation of Jesus drew high, some of the Magi who were aware of the appearance of the star of Jesus in heaven, followed the trace thereof until they entered the city which was the imperial residence of Herod, - for in those days the rule of those countries was under his control, - saying: "Where is he who was <p22> born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him." After making inquiries, they learned that the child was born in Bethlehem of Judea. This was the sign in the outward heaven.

As to the sign in the inward heaven, - that is, in the heaven of knowledge and significances; who announced the Manifestation of His Holiness (Jesus) to the people; as it is said: "Verily God announceth to thee, John, who shall acknowledge the Word which cometh from God; and honorable person and one of the righteouus." (K.S. 3) By the "Word" is meant His Holiness Jesus, the announcer of whose Manifestation was John. It is also recorded in heavenly tablets: "Johanna was preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying 'repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'"

Likewise before the appearance of the beauty of Mohammad, the sign in the outward heaven became manifest and the inward signs were four men who successively announced to the people the Manifestation of that Divine Sun upon earth. Rouz-bih surnamed Salman was favored with the honor of serving them. When the time of death came to one, he sent Rouz-bih to the other, until the turn of the fourth arrived. He, at the time of death, said: "O Rouz-bih, after enshrouding and burying me, go thou to Hijaz where the Muhammadic Sun will rise. To thee be glad tidings of the meeting of His Holiness!"

As to this wonderful and impregnable Cause, most of the astronomers announced the appearance of the star in the phenomenal heaven. Likewise the two brilliant lights - Ahmad and Kazim (may God sanctify their dust) - appeared in the earth.

Consequently it is shown by these expressions that before the coming of each one of the Mirrors of Unity, the signs of that Manifestation appear in the outward heaven as well as in the inward heaven which is the station of the sun of knowledge, the moon of wisdom and the stars of significances and utterance. It is the appearance of a perfect man before every manifestation to train and prepare the servants for the meeting of that Sun of Divinity and Moon of Unity.

14.

As to His words: "And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

The purport of this saying is that at that time the people will lament because of <p23> the absence of the Sun of Divine Beauty, the Moon of Knowledge and the Stars of Intuitive Wisdom; then it will be witnessed that the face of the Promised One and the beauty of the Adored One will descend from heaven riding upon a cloud; that is, that Divine Beauty will appear from the heavens of the Supreme Will, in the human temple.

The purpose of "heaven" is none other than to demote the exaltation and loftiness which is the station of the appearance of those Day-springs of Holiness and Dawning-places of Pre-existence.

Although these ancient Beings outwardly appear from the wombs of mothers, yet in reality they descend from the heavens of command; and although they dwell upon the earth, yet they recline upon the couch of significances; and while walking among the servants, they soar in the skies of nearness.

They journey in the land of spirit without the motion of foot and fly upward to the summit of oneness without wing.

In every breath they traverse the world of creation east and west, and in every moment pass through the kingdom of the seen and unseen.

They are sent forth from the loftiness of the power of the King of Pre-existence and from the exaltation of the Will of the most great Ruler.

Therefore He says He shall "descend from heaven."

The word "heaven" is used in many senses in the utterances of the Suns of Significances; such as the "heaven of command," the "heaven of will," the "heaven of desire," the "heaven of knowledge," the "heaven of assurance," the "heaven of explanation," the "heaven of Epiphany," the "heaven of concealment," etc. In every instance He intends for the word "heaven" a meaning which can only be comprehended by those who have knowledge of the mysteries of oneness and have quaffed from the chalices of eternity. For example, it is said "Your sustenance is in the heaven, and also that which ye are promised." (K.S. 52), although sustenance grows up from the earth. Likewise, "the names come down from heaven," although they proceed from the tongue of the servants. Shouldst thou make the mirror of the hear pure and clear from the dust of prejudice, thou wilt comprehend all the symbols in the sayings of the perfect Word of Divinity in every Manifestation and be informed of the mysteries of knowledge. But unless thou destroyest with the fire of severance the veils of learning which are conventional among the servants, thou wilt not attain to the brilliant morn of the ideal knowledge. <p24>

Knowledge is divided into two kinds: - divine knowledge and satanic knowledge. One appears from the inspiration of the Ideal King; the other emanates from the imaginations of darkened souls. The teacher of one is the Exalted God and the teacher of the other is sensual suggestion. The explanation of one is "fear God and God will tech you," and the definition of the other is "knowledge is the greatest veil." The fruits of one tree are patience, longing, wisdom and love, and the fruits of the other are pride, vainglory and conceit.

Consequently, the breast must be purified from all that hath been heard and the heart sanctified from all attachments, so that it may become a recipient of the invisible inspiration and a treasury of the mysteries of supreme knowledges. Therefore it is said: "The traveller in the White Path and in the Red Support shall never reach his homestead unless he is empty-handed from all that is possessed by the people." This is the condition of the traveller; duly reflect and meditate, that thou mayest be informed of the purpose of the Book, without veil.

The meaning of "heaven" in the revealed verse is known and understood through these clear, sound and evident explanations. As to the sayings that He will descend in a cloud: - By "cloud" is meant things contrary to the egotism and desire of men, as mentioned in the formerly quoted verse - "Ye therefore, whenever a Messenger cometh unto you with that which your souls desire not,

proudly reject him and accuse some of imposture and slay others." (K.S. 2) Such (clouds), for instance, are the changing of ordinances, substitution of laws, removal of customary rules and ceremonies, and pre-eminence of those who become believers among the common people over the learned who deny.

Likewise is the appearance of that Eternal Beauty according to human limitations, such as eating, drinking, poverty, riches, glory, abasement, sleeping, waking and similar things which cause people to doubt and which hinder them. All such veils are interpreted as "clouds."

These are the clouds whereby the heavens of the knowledge and wisdom of all in the earth are rent and cloven, as it is said:

"On that Day the heaven shall be cloven asunder by the clouds." (K.S. 25)

As clouds prevent the eyes of men from viewing the phenomenal <p25> sun, so the above conditions hinder the people from apprehending that Ideal Sun. It is mentioned in the Book and attributed to the tongue of the unbelievers thus - "And they say what kind of a Messenger is this? he eateth food and walketh in the streets (as we do); unless an angel be sent down to him and become a (fellow-) preacher with him." (K.S. 25) As those Temples of Holiness were subject to outward indigence and adversity and also to natural and bodily necessities, such as hunger, diseases and incidental happenings, the people would become bewildered in saharas of doubt and suspicion and in deserts of imagination and perplexity, (wondering) how could one come from God, claim predominance over all in the earth and ascribe to Himself the motive of the creation of beings - as He hath said, - "Were it not for thee, I would not have created the firmaments," - and yet be afflicted by such trifling matters. For it is heard how every Prophet and His companions suffered adversities such as indigence, diseases and contempt; how the heads of their followers were sent as presents in the cities; how they were prevented from that whereunto they were commanded, and each of them suffered by the hand of the enemies of religion, to such an extent that the latter inflicted upon them whatever they desired.

It is evident that the changes and alterations effected during every Manifestation are the dark cloud which prevents the eye of the servants' knowledge from knowing that Divine Sun which shines forth from the Day-spring of Deity.

When the servants who have continues for years to imitate the religion of their ancestors and who have been brought up in its established ceremonies and customs, suddenly find one who hath been among them, their equal in all the human limitations, abolishing those religious ordinances in which they have been trained for successive centuries and the contradictor and denier of which they consider as infidel, impious and profligate - such circumstances naturally constitute a veil and cloud for those whose hearts have not tasted the Salsabile of severance nor drunk from the Kawther of knowledge.

As soon as they hear these things, they become so veiled from the comprehension of that Sun, that they declare Him an infidel and condemn Him to death, without

appeal.

This hath been witnessed since the earliest centuries and is also seen in this time.

Therefore an effort should be made that through the invisible <p26> assistance we may not be prevented by similar dark veils and the clouds of divine tests from beholding that shining Beauty; that we may know Him in Himself, and if we seek any proof, we may attain to the fountain of the infinite bounty before which all bounties are accounted as nothing; and not to oppose Him every day by an imagination nor by clinging to a fancy.

As to His saying: "And will send His angels, etc.":

These "angels" are souls who through spiritual power have burned human qualities by the fire of divine love and become characterized with the attributes of the exalted ones and cherubim.

As the people of Jesus did not attain to these meanings and these signs did not outwardly come to pass as they and their divines understood, they have not believed in the holy Manifestations from that day until the present; therefore they have been deprived of all the sacred bounties and veiled from the wonderful Words of eternity. This is the condition of these servants in this Day of Resurrection. They have not even understood that if in any age the signs of a Manifestation were to appear in the phenomenal world in conformity with that which is recorded in the traditions, no one would dare deny or oppose them not could the pious and the unjust, the sinner and the righteous, be distinguished. Be just; for instance, if these statements recorded in the Gospel be literally fulfilled, and angels descend with Jesus the son of Mary from the phenomenal heaven in a cloud, who would dare to deny and who would be able to reject or dispute? Nay rather, such agitation would suddenly seize upon the people of earth that they would be unable to speak a word, much less to deny or accept.

It was owing to the non-comprehension of these meanings that a number of the Christian clergy disputed with His Holiness (Mohammad). saying, "If thou art that promised Prophet, why are not those angels with thee which are recorded in our Book and which were to come with the promised Beauty, to assist Him in His Cause and threaten the servants?" (K.S. 25)

Such contradictions and oppositions have been among the people in every age and cycle. They have ever been occupies with vain sayings, that a certain sign hath not appeared and another hath not come to pass. Such diseases affected them only because of adherence to the divines of the age in their approval or denial of <p27> these pure Essences and divine Temples. The divines being submerged in selfish conditions and engaged in paltry and evanescent affairs, found these immortal Suns contrary to their learning and understanding and opposed to their judgment and decision.

15. Please God, thou shouldst purify the eye of the heart from the beckonings of water and clay, that thou mayest comprehend the infinite degrees of

knowledge and realize that God is too manifest for thee to cling to any evidence or need any proof to demonstrate His Being.

O questioning lover! If thou dost soar in the holy atmosphere of spirit, thou wilt see the True One so manifest above all things that thou wilt find naught else save Him. "There was God and nothing with Him." This condition is sanctified above demonstration by any proof or showing by any argument. If thou dost traverse the sacred space of truth, (thou wilt behold) all things renowned through His distinction, while He hath been and will be known in Himself. If thou art abiding in the ground of argument, then be satisfied with that which is said by Himself: "Is it not sufficient for them that We have sent down unto thee the Book?" (K.S. 29) This is the evidence which He hath Himself established; greater proof than this there is none nor ever will be. "His verses are His proof and His Being is His argument."

At this time, we beseech the people of the Bayan, its wise men, sages, learned and witnesses, not to forget the Commandments of God as mentioned in the Book and to look always toward the origin of the matter, lest t the time of the Manifestation of that Essences of Essences, Truth of Truths and Light of Lights, they may cling to some of the verses of the Book and inflict upon Him that which was inflicted in the cycle of the Qur'an. For that King of Divinity hath power to take life from the whole Bayan and its people, by a single letter of His own wonderful Words; or bestow upon them all a wonderful pre-existent life by a single letter, and resuscitate and send them forth from the graves of egotism and desire. Be attentive and watchful, for all must end in belief in Him and in attaining His Days and Meeting. "Righteousness is not turning your faces toward the east and the west; but righteous is he who believes in God and in the Last Day." (K.S. 2) <p28>

II

16. The substance and essence of this chapter is to demonstrate and explain to the possessors of pure souls and to sanctified mirrors that in whatever age and cycle the Suns of Truth and Mirrors of Oneness appear to the visible world from divine tents of the invisible, they manifest themselves with mighty power and and triumphant dominion for the development of the contingent beings and for the outpouring of bounty upon existent things. For these preserved Jewels and hidden and unseen Treasuries are the sources for the appearance of "God doeth whatever He willeth and God ordereth whatever He desireth."

17. It is evident to the possessors of knowledge and illumined minds that the unseen Divinity and Essence of Oneness hath been holy beyond emanation and appearance, ascent and descent, ingress and egress; is exalted above the praise of every praiser and the comprehension of every comprehender. He hath been and is everlastingly hidden in His own essence and will be eternally concealed from eyes and sights in His own identity. "The sight comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth the sight; He is the gracious, the wise." (K. S. 6)

No relation, connection, separation, union, nearness, remoteness, position or reference is possible between Him and the contingent things, inasmuch as all in

the heavens and earth have become existent by the word of His command and have stepped forth from utter and absolute non-existence and nothingness into the court of the existent and visible, through His desire which is the Will itself.

18.

Glory be to God!

Nay, even there hath not been nor will be any connection or relation between the contingent things and His word. "God warneth you to beware of Himself" (K.

S.

3) is a clear proof of this fact, and "there was God and nothing whatever was with Him" is obvious evidence thereof.

Therefore all the Prophets, successors, divines, sages and wise men confess their lack of attainment to the knowledge of that Essence of Essences and admit their inability to know and reach that Truth of Truths.

As the doors of knowing the Essence of Eternity were closed before the face of all the contingent things, therefore He causes brilliant Essences of Sanctity to appear from the holy worlds of the spirit in mighty human temples, among the creatures, in accordance <p29> with the abundant mercy of "His mercy hath encompassed all thing," and "My mercy hath extended to all things"; in order that they may express that Eternal Essence and Pre-Existent Entity.

These Mirrors of Sanctity and Dawning-places of Divinity fully express that Sun of Existence and Essence of Desire.

For instance, their knowledge expresses His knowledge, their power His power, their dominion His dominion, their beauty His beauty, and their Manifestation His Manifestation.

They are the treasuries of supreme knowledge, stores of eternal wisdom, revealers of infinite bounty, dawning-places of that Sun of Eternity.

Therefore it is said: "There is no difference between Thee and them except that they are Thy servants and Thy creatures."

This is the station of "I am He and He is me," recorded in the tradition.

19. All that is in the heavens and earth show forth the divine names and attributes until the traces of the splendor of that Sun of Truth are manifest and evident in every atom; so that without the appearance of this splendor, nothing can be honored with the robe of life nor attain to existence in the phenomenal world. What suns of knowledges are concealed in an atom! What oceans of wisdom are hidden in a drop! Among the beings, man is especially assigned to these robes and chosen for this dignity; for all the divine names and attributes are manifest and evident in human appearances, in the most perfect and excellent manner. All of these names and attributes have reference to man. Therefore He hath said: "Man is My mystery and I am his mystery." Successive verses proving and indicating this fine and subtle point are recorded and

mentioned in all the Heavenly Books and divine writings; as it is said: "We will surely show them Our signs in the regions (of the earth) and within themselves." (K. S. 41) Likewise it is said: "And also in your own selves, will you not therefore consider." (K. S. 59) In another place it is said: "And be not as those who have forgotten God and whom He hath caused to forget their own selves." Likewise the King of Eternity (may the life of all in the tent of the invisible be a sacrifice to Him!) hath said: "Whosoever hath known himself hath surely known his Lord."

O thou my friend; I swear by God that if thou dost ponder over these statements thou wilt find doors of divine wisdom and portals of infinite knowledge opened before thy face. <p30>

To resume:

It hath become evident through these explanations that all things express the divine names and attributes.

Each in proportion to its capacity, indicates and points to the divine knowledge, until the appearances of (His) attributes and names have encompassed all the seen and the unseen.

Thus it is said: "Is there any appearance in aught else save Thee, which is not of Thee, -- that it could have brought Thee forth?

Blind is the eye which doth not behold Thee!"

It is also said by the King of Eternity: "I have seen nothing except I beheld God in it, before it or after it."

Man, the most noble and perfect of the creatures, is a mightier evidence and greater expression than the other visible things.

The most perfect, superior and excellent of men are the Manifestations of the Sun of Truth; nay, rather, all else save them exist only through their desire and move by their generosity.

Nay, all are mere nothingness and absolute non-existence before their court of holiness; their mention is purified from mention of others, and their description is sanctified above description of all else.

These Holy Temples are the eternal primal mirrors which express the Invisible of the Invisibles and all His names and attributes, such as knowledge, power, dominion, grandeur, mercy, wisdom, glory, generosity and beneficence.

All these attributes become manifest and evident through the appearance of these Essences of Oneness and these qualities are not peculiar to some to the exclusion of the others.

Nay, all the favored Prophets and holy chosen ones are qualifies with these attributes and named by these names, but in certain stations some appear mightier in manifestation and greater in light; as it is said: "These are the Prophets; We have preferred some of them before others." (K.

S.

2) Therefore it is shown and confirmed that the Prophets and chosen ones of God are daysprings of the manifestation and emanation of all these exalted attributes and infinite names, although some of these attributes may or may not outwardly appear in those luminous Temples.

Even if a certain quality is not outwardly manifested from those abstracted Spirits, it cannot be denied that those repositories of divine attributes and mines of supreme names possess that quality.

Therefore all these brilliant Beings and wonderful Countenances are declared to be endowed with all the attributes of God, such as dominion, grandeur and the like, though they may not apparently appear with outward dominion and other <p31> similar (powers).

This point is evident and certain to every possessor of perception and in no need of argument.

20. All the former Prophets who have announced to the people a subsequent Manifestation have also spoken of the dominion of that Manifestation, as is recorded in the former Books. Dominion and all the names and attributes are certain and evident concerning all those preceding and subsequent Manifestations, for they are the appearances of the invisible attributes and dawning-places of divine mysteries, as already mentioned.

Furthermore, by sovereignty is meant the prevalence and power of His Holiness over all the contingent things, whether it appears in the material world with an outward predominance or not. This depends upon His own will and desire. But it is evident that the purpose of sovereignty, wealth, life, death, revival and resurrection as recorded in the former Books, is not that which these people conceive and apprehend in this day; nay rather, by dominion is intended the dominion which appears during the days of the manifestation of each one of the Suns of Truth by Himself in Himself. It is that inward authority by which they prevail over all in the heavens and earth, and which afterward appears in the phenomenal world according to the capacity of the world, time and creatures.

21. How far from the paths of truth were these people! Although the "resurrection" was realized in the rise of His Holiness, and the lights and tokens thereof had pervaded the whole earth, yet they derided and held to views based upon the false and vain imaginations of the divines of the ages, heedless of the sun of supreme providence and the showers of divine mercy. Yea; the beetle is deprived of the holy fragrances of eternity and the bat flees from the splendor of the world-illuminating sun. The same fact is witnessed in every age during the appearance of the Manifestations of the True One; as Jesus said: "Ye must be born again." In another place He hath said: "Except a man be born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God; that which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit."

The essence of the meaning is that those servants who are born of and quickened by the spirit and breath of the appearances of holiness in every Manifestation,

to them can be attributed life, resurrection, and entrance into the Paradise of divine love; while <p32> to others is ascribed death, heedlessness, and entrance into the fire of unbelief and divine wrath. In all the Books, Tablets and Scriptures, death, fire, lack of sight, hearing, and understanding is attributed to those who have not drunk of the pure cups of knowledge and whose hearts have not attained to the bounty of the Holy Spirit of the time; as it hath been previously mentioned: "They have hearts by which they understand not," etc.

22. In another place in the Gospel it is said: One day the father of one of the disciples of Jesus died. He spoke of it to His Holiness, begging permission to go perform burial and return. That Essence of Severance said: "Let the dead bury their dead." Similarly two people of Cufa went to His Holiness the Commander -- (Ali). One owned a house and wished to sell it; the other was the purchaser. They had decided that this transaction should take place and its agreement be written under the advice of His Holiness. That exponent of the divine command ordered the scribe to write: "A dead man hath bought from a dead man a house bounded by four limits; one extending toward the grave, one toward the tomb, one toward the sirat, and one either toward paradise or toward hell."

If these two souls had been quickened by Ali's trumpet of life and raised from the grave of heedlessness through love of His Holiness, "death" would certainly not have been applied to them. In no age and cycle hath the purpose of the Prophets and Holy Ones been other than the real life, real resurrection and real revival. By reflection upon this statement of His Holiness, what hath been intended by "grave," "tomb," "sirat," "paradise," and "hell" will be disclosed, but alas, all the people are veiled within the tomb of self and buried in the grave of passion. To resume; were ye to taste a little of the clear water of divine knowledge, ye would know that the real life is the life of heart and not the life of body. For both animals and men share in the life of the body. But this life is assigned to possessors of brilliant souls who drink from the ocean of faith and partake of the fruit of assurance. This life is not followed by death nor this immortality by mortality; as it is said: "A true believer is alive both in this world and in the world to come." If by "Life" be meant the outward life of body, it is evident that death overtakes it. There are likewise other statements recorded in all the books, which indicate this exalted fact and lofty word. <p33>

23. In like manner thou seest in the present day that notwithstanding the Sun of Significances, all the people both high and low are clinging to the dark beetles and satanic appearances, continually asking them intricate questions, while they, from lack of knowledge, answer in a way that will not impair their outward possessions. It is evident a beetle itself hath acquired no portion from the breeze of the muck of eternity nor stepped into the Ridvan of ideal myrtles, therefore how can it convey the odor of perfume to the nostrils? This hath been and will forever be the condition of these servants. Only those who advance toward God and turn away from the appearances of the Satan will attain to the traces of God. Thus God hath ordained the decree of the Day by the Pen

of Grandeur upon a tablet concealed behind the veil of might. Shouldst thou heed these explanations and reflect upon their outward and inward (meanings), thou wilt comprehend all the intricate questions which in this day have become a bar between the servants and the knowledge of the Day of Judgment. Then thou wilt not need to question. We hope, if it please God, thou wilt not return from the shore of the divine ocean deprived and thirsty, and from the sanctuary of eternal desire destitute. Now what will your effort and exertion accomplish?

24. To resume: The purpose of these clear explanations is to prove the dominion of that King of Kings. Now be just as to which is mightier and greater; this dominion which through one word hath so much power, prevalence and grandeur, or the dominion of kings who, after protecting their subjects and the poor, are for a number of days outwardly obeyed by the people who in heart reject and oppose?

If the purpose of dominion be outward rule and temporal sway and power whereby the people are subdued and to which they outwardly bow and submit -- so that the friends are tranquillized and honored and the enemies debased and degraded -- how can such form of dominion be true concerning the Lord of Might, in whose name is unquestionably the sovereignty and whose majesty and grandeur are acknowledged by all? For thou dost witness how most of the earth is in possession of His enemies and all are working against His good-pleasure, disbelieving, rejecting, and turning away from that which He hath commanded and inclining toward and practising that which He hath forbidden; while His friends are always suffering in the hands of enemies. All this <p34> is clearer than the sunlight. Then know, O thou questioning seeker, that outward dominion hath never been nor will be esteemed of importance by God and His Holy Ones.

25. These Essences of Being are ready to expend all; that is, they sacrifice life, property, souls and self in the path of the Friend, and to them no station is more beloved than this. The lovers have no wish except the good-pleasure of the Beloved, and seek no aim except the meeting of the Desired One.

Should we wish to explain a sprinkling of the mysteries of martyrdom and the fruits thereof, these Tablets undoubtedly would not suffice nor could they bring it to an end. We hope, if it please God, a breeze of mercy may blow and the tree of existence be clothed with a new robe through the divine spring, that we may apprehend the mysteries of the divine wisdom and through His providence become independent of the knowledge of all things. No one hath yet appeared who hath attained to this station except a few who are not renowned. The future will be what the divine judgment demands and what appears from within the tent of decree. Thus we explain unto thee the wonders of the Cause of God and reveal unto thee the melodies of Paradise that thou mayest peradventure attain to the sources of knowledge and partake of the fruits of wisdom. Consequently it should be known to a certainty that although these Suns of Grandeur dwell upon the earth, yet they abide upon the most great throne; although they may not possess a single coin, yet they soar upon the summit of wealth; and while afflicted in the hands of the enemy, they are seated upon the

right hand of power and dominion. They are established and rest upon the throne of eternal might, although outwardly in the utmost humiliation; and occupy the seat of sovereignty and authority while apparently in the extremity of weakness.

Thus one day Jesus, the son of Mary, seated Himself upon a chair and made explanations through the melodies of the Holy Spirit the import of which is this: "O people! My food is from the herbs of the earth, by which I satisfy my hunger; my bed is the bare ground; during the night my lamp is the light of the moon and I have no steed but my feet. Who upon earth is richer than I?" I swear by God that a hundred thousand wealths revolve around this poverty and a hundred thousand kingdoms of glory seek after this lowliness. <p35>

The poverty and wealth, lowliness and honor, dominion, power, and such like things considered as important by these worthless creatures, have no mention in that court; as it is said: "O men, ye have need of God, but God is self-sufficient." (K. S. 35) Consequently by "wealth" is intended independence of all else save God and by "poverty" the need of God.

Another day, Jesus the son of Mary was surrounded by the Jews. They wished His Holiness to acknowledge having made the claim to Messiahship and Prophethood in order that they might declare Him infidel and sentence Him to death. Finally they led that Sun of the heaven of significances into the presence of Pilate the Caiaphas, the greatest of the doctors of that age. All the divines were present at that meeting and a large multitude assembled for the purpose of beholding, deriding and annoying Him. No matter how much they enquired that perchance they might hear Him acknowledge, His Holiness held His peace nor did He choose to answer. At length a wretch arose and came opposite His Holiness, saying: "I adjure thee, didst thou not say, 'I am the Messiah of God, I am the King of Kings, I am the possessor of a Book and I am the destroyer of the Sabbath day'?" His Holiness, lifting up His blessed head, said: "Dost thou not see that verily the Son of Man is seated upon the right hand of power and might?" This He said, although no accessories of power were outwardly found with Him, but an inward power which pervaded all in the heavens and earth. No need to relate what they inflicted upon Him and how they dealt with Him after this saying.

It is also recorded in the Gospel of Luke that another day His Holiness passed by one of the Jews who was afflicted with palsy and laid upon a couch. When he saw His Holiness, he recognized Him by His appearance and began to entreat. His Holiness said, "Arise from thy bed; verily thy sins are forgiven." Several Jews who were present at that place began to murmur, saying, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Then Christ perceived their thoughts and said: "Whether it is easier to say, arise, take up thy bed, or to say thy sins be forgiven thee? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sin," etc. This is the real sovereignty and power of the Holy Ones of God. By all these statements repeatedly cited from different places and instances it is intended that ye <p36> may be informed of the interpretations of the words of the Chosen Ones of God that perchance the foot may not slip and the heart may

not be troubled by certain statements.

26. The utmost divine bounty ordained for the servants is the "Meeting of God" and His knowledge, which are promised to all. This is the extreme bounty of the Pre-existent Bountiful One for His servants, and the fulness of absolute grace for His creatures.

They have denied all these verses indicating the "Meeting" which is the strongest decree found in the Heavenly Books, and have deprived themselves of this lofty and exalted position and this excellent and glorious rank.

Some say that by this is meant the meeting of the splendor of God in the Day of Resurrection.

If they assert that the "Universal Splendor" is intended, this exists in all things, for we have formerly demonstrated that all things show forth the splendor of that Ideal King, and that the traces of the effulgence of the sun of the Manifestor exist and are visible in the mirrors of beings.

Nay, if the spiritual and divine eye of man be opened, he will see that nothing exists without the appearance of the splendor of that Ideal King.

For thou dost perceive that all contingent and created things express the manifestation and emanation of that Ideal Light, and dost behold the doors of the divine Ridvan opened in all things for seekers to enter the cities of intelligence and wisdom, and attained ones to pass into the gardens of knowledge and power.

In every garden the bride of significances is seen seated in the chambers of words, with full adornment and grace.

Most of the verses of the Qur'an indicate and show forth this spiritual fact.

The saying, "Neither is there anything which doth not celebrate His praise" is eloquent testimony thereto; and "everything have we computed and written down" is a faithful witness thereof.

If by "Meeting of God" is meant the meeting of these splendors, then all the people have attained to the meeting of the eternal countenance of that Peerless King.

Why, then, is it assigned to the Day of Resurrection?

But if they say the purpose is the "Special Splendor," the state interpreted by some of the Sufis as the "Most Holy Outpouring"; if it is in the Essence Itself, it hath been eternally in the divine knowledge.

Supposing this hypothesis to be admitted; in this sense "Meeting" cannot become true of any one, because this state is realized in the innermost of the Essence, unto which <p37> none can ever attain! "The way is barred, and seeking after it is forbidden."

The minds of the near ones cannot soar to this station, how much less can the intellects of the limited and veiled ones!

If they say it is the "Secondary Splendor," which is interpreted as the "Holy Outpouring," this is unquestionably in the world of creation, that is, in the world of primal manifestation and original emanation.

This station is assigned only to His Prophets and Holy Ones, because no greater and mightier than they have appeared in the realm of existence; and all confess and acknowledge this fact.

These are the sources and manifestors of all the eternal attributes and divine names, and these are the mirrors which fully express.

All that refers to them is in reality referred to His Highness, the "Manifest and Invisible One."

Knowledge of the origin and attainment thereto can only be achieved by knowing and attaining to these Beings who shine forth from the Sun of Truth.

Consequently, by meeting these Holy Lights, the "Meeting of God" is attained; through their knowledge the knowledge of God, and by their faces the face of God.

From the fact that these abstracted Essences are the first, the last, the manifest, and the hidden, it is proved of that Sun of Truth, that He is verily, "the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden," and likewise the other exalted names and lofty attributes. Therefore, whosoever is favored by these shining and glorious Lights and hath attained to these luminous and radiant Suns during every Manifestation hath attained the "Meeting of God," and entered the city of eternal and immortal life. This "Meeting" can not be realized by any except in the Resurrection Day, which is the rise of the Self of God in His Universal Manifestation.

This is the meaning of that "resurrection" recorded and stated in all Books, and which Day hath been announced to all. Consider, is there any day to be imagined greater, mightier and more excellent than this Day, that man should turn away from it and deprive himself of its bounties, which are pouring like the spring cloud from the presence of the Merciful? After it hath been proved with complete evidence that no day is greater than this Day, and no matter is mightier than this matter; and after all these sound and solid proofs which no one who is wise and sagacious can deny or avoid, how can man deprive himself of such great bounty through words of the doubting visionary? <p38>

O my brother, understand then the meaning of resurrection and purify thine ears from the saying of these rejected people. Shouldst thou step a little way into the worlds of severance, thou wilt testify that no day greater than this Day and no resurrection mightier than this Resurrection can be imagined, and that one deed in this Day is equivalent to deeds performed during a hundred thousand years -- nay, I ask pardon of God for this limitation, because deeds done in this Day are sanctified beyond any limited reward. As these worthless creatures have not understood the meaning of "Resurrection" and the "Meeting of God," they are therefore completely veiled from the bounty thereof. Although the purpose of learning and its anxieties is the attainment and knowledge of this

station, yet they are all occupied with outward learnings and desist not from them even for a moment; closing their eyes to the essence of knowledge and the knowable. It seems as if they had not drunk one drop from the ocean of divine knowledge nor attained a sprinkling of the cloud of the merciful bounty.

Consider, if one does not partake of the bounty of Meeting or the knowledge of the Manifestations of God, how can he be truly called learned, although he may have studied a thousand years, and possess all the limited and outward sciences. It is plainly evident that he cannot be said to possess knowledge. But if one hath not seen a single letter of learning, and hath attained to this mighty honor, he is undoubtedly accounted one of the divine men of learning, for he hath reached the furthermost point of knowledge and its highest degree.

This condition is also one of the signs of the Manifestation; as it is said: "He will make your highest to be the lowest, and your lowest to be the highest." Likewise it is said, "And we were minded to be gracious unto those who were weakened in the land, and to make them models of religion; and to make them the heirs (of the wealth of Pharaoh and his people)." (K. S. 28) It is witnessed in the present day how many of the divines, by reason of their denial, abide in the lowest planes of ignorance, their names erased from the book of the exalted and the learned; and how many of the ignorant, on account of their belief, have ascended to the highest horizon of knowledge, and their names are registered in the Tablets of Knowledge by the Pen of Power. Therefore, it is said, "Seeking after proof when the fact is attained is blamable, <p39> and occupying one's self with learning after reaching the object of knowledge, is to be censured." Say, O people of the earth, this is a fiery Youth who runneth in the wilderness of spirit, heralding unto you the lamp of God, and reminding you of a matter which is visible in concealment under the veils of light, from the horizon of Holiness in the region of Iraq.

27. O my friend, if thou soarest a little in the heavens of the significance of the Qur'an, and walkest upon the earth of divine knowledge unfolded therein, many doors of knowledge will be opened before thy face and thou wilt be assured that the very things which in this day prevent these servants from arriving at the shore of the eternal ocean, hindered the people during the Manifestation of the Point of the Qur'an from acknowledging and submitting to that Sun. Likewise thou wilt become informed of the mysteries of the "return" and "revival" and dwell in the loftiest chambers of security and assurance.

One day a number of the opponents of that peerless Beauty (Muhammad), who were deprived of the Ca'aba of the Eternal, said to Him by way of derision, "Surely God hath covenanted with us that we should not believe in (any) Messenger until (one) should come unto us with a sacrifice which should be consumed by fire." (K. S. 3) The import of this is that the Creator had covenanted with them that they should not believe in a Messenger unless he perform the miracle of Abel and Cain, that is, offer a sacrifice, and a fire come from heaven to consume it; as they had heard in the story of Abel, and which is recorded in the books. His Holiness said, in answer, "Messengers have already come unto you before me, with plain proofs and with the (miracle) which ye mention; why, therefore, have

ye slain them, if ye speak truth?" (K. S. 3) Now, be just; how could those servants who were in the age and cycle of His Holiness, be actually those in the age of Adam or other Prophets, when the interval between Adam and that time was several thousand years? Why did that Essence of Truthfulness attribute to the servants of His age the murder of Abel or other Prophets? Thou hast no other alternative except to ascribe falsehood and vain saying to His Holiness (which God forbid), or to say that those wicked ones were the same who contradicted the Prophets and Messengers in every age, and finally martyred them all.

Ponder carefully over this explanation, that the refreshing <p40> breeze of knowledge may blow from the city of the merciful and cause the soul to reach the garden of wisdom through the beautiful utterance of the Beloved One. As the heedless people did not understand the meanings of these perfect and eloquent explanations, and, according to their idea, did not find the answer consistent with the question, therefore they attributed lack of knowledge and hallucination to these essences of knowledge and reason.

Likewise in another verse, it is said in condemnation of the people of the age, "Although they had before prayed for assistance against those who believe not, yet when he came unto them whom they had known (to be from God), they would not believe in him; therefore, the curse of God shall be on the infidels." (K. S. 2) That is, this multitude who waged war and fought against the infidels for the sake of God, and who sought victory in order to assist His Cause, when the one whom they had known came unto them, denied him; therefore, the curse of God shall be upon the infidels! Consider how it is understood from this verse that the people of the time of His Holiness were the same people who in the days of each former Prophet strove and fought to promulgate the Law and spread the Cause of God, although the people of the time of Jesus and Moses were not actually the people of the age of His Holiness. Moreover those whom they had known formerly were Moses the possessor of the Pentateuch, and Jesus the possessor of the Gospel. Notwithstanding this, why did His Holiness say "when came unto them the one whom they had known" -- that is, Jesus or Moses -- they "denied Him?" As His Holiness was outwardly called by another name, that is, Muhammad, -- had appeared from another city and come in another language and law -- how then can the verse be proven and understood?

Comprehend thou the subject of "return"; how clearly it is revealed in the Qur'an; yet no one hath understood until the present day. What wilt thou say? If thou sayest that His Holiness was the return of the former Prophets, as is indicated by the verse, His companions must likewise be the return of the bygone companions, for the return of the former servants is also clearly shown in the mentioned verses. If they deny this, they have contradicted the text of the Book, which is the mightiest proof. Therefore in the same manner understand the fact concerning "return," "resurrection" and "revival" in the days of the appearance <p41> of the Divine Manifestations, so that thou mayest behold with the outward eye, the return of the Holy Souls in pure and brilliant bodies; and sanctify and purify the dusts of ignorance and darkened self by the water of

mercy from the knowledge of the merciful, that peradventure thou mayest distinguish and determine the highway of the morn of truth from the night of error, through the shining lamp, divine power and eternal guidance.

Furthermore, it is evident that the custodians of the Trust of the Unity appear in the temporal worlds with a new Command and a new Cause. As these Birds of the eternal throne descend from the heaven of the Divine Will, and all of them arise in the supreme, irresistible Command, therefore they are declared as one person and one essence. For they all drink from the chalice of the divine love and partake of the fruits of the tree of Oneness. These Manifestations of the True One have two stations. One is the station of pure abstraction and the essence of singleness. In this station, if thou dost name and designate all of them by one name and office, it is not amiss. As it is said, "We make no distinction at all between His Messengers." (K. S. 2) For all of them summon the people to the divine unity and announce the Kawther of infinite bounty and grace. All are dignified with the robe of Prophethood and honored by the mantle of glory. Therefore it is said by the "Point of the Qur'an," "I am all the prophets." Likewise He says "I am the first Adam, Noah, Moses and Jesus." The same statement hath been made by the Ali'ite Countenance. Similar saying indicating the unity of these Points of Oneness have appeared from the sources of the eternal utterances and treasuries of the pearls of knowledge; as recorded in the Books.

These Countenances are the points of the Command and the dawning-places of the Decree. The Command is sanctified from the veils of plurality and contingency of number. Thus it is said: "We have but one Command." Therefore as the Command is one, the Manifestations of the Command are also necessarily one.

To resume: It is evident and certain that all the Prophets are the Temples of the Command of God, who have appeared in different garments, and if thou lookest with an attentive eye thou wilt find all of them dwelling in one Ridvan, soaring in one sky, seated upon one carpet, speaking one speech and enjoining one Command. <p42>

This is the unity of those Essences of Existence and illimitable and inseparable Suns. Consequently if one of these Holy Manifestations says, "I am the return of all the Prophets," it is true. Likewise in every subsequent Manifestation, the return of the former Manifestation is realized. As the return of Prophets is proven consistent and in conformity with verses and traditions, the return of the holy ones is also certain and accomplished. This return is too clear for need of proof and argument. For instance, consider that among the Prophets was Noah. When He was appointed to Prophethood and arose in the Cause with divine mission, those who believed in Him and acknowledged His command were indeed honored with new life, and a new spirit and life became true of them. For previous to believing in God and submitting to the Manifestation of Himself, they had the greatest attachment to temporal effects and properties, such as wife, children, food, drink and the like, to such an extent that they spent night and day in seeking vanities and means of enjoyment, and from these things, before arriving at the sea of faith, they

were so firm and rooted in the limitations of their fathers and forefathers, and in following their ceremonies and laws, that if sentenced to death, they would rather submit than allow the change of a single letter of the habitual customs which prevailed among the multitude.

The same people, notwithstanding these limited veils and above-mentioned customs, as soon as they drank the choice wine of faith from the chalice of assurance in the hands of the Manifestations of the praised One, were so transformed that they would abandon wives, children, property, incumbrances, life and belief, yea, all else save God. They were so overcome by excess of longing for God, and by ecstasies of eternal joy, that they would not value the world and all therein as a wisp of straw. Can they not be declared as of "new creation" and "return"? Likewise it was witnessed that these souls, before attaining to the wonderful and new favor of God, would protect their lives with a hundred thousand plans and schemes from threatenings of destruction, until for instance, they would flee from a fox and avoid a thorn. But after being honored with the mighty security and great providence, they would voluntarily expend a hundred thousand lives; nay rather, their blessed souls despised the cage of the body, <p43> and a single one of these hosts would fight against a multitude. If these souls were the same former souls, how could such things contrary to human tendencies and opposed to bodily desire proceed from them?

To resume: The fact is clear that it is impossible for such deeds and actions which have no similitude to former deeds and actions, to appear and be witnessed in the realm of existence, without a divine change and transformation; for their agitation was changed to composure, their doubt turned to assurance, and their fear transformed into courage. This is the virtue of the divine Elixir which transforms the servants in an instant.

For instance, consider the substance copper: which if it is protected in its own mine from super-abundance of dryness, will in seventy years[1] attain to the state of gold -- although some consider copper itself to be gold, which through super-abundance of dryness, hath become disordered and hath not reached its own state.
[1 Seventy years is equivalent to "three score years and ten," the life of man. This reference to copper and gold is symbolic, copper being human reason, while gold is spiritual illumination.]

To be brief: a perfect elixir, however, will cause the substance copper to attain the state of gold in an instant, and to traverse the seventy-year stages in a moment. Could it be said that this gold is copper or that it hath not attained the condition of gold, while the test is at hand to differentiate and distinguish the qualities of gold from those of copper?

Likewise these would have traversed the earth-world in an instant through the divine Elixir, entered the worlds of sanctity, and in one step reached the divine placeless from the limited world of place. An effort is needed that thou mayest attain this Elixir which in an instant causes the west of ignorance to reach the east of knowledge, makes the gloominess of the dark night attain to

the brilliant morning, guides the remote one in the wilderness of doubts to the fountain of nearness and assurance, and directs the mortal temples to the Ridvan of immortality. Now if it be true to declare this gold copper, it will also be true and justifiable to declare these servants to be the same as before they had attained to the Faith.

O brother, through these clear, perfect and complete explanations, the mysteries of "new creation," "revival," and "resurrection" <p44> are manifest and evident without veil and covering. If it please God, thou wilt cast off the old garment from body and soul through the unseen confirmations, and be honored with the new and immortal robe.

Therefore in every succeeding Manifestation, those souls who preceded all in the earth in faith, drank the clear water of knowledge from the Beauty of Oneness, and ascended to the loftiest summits of faith, assurance and severance, can be declared to be the return of the former persons who in name, office, deed, word and condition had attained to these states in the preceding Manifestation.

For that which appeared from the former servants, appeared and became manifest in the subsequent ones.

If, for example, a garden of roses be in the east of the earth, and that kind of rose also cometh forth from another branch in the west, the name "rose" is applied to it.

In this case it is not in respect to the limitations of the branch and its form, but on account of the fragrance and odor which are manifest in both.

Consequently, sanctify and purify thy gaze from outward limitations, that thou mayest behold them all in one name, one office, one essence, and one truth, and that thou mayest perceive the mysteries of the "return" of the Words in the revealed Words.

Reflect a little upon the companions at the time of the Point of the Qur'an; how they cut themselves from the whole world, were purified, sanctified and severed from all human tendencies and selfish desires through the pure fragrances of His Holiness, and preceded all the people of the earth in attaining the honor of Meeting, which was identical with the Meeting of God.

For ye have heard how they sacrificed life before that Manifestation of the Glorious One.

Behold the return of the same firmness, steadfastness and severance in the companions of the Point of the Bayan, for ye have witnessed how these companions have hoisted the banner of severance upon the summit of inaccessibility, through the wonders of the generosity of the Lord of Lords.

To be brief: These lights have appeared from one lamp and these fruits have grown from one tree. In reality no difference is perceived and no change is visible. "All this is from the bounty of God; He bestoweth it upon whomsoever of His creatures He wisheth." God willing, we will avoid the land of negation

and reach the sea of affirmation, so that we may perceive the worlds <p45> of union, division, oneness, separation, limitation and divine abstraction with an eye sanctified from elements and opposites, and soar upward to the highest horizon of the nearness and sanctity of the significances.

Though all the Prophets, chosen ones, and holy ones, have commanded on the part of God that the people should see and hear with their own eyes and ears, yet disregarding the exhortations of the Prophets, they have followed and will follow their divines. Should a needy and poor one destitute of the clothing of men of learning say -- "O people: Follow the Messengers of God" (K. S. 36) -- they will wonder exceedingly at such a statement and answer -- "When all these learned and cultured men with outward leadership and rich and magnificent apparel have not understood and have failed to distinguish truth from falsehood, how couldst thou and those like thee understand?" If number and the garb of learning be a proof and indication of knowledge and truth, the former peoples* should prove more worthy and superior, for <pF1 Adherents of former religions, who deny a Manifestation in His Day.> they are greater and more numerous.

The point is also clear and evident that the divines of the age have prevented people from the path of truth at the time of the appearance of the holy Manifestations. This is recorded and stated in all the Heavenly Books and Epistles. No Prophet was sent forth who did not become the object of hatred, denial, rejection and execration by the divines. May God denounce them for what they have done formerly and are now doing! What veils of glory are greater than these temples of error? By God, removing these veils of glory is the greatest affair, and rending them asunder is the mightiest action! May God strengthen us and you, O concourse of Spirit, that ye may succeed in this in the time of "Mustagath" and be not veiled from the Meeting of God in His Day.

Consider how many mysteries are hidden in the tents of the knowledge of God, and what jewels of His wisdom are concealed in the treasuries of preservation, so that thou mayest be convinced that there hath been and will be neither beginning nor end to His creation. The space of His destiny is too vast to be limited by explanation or traversed by the bird of minds and His ordained decrees are beyond attainment by any comprehension. His creation hath been from the "Beginning before which there <p46> is no beginning," and no "End" hath overtaken it. The Manifestations of His beauty will be until the interminable End; and no Beginning hath beheld Him.

Briefly: O my beloved, the melody of the divine world is sanctified above limitation by earthly hearing and minds. How can the ant of existence step into the court of the Adored One? Yet weak souls deny these abstruse explanations and reject similar traditions, through lack of understanding. Yea, only the spiritually minded can understand this. Say -- this is an end to which there is no end in the creation, and a beginning for which there is no beginning in the world of origin. So, O concourse of the earth, ye may behold the splendor of the end in the Manifestations of the beginning.

28. We have formerly explained two stations for the Suns rising from the Day-springs of Divinity. One is that station of unity and condition of oneness, as previously mentioned. "We make no distinction between any of them." (K. S. 2) The other station is that of distinction, creation, and human limitations. In this station, for each one a temple is designated, a mission is indicated, a manifestation is decreed, and certain limitations are assigned. Each one is named by a certain name, characterized by a quality, and appointed to a new Cause and Law; as it is said: "These are the Messengers; We have preferred some of them before others; Some of them hath God spoken unto, and hath exalted the degree of others of them. And we gave unto Jesus, the son of Mary, manifest signs and strengthened Him with the Holy Spirit." (K. S. 2)

It is due to the variance of these stations and conditions that different words and explanations appear from those Fountains of Divine Knowledge, but in reality all the intricate divine subjects are regarded as one utterance by the knowing. As most of the people are not acquainted with the mentioned conditions, they are troubled and confounded by the different words of those Temples of Unity.

To be brief: It is evident that all these differences of words are due to the differences of stations. Therefore in the station of oneness and rank of singleness, pure sublimity, divinity, unity and absolute deity have been and are applied to those Essences of Existence, because they are all seated upon the throne of the "Manifestation of God," that is, the appearance of God <p47> is made manifest by their appearance and the beauty of God is revealed by their beauty. Thus it is that melodies of divinity have proceeded from these Temples of Unity.

But in the second station, which is that of distinction, separation, limitation, and temporal conditions and indications, they show forth absolute servitude, real need and utter lowliness; as it is said, "Verily, I am the servant of God," and, "Verily, I am only a man like you." (K. S. 41)

If it be heard from the perfect Manifestations "Verily I am God," it is true and without doubt; for it hath been repeatedly demonstrated that through their manifestation, attributes, and names, the manifestation of God, the attribute of God, and the name of God, appear upon earth. Thus it is said, "Verily, they who swear fealty unto thee, swear fealty unto God, etc." In this station, all are sent forth from the presence of that Ideal King and Eternal Essence. If all of them raise the call, "I am the Seal of the Prophets," it is also true and beyond reach and access of uncertainty, because all are accounted as one soul, one essence, one spirit, one body, one command, and are the Manifestors of the states of the "Beginning" the "End," the "First," the "Last," the "Manifest," the "Hidden" of that ideal Spirit of Spirits and eternal Essence of Essences. Likewise if they say, "We are the servants of God," this is also confirmed and evident, for outwardly they have appeared with the utmost degree of servitude.

No one hath the courage to appear in the world with that manner of servitude. Thus those Essences of Existence, when submerged in the seas of eternal

holiness and when ascending to the summits of the significances of the Ideal King, uttered declarations of unity and deity. Were one to consider attentively, he will find that even in this state they witnessed in themselves the utmost humility and lowliness in presence of the Absolute Existence and Real Life, as though accounting themselves utter non-existence and deeming their own mention in that court as polytheism. For in this station any mention would be an indication of being and existence, and this is considered a great error by the attained ones. How much greater (error) to mention aught else, or that the heart, tongue, mind, and soul be occupied in any other mention than the Beloved One; that the eye should look upon other than His beauty, the ear hear other than His melody, or the feet walk in other than His path. <p48>

At this time the breeze of God is wafted and the spirit of God hath surrounded. The pen is withheld from motion and the tongue hath ceased utterance. Briefly: In this station the declaration of divinity and the like have appeared from them, while in the station of messengership they have declared prophethood. Likewise in every station they have made a declaration expedient thereto and have attributed all these to themselves; (declarations) concerning the world of command, the world of creation, the worlds of divinity, and the worlds of phenomena. Therefore whatever they may say and claim, including divinity, deity, prophethood, messengership, successorship, imamat or servitude is true and without doubt. Consequently these proven statements should be reflected upon, that no one may be overtaken in the sayings of the Manifestations of the Invisible and Dawning-places of Holiness.

Briefly: One must ponder over the Words of the Sun of Truth, and if they are not understood, they should be submitted to those who are custodians of the depositories of knowledge, in order that they may explain and remove the difficulty. One should not interpret the Holy Words according to his own inclination and desire, proceed to reject and deny -- as do the doctors and theologians of the age who are seated upon the platform of knowledge and learning, and who call ignorance knowledge and oppression justice. Should they ask the Ideal Sun concerning their imaginary notions and find the answer at variance with what they have conceived or understood from the book of one similar to themselves, they unquestionably would ascribe ignorance to that mine and source of knowledge. This hath happened in every age.

For instance, when they asked that Lord of the Existence (Muhammad) concerning the phases of the moon, He answered by the command of God: "They are times appointed unto men." (K. S. 2) Hearing this, they attributed ignorance to His Holiness.

Nay, rather, knowledge is that which proceeds from those mines of divine wisdom and those depositories of eternal knowledge. "Knowledge is one point, but the ignorant have multiplied it," is a proof of this; and "Knowledge is a light which God sheds into the heart of whomsoever He wisheth" confirms this statement. <p49>

In this day, divers in the sea of eternal knowledges and dwellers in the ark of

divine wisdom forbid people from studying vain sciences. Their shining breasts, praise be to God, are purified from these allusions and sanctified from these veils. We have consumed the greatest veil, in the saying, "Learning is the greatest veil," with the fire of the love of the Friend, and have raised another tent. And we glory in this, that we have burned the "veils of glory," praise be to God, with the fire of the beauty of the Beloved, and have placed none other than the desired One in the mind and heart. Neither do we adhere to any knowledge but His knowledge, nor cling to anything knowable save the splendor of His lights.

29. As it hath been shown that no one can enjoy the melodies of the divine nightingale save those who are custodians thereof, it is necessary and obligatory for every one to submit the difficulties of the divine questions and intricacies in the references of the Dawning-places of Holiness, to the possessors of brilliant hearts and the bearers of the mysteries of unity; so that the questions may be solved through the supreme confirmation and divine bounties, and not by the assistance of acquired sciences.

But O my brother, when a seeker intends to turn the step of search and journeying into the path of the knowledge of the King of Pre-existence, he must first cleanse and purify his heart, -- which is the place of the appearance and emanation of the splendor of the hidden mysteries of divinity -- and he must cleanse and refine his breast -- which is the throne for the accession and establishment of the love of the Eternal Beloved -- from all the gloomy dusts of acquired learnings and from the allusions of satanic appearances.

He must likewise sanctify his heart from attachment to water and clay -- that is, from all phantasmal forms and spectral images -- in such manner that no trace of love or hatred may remain in the heart, lest that love may cause him to incline toward a direction without guide, or that hatred prevent him from another direction; just as in this day, most are bereft of the immortal Face and of the threshold of meanings, because of these two tendencies, and are grazing shepherdless in the deserts of error and oblivion.

He should at all times trust in God, and turn away from the creatures; be severed and detached from the world of dust and united with the Lord of Lords; not preferring his own self before any one, but cleansing the tablet of the heart from pride and vainglory; <p50> attaching the heart to patience and self-restraint; observing silence and avoiding useless speech; for the tongue is a smoldering fire and loquacity is a deadly poison.

Material fire devours bodies, but the fire of the tongue consumes souls and minds.

The effect of the former vanishes in an hour, but the latter continues for a century.

He should consider backbiting as error, and never step into that court, for backbiting extinguishes the brilliant light of the heart and numbs the life of the soul.

He should be content with little and free from avarice; profiting by the companionship of the severed ones and regarding seclusion from haughty and worldly people as a benefit.

At dawn he should be engaged in commemorations, seeking for that Beloved One with the utmost earnestness and power; consuming heedlessness with the fire of love and praise; passing over all else save God with the swiftness of lightning; bestowing a portion upon the destitute, and not refusing benevolence and favor to the unfortunate.

He should show kindness to the animals; how much more to mankind, (especially) to the people of the Bayan; refusing not his life for the Beloved and turning not away from the True One when reproached by the creatures.

He should not wish for others what he doth not wish for himself, nor say that which he will not fulfil; keeping aloof from evil doers with all determination, and asking the forgiveness of God in their behalf; condoning the sinners and despising them not, for the end is not known.

Many a sinner who is favored with the essence of faith at the time of death, drinks the wine of immortality and hastens to the Supreme Concourse; while many a believing and obedient one is estranged at the time of the soul's departure, and dwells in the lowest abyss of fire.

Briefly: by all these sound explanations and valid references, it is meant that the traveller and seeker should consider all else save God mortal and account all but the Adored One as nothing.

When the lamp of search, effort, longing, fervor, love, rapture, attraction and devotion is enkindled in the heart, and the breeze of love blows forth from the direction of unity, the darkness of error, doubt and uncertainty will be dispelled and the lights of knowledge and assurance will encompass all the pillars of existence. Then the ideal Herald will dawn as the true morn from the Divine City, with spiritual glad tidings, and awaken the heart, soul and spirit from the sleep of negligence with the trumpet of <p51> knowledge. Then the favors and confirmations of the eternal Holy Spirit will impart such a new life that one will find himself the possessor of a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind, and will direct his attention to the clear, universal signs and to the hidden individual secrets. With the new eye of God he will see a door open in every atom for attainment to the stations of positive knowledge, certain truth and evident light, and will perceive in all things the mysteries of the splendor of Oneness and the traces of the Manifestation of Eternity.

I swear by God, should the traveller in the path of salvation and the seeker for the summits of righteousness attain to this supreme and lofty state, he will inhale the fragrance of the True One from remote distances and discern the brilliant morn of guidance from the Day-springs of all things.

Every atom and object will direct him to the Beloved and the Desired One.

He will become so discerning that he will distinguish truth from falsehood as

the sun from shadow.

For example; if the breeze of truth should blow forth from the east of creation, he will surely inhale it in the west of emanation.

Likewise, he will distinguish all the signs of the True One -- such as wonderful words, incomparable deeds, and brilliant actions -- from the deeds, actions and traces of all else, just as the jeweller distinguishes the gem from the stone, and man the spring from autumn and heat from cold.

When the head of the soul is purified from the ailment (lit. cold) of the contingent and existent, it will unfailingly discover the fragrance of the Beloved from distant stations, arrive at the city of the assurance of His Highness the Beneficent, through the effect of this fragrance, and behold the wonders of the wisdom of His Highness the Most Holy, in that spiritual city.

It will detect the hidden knowledges from the forms of the leaves of the tree of that city, hear the glorification and praise of the Lord of Lords from its soil, with the outward and inward ears, and perceive the mysteries of "advent" and "return" with the outward eye.

What shall we mention of the signs, tokens, appearances and splendors ordained in that city, by the command of the King of Names and Attributes!

It quencheth thirst without water, and increaseth the heat of the love of God without fire.

The ideal consummate wisdom is hidden in every plant, and a thousand nightingales of speech are in ecstasy and rapture upon every rose branch.

The mystery of the fire of Moses is revealed in its wonderful tulips, and the breath of <p52> the Holy Spirit of Jesus emanates from its fragrances of holiness.

It bestows wealth without gold and grants immortality without death.

A paradise is concealed in every leaf, and a hundred thousand wisdoms are treasured in every one of its chambers.

Those who earnestly endeavor in the way of God, after severance from all else, will become so attached to that city that they will not abandon it for an instant.

They will hear conclusive proofs from the hyacinth of that assembly and will receive clear arguments from the beauty of the rose and the melody of the nightingale.

This city is renewed and adorned every one thousand years, more or less.

Therefore, O my friends, we must make an efforts to attain to that city and remove the veils of glory, through divine favors and lordly compassion, so that we may sacrifice the withered soul in the path of the New Beloved, and show forth a hundred thousand supplications and humiliations in order to be favored with that attainment.

This city is none other than the "Divine Book" in every age.

For instance, in the age of Moses it was the Pentateuch; in the time of Jesus, the Gospel; in the day of Muhammad the Messenger of God, the Qur'an; in this age, the Bayan;[1] and in the Day of "Him whom God shall send forth,"
[1 In this Tablet Baha'u'llah wrote as a follower of the Bab, interpreting the religious books of the past with relation to their fulfilment in the Bab as the "Herald," or "First Point."]

His Book, which is the return of all the Books and the guardian. In these cities, sustenance is provided and eternal blessings are appointed. They bestow spiritual food and provide preexistent benefit. They confer the wealth of unity upon the people of abstraction, bestow a portion upon the portionless, and favor the wanderers in the desert of ignorance with the cup of knowledge. In these cities are treasured and deposited the guidance, favor, knowledge, understanding, faith and assurance of all in the heavens and earth.

30. To resume: We must not depart from the irrefutable command of God and the fixed decree of the Most High but must acknowledge the wonderful Books. And it is evident that whosoever hath not acknowledged the Qur'an hath not in reality accepted the Books which preceded it. Should we mention the concealed meanings and explain the hidden mysteries thereof, time undoubtedly would not bring them to a conclusion and the world could not bear them. God testifieth to what we say! <p53>

Consider how great is the value and how paramount the importance of the verses in which God hath completed His perfect argument, consummate proof, dominant power and penetrating will. In the declaration of His proof, that King of Unity hath not conjoined anything with them, for among proofs and evidence, verses are like unto the sun, while all others are as stars. To the people they are everlasting proof, fixed argument, and shining light from the presence of that Ideal King. No excellence equals them and nothing precedes them. They are the treasury of divine pearls and the depository of the mysteries of unity. They are the strong thread, the firm rope, the most secure handle and the inextinguishable light. Through them flows the river of the divine knowledges, and bursts the fire of the consummate Wisdom of the Eternal. This is a fire from which two effects proceed at the same time: It creates the heat of love within the people of faith, and produces the cold of heedlessness within the people of hatred. O friend, we must not depart from the command of God, but acquiesce and submit to that which He hath appointed to be His proof.

As the Jews in the time of Moses exchanged the heavenly Table for such foul things as garlic and onions, likewise these people sought to exchange the revealed verses for impure and unclean imaginations. Similarly it is seen in this day that although the ideal Table is descending from the heaven of divine mercy and from the clouds of celestial bounty, and although the seas of life are flowing and moving in the Ridvan of Paradise by the command of the Creator of all things, yet they are gathered like dogs around dead bodies, and are contented with a briny lake which is but bitter salt. Praise be to God! One is

greatly astonished at such servants, who seek for proof after the banners of the proven are hoisted; who cling to the allusions of learning after the sun of knowledge hath appeared. It is like asking the sun for proof of its light, or the vernal shower for argument to demonstrate its bounty. The proof of the sun s its light which shines forth and encompasses the world; and the argument of the shower is its bounty which renews the world with a fresh mantle. Yea! The blind realize no effect in the sun but heat, and a barren soil knoweth no bounty from the vernal mercy.

Lend not thine ear to the vain statement of the servants who say that "the Book and verses cannot be proof to the common people <p54> because they neither understand nor comprehend them." The Qur'an is a proof to the East and the West. How could it be a proof, if the power of understanding it were not possessed by the people? According to their statement, none would be required to know God, nor would it be necessary; for the knowledge of Him is greater than the knowledge of His Book; and the common people would not possess the capacity to comprehend it.

To be brief: This statement is extremely vain and inadmissible, and emanated from pride and arrogance for the purpose of keeping the people afar from the Ridvan of the good pleasure of God, and grasping their reins tightly. Before God these common people are accepted and approved above the learned who have turned away from the True One. Understanding the divine Words and comprehension of the utterances of the Ideal Doves have no connection with outward learning, but depend upon purity of heart, chastity of soul, and freedom of spirit. For at the present time there are some servants who have not seen a single letter of the forms of learning, yet they are seated upon the summit of knowledge, the gardens of their hearts adorned with roses of wisdom and tulips of insight, through the cloud of the divine bounty. Blessed are the sincere ones through the lights of the Great Day!

31. Consequently understand and be convinced that in every age, the people clinging to a verse of the Book, have made vain statements that no other Prophet should appear in the world. For instance, the divines of the Gospel sought to prove through a formerly mentioned verse (Matt. xxiv, 35), that the decree of the Gospel shall never be abolished and that no independent Prophet shall arise except to confirm the Law of the Gospel. Most of the nations are afflicted with the same soul-sickness. Ye behold how the people of the Qur'an, like former nations, are veiled by the statement: "The Seal of the Prophets." Although they themselves confess the saying: "Only God knoweth the interpretation thereof, and those who are well-grounded in knowledge" (K. S. 3), yet when He who is well-grounded in knowledge and who is their source, self, essence and identity explains it, finding it somewhat contrary to their desire, they say and do that which ye have heard. This proceeds only from the religious leaders, that is, from those who hold to no other God than desire, and find no creed <p55> except gold; who are veiled by the veils of learning and wander by reason of its error.

Hearken ye unto the divine voice of Holiness and the sweet melody of Eternity;

how He hath by intimation warned those who falsely accuse the verses, and how He hath rejected those who deny the holy Words.

Consider also the remoteness of these people from the Kawther of nearness, and the arrogance and denial of those bereft ones concerning that Beauty of Holiness.

Although that Essence of Grace and Beneficence directed those temples of nonentity to the court of pre-existence and guided those really destitute ones to the sacred road of wealth, yet some said, "This man is no other than one who blasphemously accuses the Lord of the creatures"; others said, "This man withholds people from the path of religion and faith"; and still others accused Him of madness and the like.

Similarly in this day ye witness what vain statements they have made against that Essence of Eternity, (the Bab) and what accusations and evils they have attributed to that source and mine of infallibility.

Although in the Divine Book and Supreme Holy Tablet God hath threatened those who falsely deny and reject the revealed verses, and hath announced good tidings to those who accept them, yet how the verses revealed from the new Heavens of Holiness have been contradicted, notwithstanding the eye of the universe hath not seen such bounty, nor the ear of the beings heard such favor as the flow and descent of verses like spring showers from the clouds of the mercy of the Merciful.

Each one of the Prophets "endowed with constancy" whose greatness of rank and loftiness of station are as clear and manifest as the sun was favored with but one Book which is still extant and its verses known.

But so much hath descended (in this Day) from the clouds of mercy of the Merciful that no one hath yet estimated it.

Twenty volumes thereof are now available what a quantity hath not yet come to hand!

How much hath been plundered and is fallen into hands of the infidels, and it is not known what they have done with it!

O brother! We must open the eye, reflect, and appeal to the Divine Manifestations, that perchance we may be advised by the clear exhortations of the Book and warned by the admonitions recorded in the Tablets; not contradicting the Revealer of the verses, but willingly obeying His command and accepting and <p56> submitting to His decree with all heart and soul, that we may enter the court of mercy and dwell upon the shore of bounty. "Verily, He is merciful and forgiving toward His servants." (K. S. 5)

32. Among the proofs demonstrating this Cause is that in every time and age, when the invisible Divinity appeared in a human temple, some people who were of no repute, and who had no attachment for the world or any other object, sought illumination from the Sun of Prophethood, were directed to the lights of the Moon of Guidance and attained to the Meeting of God. For this reason, the

divines of the age and the wealthy of the time derided; as is related of those erring ones: -- "Among His people the concourse of those who believe not said: 'We see thee (to be) no other than a man like unto us; and we do not see that any follow thee, except those who are the most abject among us, and are of a rash judgment, neither do we perceive any excellence in thee above us; but we deem you to be liars.'" (K. S. 11)

They objected to those Holy Manifestations, saying that no one followed them except the abject who were not worthy of credence. They meant that the learned, wealthy and distinguished among the people did not believe in them. By this proof and the like they sought to demonstrate the falsity of the possessor of the Truth. But in this most obvious Manifestation and most mighty Dominion, many of the rightly guided theologians were favored with the cup of nearness and meeting, and attained to the most great favor, abandoning the world for the sake of the Beloved One.

All these confessed, obeyed and were guided to that Sun of Manifestation (Bab), to such an extent that most of them abandoned property and family, and joined themselves to the good pleasure of the Professor of Glory.

They sacrificed their lives for the sake of the Beloved One and expended all they possessed.

Their breasts became targets for the arrows of the adversaries and their heads adorned the lances of the infidels.

No land remained which did not drink the blood of these abstracted souls and no sword that did not touch their necks.

Their deeds are a sufficient proof of the truth of their words.

Is not the testimony of these holy souls who in this manner gave life in the way of the Friend, and at the sacrifice of whose heart and soul the <p57> whole world was astonished, sufficient for these servants?

Is it not witness against the denial of other servants who gave religion for gold, exchanged immortality for mortality, bartered the Kawther of nearness for salt fountains, and who have no aim except seizing the property of people?

For it is seen that all of them are occupied with the vanities of the world and have kept afar from the Supreme Lord.

Now be just; whether is the testimony of those acceptable and credible whose deeds are consistent with their words, and whose outward is in accord with their inward, so that minds are bewildered at their deeds, and souls are astonished at their self-restraint, and at that which their bodies have endured?

Or is the testimony of these opposers who do not breathe except in selfish desire, and are not delivered from the cage of false imaginations? -- who life not the head from the bed by day except to strive as the dark bat in search of the mortal world, and do not rest by night save to labor in planning for

worthless things? -- who are occupied with selfish designs and are heedless of the divine decree? -- who by day exert themselves diligently for livelihood, and by night seek to adorn the means of the bed?

Is it justified by any law or creed that people should cling to the contradiction of these limited souls and ignore the faith and acknowledgement of souls who have sacrificed life, property, name, office, reputation and honor in the good pleasure of the True One?

33. Furthermore, the sign of truthfulness and that of falsehood is designated and appointed in the Book. The claims and pretensions of all the servants should be tested by this divine touchstone, in order that it may distinguish the truthful from the false. This touchstone is "Wish for death if ye say truth." (K. S. 2) Consider these sincere martyrs, the truth of whose words is testified by the texts of the Book, and all of whom as ye have seen, expended life, property, wife, children, and all they possessed, and ascended to the highest chambers of the Ridvan.

Yet the testimony of these lofty beings and severed souls in acknowledging this high and exalted Cause is not accepted; while the testimony of those people who have forsaken religion for gold and avoided the First Emanation (Bab) in order to occupy the high seat, is acceptable and allowable against this shining Light; even though all the people have known them, and have comprehended <p58> that they do not relinquish the least amount of outward temporal honor for the sake of the Divine Religion; how much less, life, property and the like!

Consider how, according to the text of the Book, the divine touchstone hath differentiated and distinguished between the pure and impure; still these people are not mindful, and in the sleep of heedlessness are occupied in gaining the mortal world and outward leadership.

"O Son of man, days have already passed thee during which thou hast been occupied with the imaginations and superstitions prompted by thine egotism. How long wilt thou be asleep upon thy couch? Lift thy head from slumber, for verily the sun hath already reached mid-day; that it may shine upon thee with the lights of Beauty."

But let it be known that not one of these learned men and doctors already mentioned had any outward leadership. It is impossible for well-known and influential divines of the age, seated upon the high seat of command and established upon the throne of authority to follow the True One; "except whomsoever thy Lord wishes." Save a few, no such thing hath appeared in the world, "for few of My servants are thankful." (K. S. 34) In this day not one of the noted divines, in the grasp of whose authority are the reins of the people, hath believed; nay rather, they have exerted themselves in suppression, with such hatred and denial that no ear hath heard and no eye hath seen (the like).

The Supreme Lord (Bab) (may the life of all else save Him be a sacrifice to Him!) hath especially revealed an Epistle to the learned divines of each city, wherein He hath mentioned in detail the grades of their opposition and

arrogance. "Wherefore, take example (from them), O ye who have sight." By mentioning this he intended that during the Manifestation of "Mustagath" in the next Resurrection, the people of the Bayan should not dispute (upon the ground) that "in the Manifestation of the Bayan, many of the learned divines did believe, therefore, why does not this happen in this Manifestation"; and that they, God forbid, should cling to such trivial notions and be deprived of the Divine Beauty. Yea, most of the mentioned divines were not renowned, but by the grace of God they all were sanctified and purified from outward leadership and temporal vanities. "This is through the Bounty of Go; He will give the same unto whom He pleaseth." <p59>

34. Another proof and argument which shines like a sun among proofs is the steadfastness of that Eternal Beauty (Bab) in the Divine Cause. Although He was in the age of youth, yet without fear, and regardless of any one He declared a matter contrary to the people of the earth, including the high and low, rich and poor, powerful and humble, king and subject. This has been heard by all. Could this be any other than the Divine Command and the confirmed Will of God? I swear by God, that should another entertain or think of such a matter, he would immediately be destroyed; and should be place the heart of all the world in his heart, he still would not venture this important measure unless by divine permission, or except his heart be united with the bounties of the Merciful and his soul confide in the supreme favors. To what do the people ascribe this? Do they attribute it to madness, just as they did with bygone Prophets, or say that He hath undertaken these things for outward leadership, and to possess the tinsel of the mortal world?

Praise be to God! In His first Book which He hath entitled "Ghayoumi Asma" (the Self-Subsistent of the Names) -- the first, greatest and most mighty of all Books -- He prophesied His own martyrdom. In a certain place He hath mentioned this verse: "O Thou remnant of God, I have wholly sacrificed myself unto thee; I have been pleased with curses in Thy path, and have wished nothing except death in Thy love; whereunto only God the Exalted, the Defender, the Pre-existent, is a sufficient witness!"

Likewise He craved martyrdom in "Tafsiri Ha" ("Interpretation of the letter H"), thus; "It is as if I heard a crier proclaiming in mine innermost heart -- 'Sacrifice thou in the path of God the thing which is most beloved by thee, even as Husayn (Peace be upon Him!) sacrificed Himself in My way'; and were I not regardful of this real mystery, by Him in whose hand is my soul, even if all the kings of the earth were assembled, they could not take from me a single letter, how much less can such servants who are of no importance in this and are of those who are rejected? That all may know the degree of my patience, resignation and sacrifice in the path of God."

Could it be asserted that the author of these words walks in any other than the path of God, or hath desired aught else save <p60> His good pleasure? In this verse, such a breeze of severance is hidden, that were it to blow, all the temples of existence would sacrifice life and relinquish soul. Consider the ignorance and extreme ingratitude of the people who have closed their eyes to

all this and run after dead bodies from whose bellies proceed the lamentations of the property of the faithful. Yet what unwarranted accusations they bring against the Dawning-places of Holiness! Thus do we mention unto thee that which is wrought by the hands of those who disbelieve, and who turn away from the Meeting of God in the Day of Resurrection.

Consider how, in His tender youth, this Sadrat of the Divine Ridvan delivered the Cause of God, and what steadfastness appeared from that Beauty of Oneness. Though all upon the earth combined to suppress Him, it produced no result. The more harm they inflicted upon that Sadrat of Blessedness, the more His fervor increased, and the fire of His love was enkindled. All these things are clear and no one denies them. Finally He surrendered His soul and hastened to the Supreme Friend.

Among the proofs of the Manifestation (Bab) were the power, domination and authority which proceeded from the person of that Manifestor of Existence and that Appearance of the Adored One throughout all regions of the earth. Although that Eternal Beauty appeared in Shiraz and removed the veil in the year "Sixty" yet in a short time the signs of the power, domination, sovereignty and authority of that essence of essences and ocean of oceans became so manifest throughout all countries, that from every city the traces, indications, evidences and tokens of that heavenly Sun became visible. Many a pure and chaste heart became expressive of that Eternal Sun, and many a sprinkling of enlightenment from that Sea of Intuitional Knowledge encompassed the contingent beings. Though the divines and grandees in every city and town arose to reject and suppress them, girded up loins of envy, hatred and injustice to eradicate them, killed many a holy one who was the essence of justice, by the accusation of injustice, and destroyed with severest torment many a temple of spirit which showed forth pure knowledge and deeds; yet each one of these beings was occupied in the commemoration of God until the verge of death, and soared in the sky of submission and resignation. He so influenced and transformed these beings that they had no purpose except His wish, and sought <p61> nothing but His command. They yielded to His good pleasure and attached their hearts to His thought.

Reflect a little; hath such a power and influence appeared from any other in the world? All these purified hearts and sanctified souls hastened with perfect resignation to the call of destiny. During occasions of complaint, nothing proceeded from them except thanksgiving, and in time of affliction, only submission was visible. It is an evident fact how much hatred, animosity and enmity the people of the earth entertained toward these companions, for they considered tormenting and oppressing these holy ideal countenances conducive to prosperity, salvation and everlasting success and gain. Hath such commotion appeared in the lands at any period from the age of Adam down to the present time, or such tumult been witnessed among the servants? Notwithstanding all their sufferings and injuries, they became the objects of the curses of the people and the subject of censure by all the servants. It seemed as if patience originated in the world of existence from their self-restraint, and

faithfulness appeared in the regions of the earth from their actions.

Briefly: Reflect upon all these events which have happened and things which have come to pass, in order that thou mayest be aware of the greatness and importance of the Cause. Then the spirit of tranquillity will be breathed in thy being through the favor of the Merciful, and thou wilt rest and abide upon the throne of assurance. The One God testifies that were ye to reflect a little, ye would find that aside from all these established facts and mentioned proofs, the very cursing, execration and rejection by the people of the earth are the greatest proof and weightiest evidence of the truth of these heroes of the field of severance and resignation. When thou dost reflect upon the contradictions of the people, including divines, men of learning, and the ignorant, thou wilt become more firm and steadfast in this Cause; for whatever hath happened was previously prophesied by the Mines of Institutional Knowledge and Sources of Eternal Command.

35. The signs and tokens of the True One are as apparent as the sun in mid-heaven, yet people are bewildered in the desert of blindness and ignorance. Notwithstanding that many of the Qur'anic verses and confirmed traditions indicate a new Law and Command, and a new Cause, they still await the promised Countenance to decree according to the law of the Qur'an; just as the Jews and <p62> Christians hold to the same saying. Among the texts pointing to a new Law and a new Dispensation are the statements in the prayer of Nudba: "Where is the One who is preserved to renew the precepts and regulations? Where is the One who is chosen to reform the religion and law?" It is also said in the Zeyarat (visiting tablet written by Ali): "Peace be upon the new True One." Abu-Abd 'Allah (sixth Imam) was asked concerning the character of the Mahdi: "What will be His character?" He (Muhammad) and He will destroy whatever hath been before Him, just as the Prophet of God abolished the matter of Jahileyeh."

Consider, notwithstanding similar traditions, how they have sought to prove the permanency of the ordinances, although the purpose of every Manifestation is the manifestation of change and transformation in the regions of the world, publicly and privately, outwardly and inwardly.

For if the affairs of the earth change not, the appearance of Universal Manifestations would be futile.

It is said in "Awalim" which is one of the authoritative books, "A youth shall appear from Beni-Hashem (family of Muhammad) who will possess a new Book and new Laws"; then follows, "Most of his enemies will be the divines."

In another place it is related that Sadik-Ebn-Muhammad said: "A youth shall appear from Beni-Hashem, and will command people to swear allegiance to Him; He shall possess a new Book; He will summon people to acknowledge a new Book which is onerous to the Arab.

When you hear about Him, hasten to Him."

How well have they carried out the testament of the Imams of Religion and Lights of Certainty!

Although it is said: "If you hear of a youth of Beni-Hashem appearing, summoning people to a new Divine Book and new Supreme Laws, hasten unto Him," yet they gave verdict of infidelity and apostasy against that Lord of Existence and did not go unto that Hashemite Light and Divine Appearance except with drawn swords and hearts full of hatred.

Moreover consider how plainly the enmity of the divines is mentioned in the Book.

Notwithstanding all these clear and indicative traditions and evident and confirmed references, the people have turned away from the clear Essence of knowledge and utterance, and have advanced toward the appearances of error and sedition; and despite these revealed words and recorded traditions, they say <p63> whatever is prompted by self.

Should the Essence of Truth give an explanation which proves contrary to their egotism and desire, they will straightway charge Him with infidelity, saying, "this is contrary to the words of the Imams of the religion and of the manifest lights, and no such command or order hath been laid down in the irrefutable Law"; just as in the present day similar vain sayings proceed from these mortal temples.

No understanding can comprehend the character of His Manifestation and no knowledge grasp the measure of His mission.

All sayings are dependent upon His approval, and all things are in need of His authority. All else save Him is created by His command and exists by His direction. He is the manifestor of the divine mysteries and the elucidator of the hidden wisdoms of eternity. This is it related in "Buhar'ul-Answar," "Awalim" and "Yanbou'a" (three authoritative books of tradition) that Sadik-Ebn-Muhammad said: "Knowledge is twenty-seven letters. All that was brought of it by the Prophets were two letters, and until the present day, people only know these two letters; but when Gha'im shall arise, the twenty-five letters will appear."

Consider:

He hath designated that knowledge consists of twenty-seven letters, and all the prophets from Adam down to the "Seal" explained but two letters thereof, and were sent forth in these two.

He also says Gha'im shall bring forth the remaining twenty-five letters.

From this explanation realize the rank and station of His Holiness (Bab); that His rank is greater than all the Prophets and His mission loftier and higher than the knowledge and comprehension of all the holy ones.

These worthless creatures measure with their limited minds, learnings and understanding, a matter of which the Prophets, holy ones and chosen ones have either not been informed, or which they have not declared because of an irrefutable command of God, and finding it not in accord therewith, reject it. "Dost thou imagine that the greater part of them hear or understand?

They are no other than like the brute cattle; yea, they stray more widely from the true path."

To what do they apply the mentioned tradition which clearly indicates the hidden facts and wonderful new event in the Day of His Holiness?

These new events will cause the people to disagree to such an extent that the divines and religious doctors will sentence His Holiness and His companions to death, and all the people of the earth will arise in contradiction.

Thus <p64> it is said in "Kafi," in the tradition by Jabir in the "Tablet of Fatima," concerning the Gha'im: "The perfection of Moses, the splendor of Jesus, and the patience of Job (shall be) in Him, and His friends shall be abased during His time, and their heads shall be, just as the heads of the Turks and Deylamites were, exchanged as presents; they shall be slain and burnt, terrified with fear, and appalled; the earth shall be dyed with their blood, and lamentation and wailing shall prevail amongst their women; these are indeed my friends."

We beg the doctors and divines of the Bayan not to act in like manner; not to inflict upon the Essence of Divinity, the Supreme Light, the Absolute Eternity, and the Origin and End of the Manifestations of the Invisible, at the time of Mustagath,[1] that which hath been inflicted in this day; not to depend upon intellect, comprehension and learning, nor show hostility toward that Manifestor of supreme infinite knowledges. Yet, notwithstanding all these admonitions, it is seen that a misleading person, who is a chief of the people, will arise with the utmost opposition. Likewise in every city, (people) will arise to suppress that Beauty of Holiness. The companions of that King of Existence and Essence of the Desired One will flee to mountains and deserts and conceal themselves from the hand of the oppressors, while some will resign themselves and yield life with entire severance. As already witnessed, one known and reputed for great piety and virtue, whom the people deem it their duty to obey, and to whose command they consider it necessary to submit, will war against that Root of the Divine Tree and arise to oppose with the utmost strife and exertion. This is the quality of people!
[1 Baha'u'llah.]

To resume: We hope that the people of the Bayan may be trained; that they may soar in the atmosphere of spirit and abide in its court; that they may distinguish the True One from all others, and penetrate a false vestment with the eye of insight. But in these days such odor of jealousy is diffused, I swear by the Educator of Existence, including the seen and the unseen, that from the beginning of the foundation of the world -- though it hath no beginning -- to the present time, no such envy, animosity and hatred have appeared or ever will appear. For a number who have not inhaled the odor of justice, have hoisted banners of discord, and have agreed to oppose this servant. From every <p65> direction a spear is visible, and from every side an arrow flies. This, although we have not gloried in any matter, nor have we sought superiority over any. To every one we have been a most affectionate

companion and a most forbearing and indulgent friend; with the poor we have been as the poor, and before the learned and lofty, perfectly submissive and resigned. Yet by God, than Whom there is no other God, the hardships, calamities and sufferings inflicted by the enemies and possessors of the Book are as nothing compared to what hath been inflicted by the believers (Babis).
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The Birds of Divinity and Doves of Eternity have two utterances. One they reveal according to the outward, without allegory, covering or veil, that it may be a guiding lamp and beckoning light by which wayfarers may reach the summits of holiness, and seekers be led to the court of union. Such are the clear records and evident verses already mentioned. The other utterance they reveal in veil and covering to expose that which the malicious have concealed in their hearts and disclose their innermost beings. Therefore it is said by Sadek-Ibn-Muhammad, "God will purge them and sift them." This is the divine balance and the eternal touchstone wherewith He tests His servants. No one comprehendeth the meanings of these utterances except tranquil hearts, approved souls and abstracted minds. In similar utterances the literal meaning understood by people is not intended. <p66>

Thus it is said: "Every knowledge hath seventy senses, of which one only is known among the people; but when the Gha'im shall arise, He will spread the remaining senses among men." Likewise it is said: "We speak one word and by it we intend one and seventy meanings; each one of these we can explain."

To resume: These things are mentioned that the people may not be troubled by certain traditions and utterances, the signs of which have not appeared in the world of dominion, but that they may attribute their perplexity to their own lack of comprehension and not to the non-fulfillment of the meanings of the traditions; for the intent of the Imams of religion is not known to these servants, as evidence by the traditions themselves. Consequently the people should not deprive themselves of the bounties through such texts, but should question the custodians thereof, so that the hidden mysteries may appear and become manifest free from veils.

But no one is found among the people of the earth who is a seeker of the Truth, and who turns to the Manifestation of Oneness, concerning intricate questions. All are dwelling in the land of oblivion and follow the people of hostility and rebellion. But God will do unto them just as they are acting, and will forget them even as they ignored His meeting in His Days. Thus those who have denied are judged, and He shall judge those who reject His signs.

Revealed from the "B" and the "H" (Baha).

Peace be upon those who hear the melody of the Dove in the Sadrat-el-Muntaha!

Glory be to our Lord, the Supreme! <p67>

CHAPTER II
THE GREAT MESSAGE

36. He is the Mighty Over That Which He Willeth

This is the Noble Book from before the Lord of the worlds to those who have believed in this great announcement; verily, it is an admonition to whosoever is guided and a remembrance to the one who hath advanced towards the Lord of the people of knowledge.

Those who are given vision by God are indeed those who know the truth and are not withheld from it by the veils of polytheists. They see the lights of the Kingdom as they see the sun in the midst of the sky. Are they not indeed of the people of the Presence? Blessed is he who flings the world away and mounts the Red Ark through the Lord of the Names. Is he not of the people of Baha? Thus hath it been caused to descend from before the Revealer of the Bayan, whereunto beareth witness he who judges rightly in the Cause of God, and who has been of the witnesses.

We sent Ali (the Bab), who preached to you of the Kingdom before the Face, called you in the wilderness of unity, and summoned you to God, the Mighty, the Exalted, the Great.

Had He not come, no one would have the right to object to this Manifestation. How would it then be after We revealed the Bayan and adorned it with the embroidered Garment of My commemoration, the Precious, the Wonderful?

Say: O people! Do ye call upon the Names and cast aside their Creator? Verily this is no other than grievous error. Arise to assist the Cause of God; then invite the people to this Noble Outlook.

Say: Are ye affrighted by the assault of those who have exercised oppression, after ye see the power of your Lord, the Mighty, the Extolled? Follow the example of your Lord, the Merciful, whilst in the greatest disaster. He calleth the people to the truth, and was impeded neither by the oppression of the <p68> oppressors nor by the injury of the polytheists. Verily, your Lord, the Merciful, protecteth whom He pleaseth, though He may be in the mouth of the winged dragon. By My Life, not a single leaf is moved but after His permission and He is indeed the Mighty, the Powerful. And he whose stated time hath come, death apprehendeth him, even if he be in a stronghold.

His compassion hath preceded His wrath; thereupon We have suffered anguish from every lowly one though in Our grasp is the Kingdom of heaven and earth.

Beware not to commit that whereby discord may be caused. Unite in the Cause and disagree not. By union ye break the backs of those who have denied the Ruler of existence. This is better unto you, if ye are of those who believe. Nothing was desired by Us for you save that which draws you nigh to God. Hearken unto the truth and follow not the steps of the devils.

As to thee, thou are commemorating My commemoration and looking to My Face; deliver to the people that whereunto thou art commanded. Peradventure the winds of Paradise may move them and turn them over to the Kibla of the people of the world.

Cleanse the people with the water of the inner significances which We have deposited in the signs. By My Life, it is indeed the water of life which the Merciful One hath sent down from the heaven of grace for the life of the people of the world.

The night hath passed wherein God hath enjoined upon all who were around Him: "Rally under the shadow of that which hath extended from this Divine Sadrat." This is that which We have commanded you on a former occasion. Blessed are the attainers.

Beware not to disagree in the Cause of God and not to follow the imaginations of the doubting people. Verily He is with the one who commemorates Him and assists this Cause, wherefrom the fragrance of the Merciful hath spread among the people of the world.

TABLET TO THE SHAH OF PERSIA

37. O King of earth, hear the voice of this slave! I have sacrificed myself in His way; to this do the afflictions wherein I am (the like of which none amongst mankind hath <p69> borne) testify, and my Lord the All-Knowing is the witness to what I say. I have not summoned men unto aught save unto Thy Lord and the Lord of the worlds. In love for Him there hath come upon me that whereof the eye of creation hath not beheld the like; in this will these servants whom the veils of humanity have not withheld from confronting the chiefest outlook bear me out, and beside them He with whom is knowledge of all things in a Preserved Tablet. Whenever the clouds of fate rain down the darts of affliction in the way of God the Lord of the names, I advance to meet them; to this testifieth every fair and rightly informed person. How many are the nights wherein the wild beasts rested in their lairs, and the birds in their nests, while this servants was in chains and fetters and found for Himself none to succor, nor any helper! Remember the grace of God toward thee when thou wast in prison with sundry others, and He brought thee out thence, and succored thee with the hosts of the invisible and the visible, until the King sent thee to Iraq (Baghdad) after we had disclosed to him that thou wast not of the number of the seditious. Verily such as follow their lusts and turn aside from virtue, these are in evident error.

And as for those who work sedition in the earth, and shed blood and falsely consume men's wealth, we are quit of them, and we ask God not to associate with them either in this world or in the world to come, unless they repent unto Him; verily He is the most merciful of the merciful, verily it behooveth him who turneth towards God to be distinguished in all actions from what is apart from Him and to conform to that which is enjoined upon him in the Book; thus is the matter decreed in a perspicuous Book. As for such as cast the command of God behind their backs and follow after their lusts, they are in grievous error.

O King, I conjure thee by thy Lord the merciful to regard His servants with the gaze of pitiful eyes, and to rule with justice in their midst, that God may award His favor unto thee; verily thy Lord judgeth as He pleaseth. The world shall perish with whatsoever of glory and abasement is therein, while dominion

remaineth unto God, the supreme and all-knowing King. Say, verily He hath kindled the lamp of the Bayan, and He will continue it with the oil of ideas and expressions; exalted is thy Lord the merciful. Verily He will show forth what He pleaseth by <p70> His authority, and will guard it with a cohort of the proximate angels. He controlleth His handiwork and compelleth His creation; verily He is the All-Knowing, the Wise.

O King, verily I was as any one amongst mankind, slumbering upon my couch. The gales of the All-Glorious passed by me, and taught me the knowledge of what hath been. This thing is not from me but from One who is mighty and All-Knowing. And He bade me proclaim betwixt the earth and the heaven, and for this hath there befallen me that whereat the eyes of those who know overflow with tears. I have not studied those sciences which men possess, nor have I entered the colleges; inquire of the city wherein I was, that thou mayest be assured that I am not of those who speak falsely.

This is a leaf which the breezes of the will of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Extolled, have stirred. Can it be still when the rushing winds blow? No, by my Lord of the names and attributes! Rather do they move it as they list, for being belongeth not to nonentity in presence of the eternal. His decisive command did come, causing me to speak for His celebration amidst the worlds. Verily I was not save as one dead in presence of His command, the hand of thy Lord the Merciful, the Clement, turning me. Can any one speak on his own part that for which all men, whether high or low, will contradict Him? No, by Him who taught the Pen eternal mysteries, save him who is strengthened by One mighty and strong.

The Supreme Pen addresseth me, saying, "Fear not, but relate unto His majesty, the king, what hath come upon thee. Verily his heart is between the fingers of thy Lord the Merciful; perchance He will cause the sun of justice and kindness to dawn from the horizons of his heart." Thus was the command revealed from the All-Wise.

Say, King, look with the gaze of justice upon this servant; then decide according to the right concerning what hath befallen him. Verily God hath appointed thee His shadow amongst His servants, and the sign of His power to the dwellers in the land; judge between us and those who have oppressed us without proof or clear warrant.

Verily those who surround thee, love thee for their own sakes, while this servant loveth thee for thine own sake, nor doth He desire aught save that He may bring thee nigh unto the station <p71> of grace and turn thee unto the right hand of justice; thy Lord is witness unto that which I say.

O King, if thou wouldst hear the cry of the Supreme Pen, and the cooing of the dove of eternity on the branches of the Divine Lote-tree beyond which there is no passing in praise of God, the maker of the names, the creator of the earth and heaven, verily this would cause thee to attain unto a station whence thou wouldst behold in existence naught save the effulgence of God the adored, and whence thou wouldst regard dominion as a thing of least account in thine eyes,

leaving it to who desireth it, and turning toward a horizon illumined with the lights of God's face; neither wouldst thou ever endure the burden of dominion unless it were to help thy Lord, the High, the Supreme. Then would the people of the Supreme Concourse magnify thee, saying, "How good is this most glorious station, if thou wouldst but ascend thereunto by authority accorded unto thee in the name of God."

Amongst mankind are some who say this servant desireth the world for himself notwithstanding that I have not found during the days of my life a place of safety such that I might set my feet therein, but was ever overwhelmed in the floods of affliction, whereof none wots save God; verily He knoweth what I say.

How many were the days wherein my friends were disquieted for my distress, and how many the nights, wherein the sound of wailing arose from my family in fear for my life; none will deny this save he who is devoid of truthfulness.

Doth he who regardeth not his life (as assured) for less than a moment, desire the world?

I marvel at those who speak after their lusts, and wander madly in the desert of passion and desire.

They shall be questioned as to that which they have said; on that day they shall not find for themselves any protector nor any helper.

And amongst them who say, "Verily, he denieth God," notwithstanding that all my limbs testify that there is no God but Him, and that those whom He quickeneth with the truth and sent for men's guidance are the manifestations of His most comely names, the day-springs of His supreme attributes, and the recipients of His revelation in the realm of creation: by whom the proof of God unto all beside Himself is made perfect, the standard of faith and unity is set up, and the sign of renunciation becomes apparent; and by whom every soul taketh a course toward the Lord of the throne.

We bear witness that there is no God but Him: everlastingly He was <p72> and there was nothing beside Him; everlastingly He will be even as He hath been.

Exalted is the Merciful One above this, that the hearts of the people of wisdom should ascend unto the comprehension of His nature, or that the understanding of such as inhabit the worlds should rise to the knowledge of His essence.

Holy is He above the knowledge of all save Himself, and exempt is He from the comprehension of what is beside Him; verily in eternity of eternities was He independent of the worlds.

Remember the days wherein the Sun of Batha (Muhammad) shone forth from the horizon of the will of thy Lord, the High, the Supreme, how the doctors turned aside from him, and the cultured found fault with him, that thou mayest understand what is now hidden within the veil of light. Matters waxed grievous for him on all sides, until those who were gathered round him were dispersed by his own command; thus was the matter decreed from the heaven of glory. Then remember when one of them came in before the Nejashi (king of Abyssinia) and

recited unto him a sura of the Qur'an. He said to those around him: "Verily it hath been revealed on the part of One All-Knowing and Wise. Whosoever accepteth what is best, and believeth in that which Jesus brought, for him it is impossible to turn aside from what hath been read; verily we testify unto the truth of it, even as we testify unto the truth of what is with us of the Books of God, the Protecting, the Self-subsistent."

By God, O king, if thou wouldst hear the strains of the dove which cooeth on the branches with varied notes by the command of thy Lord the Merciful, thou wouldst assuredly put away dominion behind thee and go unto the Chiefest Outlook, the station from the horizon of which the Book of the Dawn is seen, and wouldst spend what thou hast, seeking after that which is with God. Then wouldst thou find thyself in the height of glory and exultation and the zenith of greatness and independence; thus has the matter been written in the primal revelation by the Pen of the Merciful One.

There is no good in what thou dost possess today, for another shall possess it tomorrow in thy stead. Choose for thyself that which God hath chosen for His elect. Verily He will bestow upon thee a mighty dominion in His Kingdom. We ask God that He may help thy mayest to hearken unto the Word whereby the <p73> world is illuminated, and preserve thee from those who are remote from the region of nearness.

Glory be to Thee, O God!

O God, how many a head hath been set us on spears in Thy way!

How many hearts have been riddled for the exaltation of Thy Word and the diffusion of Thy religion!

How many eyes have overflowed with tears for Thy love!

I ask thee, O King of Kings, Pitier of thralls, by Thy most great name, which Thou hast made the day-spring of Thy most comely names and the manifestation of Thy supreme attributes, to lift up the veils which intervene between Thee and Thy creatures, withholding them from turning toward the horizon of Thy revelation; then drawn them, O God, by Thy Supreme Word from the left hand of fancy and forgetfulness to the right hand of certainty and knowledge, that they may know what Thou, in Thy bounty and grace, desireth for them, and may turn toward the manifestation of Thy religion and the day-spring of Thy signs.

O God, Thou art the gracious, the Lord of great bounty; withhold not Thy servants from the most mighty ocean, which Thou hast made to produce the pearls of Thy knowledge and wisdom, neither repel them from Thy gate which Thou hast opened unto all who are in Thy heaven and Thy earth.

O Lord, leave them not to themselves, for they know not, and flee from what is better for them than whatsoever hath been created in Thine earth.

Look upon them, O Lord, with the glances of the eyes of Thy favors and bounties, and free them from passion and lust, that they may draw nigh unto Thy supreme horizon, and may discover the delight of remembering Thee, and the

sweetness of the table which hath been sent down from the heaven of Thy will and the air of Thy bounty.

Everlastingly hath Thy grace encompassed all contingent beings, and Thy mercy preceded all creatures; there is no God but Thee, the forgiving, the merciful!

Glory be to Thee, O God!

Thou knowest that my heart is melted about Thy business, that my blood boils in my veins with the fire of Thy love, and that every drop thereof crieth unto Thee with dumb eloquence saying, "O Lord Most High, shed on the earth in Thy way, that there may grow from it what Thou desirest in Thy Books, but hast concealed from the sight of Thy servants, save such as have drunk from the Kawther of knowledge from the hands of Thy grace, and the Salsibil of wisdom from the cup of Thy bounty."

Thou knowest, O God, that in every action I <p74> desire nothing save Thine affair, and that in every utterance I seek naught but Thy celebration, neither doth my pen move except I desire Thy good pleasure and the setting forth of what Thou hast enjoined upon me by Thy authority.

Thou seest me, O God, confounded in Thine earth; if I tell what Thou hast enjoined on me, Thy creatures turn against me; and if I forsake what Thou hast enjoined on me on Thy part, I should be deserving of the scourges of Thy wrath, and far removed from the gardens of nearness to Thee.

No, by Thy glory, I advance toward Thy good pleasure, turning aside from what the souls of Thy servants desire; and accept what is with Thee, forsaking what will remove me afar off from the retreats of nearness to Thee and the heights of Thy glory.

By Thy glory, for Thy love, I flinch not from aught, and for Thy good pleasure I fear not all the afflictions in the world; that is but through Thy strength and Thy might, and Thy grace and Thy favor, not because I am deserving thereof.

O God, this is a letter which I wish to send to the king; and Thou knowest that I have not desired aught of him save the display of his justice to Thy people, and the showing forth of his favors to the dwellers in Thy Kingdom, and verily, for myself, I have not desired aught save what Thou desirest. Perish that being which desireth of Thee aught save Thyself! Help, O God, his majesty the King, to execute Thy laws amongst Thy servants and to show forth Thy justice amidst Thy creatures, that he may rule over this sect as he ruleth over those who are beside them. Verily Thou art the potent, the mighty, the wise.

O would that thou mightest permit, O King, that we would send unto thy mayest that whereby eyes would be refreshed, souls tranquillized and every just person assured that with him (Baha'u'llah) is knowledge of the Book. Were it not for the turning aside of the ignorant and the willful blindness of the doctors, verily I would utter a discourse whereat hearts would be glad and would fly into the air from the murmur of whose winds is heard, "There is no God but He." But now, because the time admitteth it not, the tongue is withheld from

utterances, and the vessel of declaration is sealed until God shall unclose it by His Power; verily He is the potent, the powerful.

Glory be to Thee, O God! O my God, I ask of Thee in Thy name, whereby Thou hast subdued whosoever is in the heavens <p75> and the earth, that Thou wilt keep the lamp of Religion with the glass of Thy power and Thy favors, so that the winds of denial pass not by it from the region of those who are heedless of the mysteries of Thy sovereign name; then increase its light by the oil of Thy wisdom; verily Thou art the potent over whosoever is in Thy earth and Thy heaven. O Lord, I ask of Thee by Thy supreme word, whereat whosoever is in the earth and the heaven feareth, save him who taketh hold of the most firm handle, that Thou wilt not abandon me amongst Thy creatures. Lift me up unto Thee, and make me to enter under the shadow of Thy mercy, and give me to drink of the pure wine of Thy grace, and that I may dwell under the canopy of Thy glory and the dome of Thy favors, -- verily Thou art powerful unto that which Thou wishest and verily Thou art the protecting, the self-sufficing.

O King!

The lamps of justice are extinguished, and the fire of persecution is kindled on all sides, until that they have made my people captives.

This is not the first honor which hath been violated in the way of God.

It behooveth every one to regard and recall what befell the kindred of the prophet until that the people made them captives and brought them in unto Damascus, the spacious; and amongst them the Prince of worshippers, (Zeynu'l'Abindin) the stay of the elect, the sanctuary of the eager (the soul of all beside him be his sacrifice).

It was said unto them, "Are ye seceders?"

He said, "No, by God, we are servants who have believed in God and in His signs, and through us the teeth of faith are disclosed in a smile and the sign of the Merciful one shineth forth; through our mention spreadeth Albatha (Mecca) and the darkness which intervened between earth and heaven is dispelled."

It was asked, "Have you forbidden what God hath sanctioned, or sanctioned what God hath forbidden?"

He answered, "We were the first who followed the commandments of God; we are the pioneers of this religion, and the first fruits of all good and its consummation; we are the sign of the Eternal, and His commemoration amongst the nations."

It was asked, "Have you abandoned the Qur'an?"

He said, "Within us did the Merciful One reveal it; we are the streams which have arisen from the most mighty ocean whereby God revived the earth after its death and will revive it again; from us His signs are diffused, His evidences are manifested and His tokens appear: and with us are <p76> His mysteries and

His secrets."

It was asked, "For what fault then, were ye afflicted?"

He said, "For the love of God and our severance from all beside Him."

Verily we have not repeated his expressions (upon him be peace) but rather we have made manifest a spray from the ocean of life, which was deposited in his words, that by it those who advance may live and be aware of what hath befallen the trusted ones of god on the part of the evil and most reprobate people. And today we see the people censuring those who acted unjustly of yore, while they oppress more vehemently than those oppressed, and know it not. By God, I do not desire sedition, but the purification of God's servants from all that withholdeth them from approach to God, the King of the Day of Judgment.

I was asleep on my couch; the breaths of my Lord, the Merciful, passed over me and awakened me from my sleep; and commanded me to proclaim betwixt earth and heaven. This was not on my part but on His part, and to this bear witness the denizens of the realms of His power and His kingdom, and the dwellers in the cities of His glory, and Himself, the truth. I am not impatient of calamities in His way, nor of afflictions for His love and at His good pleasure--God hath made afflictions as a morning shower to His green pasture, and as a wick for His lamp whereby earth and heaven are illumined.

Shall that which any one hath of wealth endure unto him, or avail him tomorrow with him who holdeth his forelock?

If any should look on those who sleep under slabs and keep company with the dust, can he distinguish the bones of the king's skull from the knuckles of the slave?

No, by the King of Kings?

Or doth he know the governors from the herdsmen, or discern the wealthy and the rich from him who was without shoes or carpet?

By God, distinction is removed save from him who fulfilled righteousness and judged uprightly. where are the doctors, the scholars, the nobles? where is the keenness of their glances, the sharpness of their sight, the subtlety of their thoughts, the soundness of their understanding? where are their hidden treasures and their apparent gauds, their bejewelled thrones and their ample couches?

Alas!

All have been laid waste, and the decree of God hath rendered them as scattered dust!

Emptied is what they treasured up, and dissipated is what they collected, and dispersed is what they concealed.

They have become such that <p77> thou seest naught but their empty places; their gaping roofs, their uprooted beams, their new things waxed old.

As for the discerning man, verily wealth will not divert him from regarding the end; and for the prudent man, riches will not withhold him from turning toward God, the Rich, the Exalted.

Where is he who held dominion over all whereon the sun arose, and who spent lavishly and sought after curious things in the world and what is therein created? where is the lord of the swarthy squadron and they yellow standard? where is he who ruled Baghdad, and where is he who wrought injustice in Damascus, the spacious? where are they at whose bounty treasures were afraid, and at whose openhandedness and generosity the ocean was dismayed? where is he whose arm was stretched forth in rebelliousness, whose heart turned away from the merciful One? where is he who used to make choice of pleasures and cull the fruits of desire? where are the dames of the bridal-chambers, and the possessors of beauty?

Where their waving branches and their spreading boughs, their lofty palaces and trellised gardens?

Where is the smoothness of the expanses thereof and the softness of their breezes,and the rippling of their waters and the murmur of their winds, and the cooing of their doves and the rustling of their trees?

Where are their laughing hearts and their smiling mouths?

Woe unto them!

They have descended to the abyss and become companions to the pebbles; today no mention is heard nor any sound; nothing is known of them or any hint.

Will the people dispute it while they behold it? will they deny while they know it?

I know not in what valley they wander erringly; do they not see that they depart and return not?

How long will they be descending and ascending--spiritually rising and falling?

Has the time not yet come to those who believe, for their hearts to become humble for the remembrance of God?

Well is it with that one who hath said or shall say, "Yea, O Lord, the time is right and hath come."

And who severeth himself from all that is, unto the King of beings, and the Ruler of creation.

Alas!

Naught is reaped but what is sown, and nought is taken but what is laid up, save by the grace of God and His favor. hath the earth conceived him whom the veils of glory prevent not from ascending into the kingdom of his Lord, the Mighty, the Supreme?

Have we any good works whereby defects shall be removed or which shall bring us

near unto the Lord of causes?

We ask God to deal with us according to His grace, not His justice, and to make us of those who <p78> turn toward Him and sever themselves from all beside Him.

O King, I have seen in the way of God what no eye hath seen and no ear hath heard.

Friends have disclaimed; ways are straightened unto me; the pool of safety is dried up; the plain of ease is scorched yellow.

How many calamities have descended, and how many will descend!

I walk advancing toward the Mighty, the Bounteous, while behind me glides the serpent.

My eyes rain down tears until my bed is drenched; yet my sorrow is not for myself.

By God, my head longeth for the spears for the love of its Lord, and I never pass by a tree but my heart addresseth it, saying, "O would that thou wert cut down in my name and my body were crucified upon thee in the way of my Lord."

Yea, because I see mankind going astray in their intoxication and they know it not; they have exalted their lusts, and put aside their God, as though they took the command of God for a mockery, a sport, and a plaything; and they think that they do well, and that they are harbored in the citadel of security.

The matter is not as they supposed; tomorrow they shall see what they now deny.

The rulers of authority and wealth are about to send us forth from this land, Adrianople, unto the city of Acca.

And according to what they say, it is assuredly the most desolate, the most detestable in climate, and the foulest in water; it is as though it were the metropolis of the owl; there is not heard from its region aught save the sound of its echo, and in it they intend to imprison this servant, and to shut in our faces the doors of leniency and take away from us the good things of the life of the world during what remaineth of our days.

By God, though weariness should weaken me and hunger should destroy me, though my couch should be made of the hard rock and my associates of the beasts of the desert, I will not blench, but will be patient, as the resolute and determined are patient in the strength of God, the King of pre-existence, the Creator of the nations; and under all circumstances I give thanks unto God.

And we hope of His graciousness (exalted is He) the freedom of the necks from chains and shackles in this imprisonment; and that He will render all men's faces sincere toward Him, the Mighty, the Bounteous.

Verily He answereth him who prayeth unto Him, and is near unto him who calleth on Him.

And we ask Him to make this dark calamity a buckler for the temple of His

command, and to protect it thereby from sharp swords and piercing blades.

Through affliction hath <p79> His light shone and His praise been bright unceasingly; this hath been His method through past ages and bygone times.

The people shall know what today they understand not, when their steeds shall stumble, their bed be rolled up, their swords be blunted, and their footsteps slip.

I know not how long they ride this steed of desire and wander erringly in the desert of heedlessness and error.

Of glory shall any glory endure, or of abasement any abasement?

Or shall he endure who used to stay himself on high cushions and who attained in splendor the utmost limit?

No, by my Lord the Merciful!

All that is on the earth is transient, and there remaineth only the face of my Lord, the Mighty, the Beneficent.

What buckler hath not the arrow of death smitten, or what pinion hath not the hand of fate plucked?

From what fortress hath the messenger of death been kept back when he came?

What throne hath not been broken, or what palace hath not been desolate?

Did the people but know what is beyond the end of this life, the pure wine of the mercy of their Lord, the Mighty, the All-Knowing, they would certainly cast aside reproach and seek to be satisfied by this servant.

But now they have veiled me with the veil of darkness which they have woven with the hands of doubts and fancies.

The White Hand shall cleave an opening to this somber night, and God will open into His city a gate.

On that day men shall arise from the tombs and shall be questioned concerning their riches.

Happy that one whom burdens shall not oppress on that day whereon the mountains shall pass away and all shall appear for questioning in the presence of God the Exalted!

Verily He is sever in punishing.

We ask God to sanctify the hearts of certain of the theologians from rancour and hatred that they may regard things with eyes which closure overcometh not; and to raise them unto a station where the world and the lordship thereof shall not turn them aside from looking toward the Supreme Horizon, and where anxiety for gaining a livelihood and providing household goods shall not divert them from the thought of that day whereon the mountains shall be made like carpets.

Though they rejoice at that which <p80> hath befallen us of calamity there

shall come a day whereon they shall wail and weep.

By my Lord, were I given the choice between the glory and opulence, the wealth and dignity, the ease and luxury wherein they are, and the distress and affliction wherein I am, I would certainly choose that wherein I am today, and I would not now exchange one atom of these afflictions for all that hath been created in the kingdom of production!

Were it not for affliction in the way of God my continuance would have no sweetness for me, nor would my life profit me.

Let it not be hidden from the discerning and such as look toward the Chiefest Outlook that I, during the greater part of my days, was a servant sitting beneath a sword suspended by a single hair, who knoweth not when it shall descend upon him, whether it shall descend instantly or after a while.

And in all this we give thanks to God, the Lord of the worlds, and we praise Him under all circumstances, -- verily He is a witness unto all things.

We ask God to extend His shadow that the unitarians may hasten thereto, and that the sinners may take shelter therein, and to bestow on these servants flowers from the garden of His grace and stars from the horizon of His favors; and to assist the king in that which He liketh and approveth; and to help him unto that which shall bring him near to the day-spring of His most comely names, that he may not shut his eyes to the wrong which he seeth, but may regard his subjects with the eye of favor and preserve them from violence.

And we ask Him (exalted is He) to gather all together by the gulf of the most mighty ocean whereof each drop crieth, "Verily He is the giver of good tidings to the worlds and the quickener of the worlds; and praise be to God, the King of the Day of Judgment."

And we ask Him (exalted is He) to make thee a helper unto His religion and a regarder of His justice, that thou mayest rule over His servants as thou rulest over those of thy kindred, and mayest choose for them what thou wouldst choose for thyself.

Verily He is the potent, the exalted, the protecting, the self-subsistent.

Thus have we built the Temple by the hands of might and potency, were ye of those who know.

This is indeed the Temple of which ye are promised in the Book; come nigh unto it; this is better unto you were ye to understand.

O people of the earth!

Be just and say whether this is better unto you or the temple which is built of clay.

Turn unto Him, thus have ye been commanded on the part of God, the Protector, the Self-existent. <p81>

Follow the command, then praise God, your Lord, for that which He hath

graciously bestowed upon you. Verily He is the truth, there is no God but Him. He maketh to manifest what He pleaseth by saying, "Be" and it is.

TABLET TO THE SULTAN OF TURKEY

The Supreme Pen proclaims:

38. He is the Possessor in His Might and Power!

O, thou personage, who considerest thyself the greatest of all men, while looking upon the Divine Youth, thinking him to be the lowest of men, yet through him the eye of the Supreme Concourse is brightened and illumined.

This Youth has never made nor will he ever make a request of thee:

For from the beginning every one of the Manifestations of mercifulness and the Dawning-places of the glory of the Almighty, who have stepped forth from the realm of immortality upon the arena of existence and shone forth with splendor for the quickening of the dead, men like thee have considered those sanctified souls and Temples of Oneness upon whom the reformation of the world depends, as the people of strife, and wrong-doers.

Verily, their names (the deniers) are forgotten and ere long thy name will also be forgotten and thou shalt find thyself in great loss.

According to thy opinion this quickener of the world and its peace-maker is culpable and seditious.

What crime have the women, children and suffering babes committed, to merit thy wrath, oppression and hate?

In every religion and community the children are considered innocent, nor does the Pen of Divine Command hold them responsible, yet the reign of thy tyranny and despotism has surrounded them.

If thou art the follower of any religion or sect, read thou the Heavenly Books, the inspired epistles and the divine writings, so that thou mayest realize the irresponsibility of children.

On the other hand, even those people who do not believe in God, have never committed such crimes.

In everything an effect is hidden, and no one has denied the effects of things except an ignorant one who is completely denied and deprived of intelligence. Therefore, undoubtedly the lamentation of these children and the cries of these wronged ones will produce a great effect.

You have persecuted a number of souls who have shown no opposition <p82> in your country and who have instigated no revolution against the government; nay, rather, days and nights they have been peacefully engaged in the mentioning of God.

You have pillaged their properties and through your tyrannical acts, all they had was taken from them.

When the order was issued for the banishment of this Youth, these souls began to lament, but the officers who constituted my guard mentioned that these souls had committed no wrong, nor had the government banished them, but if they desired they might follow you, for no one would oppose them.

Consequently, they paid all their own expenses and leaving their property behind, they were contented with the countenance of this Youth and trusting upon God they departed again with the True One, until the fortress of Akka became the place of the incarceration of Baha.

The day after the arrival, the officials of the army surrounded the men, women and children and carried them to the gloomy dungeon of the barrack.

The first night they were given neither bread nor water, for the sentinels were guarding the door of the prison and permitted no one to leave the place.

They did not consider the plight of these wronged ones.

Water was asked for, but it was refused.

It is now some time since we are all imprisoned in this dungeon; although we were living for five years in Adrianople and all the people, whether ignorant or wise, rich or poor, testified to the sanctity and holiness of these servants.

When departing from Adrianople one of the believers of God sacrificed himself with his own hand, for he could not see this Wronged One in the hands of the tyrants. On our way we were transferred three times, from one ship to another, and it is evident that a number of the children suffered under these severe circumstances. When we left the steamer, they separated four of the friends from us, and prevented them from following, and upon the departure of this Youth, one of the four, named Abdul Gaffar, threw himself into the sea and no one has ever found any trace of him. This is a drop of the ocean of persecution which surrounded and encircled us. Notwithstanding these things, they are not yet satisfied, and every day the officers of the government are increasing their hard-heartedness, nor is it ended; day and night they are forming new intrigues and adding to our sufferings. From the government supplies, these prisoners receive three loaves of bread to last for twenty-four hours, and no one is able to eat it. <p83>

From the beginning of the world, no such persecutions have been seen or heard of!

I declare by the One who has commanded Baha to speak, between the heavens and the earth, there is no name or mention for you equal to those who sacrificed their spirits, bodies and property for the love of God, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Omnipotent!

Before God, a handful of dust is greater than your kingdom, sovereignty, glory and dominion, and should He desire, He would scatter you as the sand of the desert, and ere long His wrath shall overtake you, revolutions shall appear in your midst and your countries will be divided!

Then you will weep and lament and nowhere will you find help or protection.

Then mentioning of these facts is not for the sake of your becoming mindful, for already the wrath of God has surrounded you, but you have not nor will you become mindful; neither is it for the sake of reciting the persecutions which have descended upon these holy souls, for they are intoxicated with the wine of the Merciful and they are so exhilarated with the clear Salsabil of divine providence, that should the persecutions of the world descend upon them in the path of God, they are satisfied, nay, rather, grateful; they never had nor will they ever have any complaints to offer.

At every moment the blood in their bodies begs and supplicates from the Lord of both worlds, that it be shed upon the ground in His path; likewise their heads yearn to be raised upon a spear for the sake of the Beloved of the heart and soul.

For several times the tests of God have descended upon you, and you were not mindful; one was a conflagration which burned the city with the fire of justice, so much so that poets have composed poems about it, declaring that such a conflagration had never appeared before; notwithstanding this your negligence increased.

Then the cholera came, and still you remained heedless.

Be ye watchful, for the wrath of God is prepared and ere long ye shall behold that which is descended from the Pen of Command.

Have ye thought that your glory is everlasting, or did ye dream that your kingdom would remain forever?

No, by the life of God!

Your glory is not eternal, and our humiliation will not last.

This humiliation is the diadem of all the glories, and only man in his perfection can comprehend it.

When this Youth was a child and had not yet reached the age of maturity, one of my brothers intended to marry in Tihran and according to the custom of that country, for seven days and nights <p84> they were engaged in feasting and banqueting.

The program for the last day of the entertainments for the guests was the play of "Sultan Salim."

The ministers, the grandees and officials of the city were there in a great throng, and this Youth was sitting in one of the galleries of the building and was observing the scenes.

Then they raised a great tent in the middle of the court; representations of human forms only a few inches in height would come out of the tent and cry: "The king is coming, arrange the seats in order."

Then the other figures came out, sweeping the ground while a number were

sprinkling the streets with water; then another image was presented, who was supposed to be the herald, acquainting the people to be ready for review before His Majesty, the Sultan.

Then the ministers came, with hat and shawl, according to the Persian custom; others were present with clubs, while a number of others were garbed as chamberlains, aides-de-camp, ferrashes and executioners with instruments of punishment.

All these men were lined according to their station and class.

At last the king appeared, with sovereign power and shining diadem upon his head, and with splendor and glory walked slowly and majestically, and with perfect calmness, tranquillity and composure, seated himself upon the throne.

At that moment the noise of the guns and the music of the national anthem was raised, and the smoke surrounded the tent and the king.

When the air was cleared, it was seen that the king was on his throne, and the ministers, the magistrates and secretaries had taken their places according to their rank.

Immediately, a thief, captured by the police, was brought before the king, and a royal order was issued to behead him.

The the chief of the executioners took the captive and decapitated him, and a red fluid, like blood, was seen by all the spectators.

When the Sultan was consulting with some of his ministers, the news was brought in that a certain person had become a rebel.

The Sultan issued orders that several regiments of soldiers and artillerymen be sent to the scene and quell the disturbance.

After a few minutes the thunderous noise of guns and artillery was heard behind the tent, and we were told they were engaged in battle.

This Youth became astonished and bewildered at these affairs.

Then the review ended and the curtain descended.

After twenty minutes a man came out from behind the tent <p85> with a box under his arm. I asked him, "What is this box? Where is the king and all the men?" He answered that all these great things and manifest objects, such as kings, princes and ministers, glory, majesty, power and sovereignty that we beheld were enclosed in this box.

I declare by the Lord who has created all things through His Word, that from that day all the conditions of this world and its greatness are like that play before the eyes of this Youth. It has not nor will ever have the weight of a mustard seed. I was wondering greatly that the people glorify themselves in these affairs; notwithstanding this, the people of insight will discern with the eye of certainty the end of the glory of every great one before beholding it. I have seen nothing except I have discerned its transiency, and God

testifies to this. It is incumbent upon every soul in these few days of life to spend them in truthfulness and justice and if he be not confirmed with the knowledge of the True One, he can at least walk in the path of equity and intelligence.

Ere long all these apparent things, manifest treasures, worldly wealth, valiant soldiers, beautiful dresses and haughty souls, will be enclosed in the box-like tomb, similar to the box which contained all the players, and all this quarrel, strife and so-called honors are like the play of the children before the people of insight. Be ye admonished, and be not of those who see the truth and yet deny. These things will not affect this Youth and the friends of the True One, for they are all prisoners and enchained, and will not nor will ever make any request of people like thee.

The point is this, that thou mayest raise thy head from the bed of negligence and become mindful and not oppose the servants of God without reason. Bear in mind that so far as power and strength remain in the body, thou shouldst remove persecutions from the oppressed ones. Shouldest thou have a little justice and behold with the eye of certainty in the affairs and differences of the ephemeral world, thou shalt acknowledge that all of them are like the above-mentioned play. Hearken unto the word of truth! Be thou not proud on account of the world. Where are those people who were like unto thee, who claimed divinity on this earth without the permission of God, and desired to extinguish the light of God and to demolish the foundation of truth?

Dost thou see any of them? Be just! Then turn to God, perchance <p86> He may forgive the sins thou hast committed in this ephemeral life. Yet we know that thou shalt not become assisted in this, for through thy tyranny the Fire of Sinai flamed forth, the Spirit wept, and the hearts of the angels bled.

O ye people of the earth! Hearken to the voice of this Oppressed One with the ear of the soul, and ponder ye deeply over the above-mentioned story. Perchance ye may not be burned with the fire of passion and desire, and be not prevented from the meeting of the True One, through the worthless things of the faithless world. Glory and abasement, poverty and wealth, trouble and tranquillity, all shall pass away, and ere long all the inhabitants of the earth shall return to the tomb. Therefore, every possessor of insight must behold the immortal Outlook, that peradventure, through the bounties of the Eternal Sovereign, he may enter into the everlasting Kingdom and rest under the shade of the Tree of Command. Although the world is the place of treachery and duplicity, yet under all circumstances it reminds all the people with the idea of change. The passing of the father is an admonition for the son, and it reminds him that he too must pass away. It would be well if the people of the world who are amassing great fortunes and are deprived of the True One, knew what would become of their great wealth. By the life of Baha, no one is cognizant of this fact except God, glorified in His Station!

The philosopher, Avicena -- peace be upon him -- says: "Be admonished, O ye whose hearts are darkened, be ye admonished, O ye, whose faces are covered with

the lines of age!" However, the majority of the people are asleep. The example of those souls is like unto a person who was so intoxicated with wine that he was showing the signs of affection to a dog, and showering upon him tender words of love and affection. When the morning of intelligence dawned, and the horizons of the heaven were illumined with the brilliant orb, he beheld that his beloved was only a dog; then ashamed, regretful and remorseful on account of his act, he returned to his home.

Do not think that thou hast made this Youth powerless, or that thou hast conquered him.

Thou art defeated by one of the servants, but knowest it not.

The worst and lowest of creatures rules over thee, that is, thy passion and desire, which have been condemned forever.

If it were not on account of the consummate <p87> wisdom of God, thou wouldst have seen thy weakness and the weakness of the people of the earth.

This humility is the glory of My Cause, wert thou to know!

This Youth has never loved nor will ever love to utter any word which is against courtesy.

Verily, courtesy is My Garment with which we have adorned the temples of our favorite servants.

Otherwise some of thy actions that thou thinkest are unknown, would be mentioned in this Tablet.

O thou possessor of might!

These little children and these friends of God did not need the officers and soldiers as guards.

After our arrival, one of the officers presented himself and after much conversation expressed his own innocence and thy crime.

This Youth mentioned to him that: "Primarily, it was necessary to bring about a meeting of the Ullamas of the time and Himself so that the crimes of which these servants were accused might become evident.

However, time has passed and according to thy statement thou art commanded to imprison us in the 'most desolate city.' But I have one wish to make of thee, and that is to request of His Majesty, the Sultan, to grant me an audience of ten minutes in order that he may ask the proofs and arguments which he thinks would establish the validity of the Word of God.

If the proofs which he desires are made manifest on the part of God, he should then liberate these wronged ones and leave them to their own condition."

He promised to take this message and send an answer, but we heard nothing more from him; although it is not the station of this True One to present himself before any person, for all the people are created for his worship: Yet for the

sake of these little children and the number of women who are away from their country and people, we volunteered this act, but notwithstanding this, no result was produced. Omar is living and ready, ask of him so that the truth may become manifest to thee. Now all these exiled ones are sick and lying in prison. No one but God the Mighty, the Glorious, knows what will happen to us.

During the first days two of these servants passed into the Supreme Concourse. One day one of the officers commanded that they could not remove those blessed bodies unless they were paid for the shroud and casket, although no one ever asked anything of them. At that time we possessed no earthly means, and when we insisted that they leave the work to us and allow the friends to prepare the dead for burial, they refused. Finally they took a <p88> rug to the bazaar and sold it at auction, and delivered the money to the officers. Later on it became evident that they only dug the ground and laid the two blessed bodies in the one grave, although they had been doubly paid for shrouds and caskets. The pen is unable and the tongue is powerless to describe that which has descended upon us; however, all these poisons of tests are sweeter to this Youth than honey. I pray that under all circumstances the trials of the world in the path of God and the love of the Merciful may descend upon this Ocean of Significances. We beg of Him patience and endurance.

Thou art weak, and knowest it not. Couldst thou realize and be perfumed with the fragrance wafted from the direction of the Ancient Beauty, thou wouldst leave everything that thou hast in hand and hasten to come and live in one of the ruined rooms of this Most Great Prison. Ask thou God that thou mayest attain to the age of maturity so that thou mayest recognize the beauty and ugliness of deeds and actions. Peace be upon those who follow guidance!

SURIY-I-RA'IS, TABLET [TO THE] MINISTER TO THE SULTAN

39. O Ra'is! Hear the Voice of God, the Protecting, Self-existing King. Verily, He crieth between the earth and heaven and summoneth all to the Most Glorious Outlook. Neither doth thy croaking prevent Him, nor the barking of those who are around thee, nor the hosts of the worlds.

The world hath been kindled by the Word of thy Lord, El-Abha. It is softer than the breath of the east wind, and hath appeared in the form of man; and by it God hath quickened His advancing servants. In the inner part of this Word there is a water whereby God hath purified the hearts of those who came unto Him, who were negligent in mentioning aught else save Him; and thus have We brought them nigh to the Outlook of His Great Name. We have caused this water to descend upon the dead, and they are looking toward the shining and brilliant Beauty of God.

O Chief! Thou hast committed that by reason of which Muhammad, the Prophet of God, lamenteth in the highest heaven. And the world hath made thee proud in such wise that thou hast turned away from the face of Him by whose light the people of <p89> the Supreme Assembly are illumined, and thou shalt find thyself in manifest loss. And thou didst unite with the Persian Minister in opposition

to Me, after that I came unto you from the rising-place of greatness and might, with a matter whereby the eyes of those near to God are consoled. By God, this is a Day wherein the fire speaketh through all things: "The Beloved of the two worlds hath come!" And on the part of everything an interlocutor of the matter hath sprung up to listen to the Word of thy Lord, the Precious, the Knowing. Verily, should We come out from the Garment which We have worn for the sake of your weakness, all, whosoever is in the heaven and on the earth, would not hesitate to redeem Me by their souls, and to this thy Lord beareth witness; but no one hears Him save those who have severed themselves from the world, through the love of God, the Mighty, the Powerful.

Dost thou imagine that thou canst quench the fire which God hath kindled in the horizons? No, by Himself, the True One, wert thou of those who know! Rather, by that which thou hast done, its burning is increased, and its blaze; and it shall encompass the earth and whosoever is thereupon. Thus hath the matter been decreed and whosoever is in the heavens or upon the earth could not withstand His command. And the Land of the Mystery (Adrianople) and what is beside it shall be changed, shall pass out of the hands of the Sultan of Turkey, and commotions shall appear, lamentations shall arise and corruptions shall become manifest on all sides, and matters shall be altered by reason of that which hath come upon the hearts from the hosts of the oppressors. The authority shall be changed, and to such an extent shall the matter become grievous that the sandheaps in the desolate hills shall lament and the trees in the mountains weep, and blood shall flow from all things, and thou shalt see the people in great disturbance.

O Chief! We have revealed Ourselves to thee once in Mt. Tina (near Baghdad), and once in Mt. Ranita, and also in this Blessed Spot; but thou didst not take any notice, become of that by reason of which thou didst follow thy lust and become one of the heedless.

Look!

And then remember when Mohamet came with manifest signs on the part of One Mighty and Wise.

The people would have stoned Him in the public places and streets, and they denied <p90> the signs of God, thy Lord and the Lord of thy fathers who were there.

And the learned denied Him; then those factions who followed them, and after them the kings of the earth, as thou hast heard in the stories of those who were aforetime.

And of these was Kisra (the Sasanian king).

Unto him He sent a kind letter inviting him to God and forbidding him from polytheism; and verily, thy Lord hath knowledge of all things.

Verily he made himself great against God, and tore up the letter, because he followed his passion, the lust.

Is he not of the people of hell?

Was Pharaoh able to hinder God by exercising his dominion, when he relied on the earth and was of the disobedient?

We have indeed manifested the Interlocutor (Moses), from Pharaoh's house in spit of his will; verily, We were able to do this.

And remember when Nimrod kindled the fire of polytheism, whereby he would burn the Friend of God (Abraham).

Verily, We calmed the fire by the truth and brought upon Nimrod manifest grief.

Say:

Verily, the oppressor (King of Persia) slew the Beloved of the worlds (the Bab) that he mighty thereby extinguish the light of God among His creatures and hinder mankind from the pure water of life in the days of his Lord, the Mighty, the Kind.

We have made the matter manifest in the country and elevated His mention (the Bab's) among the unitarians.

Say:

The Servant hath assuredly come to vivify the world and bring to union whosoever is upon the surface of the earth.

That which God willeth shall overcome and thou shalt see the earth as the garden of El-Abha; thus hath it been written by the Pen of Command in an irrevocable Tablet.

Leave the mention of the Chief; then mention the Friend who became accustomed to the love of God and separated Himself from those who associated other things with God and were lost.

He rent asunder the veils in such wise that the people of paradise heard the rending thereof.

Glory be to God, the King, the Knower, the Wise.

O Dove!

Hear the voice of El-Abha in this night whereon the military officers were assembled against Us, while We were in great joy.

O that Our blood might be shed on the surface of the earth in the way of God and that We might be cast on the ground, for this is My desire and the desire of him who hath Me in view and who hath ascended unto My kingdom, the marvellous, the most wonderful.

Know then, O servant, that one day We found the friends of God confronted by transgressors.

The troops beset <p91> all gates and prevented the servants of God from entrance and exit, and were of the oppressors.

And the friends of God and His family were left without food in the first night.

Thus did it befall those for whose sake was created the world and what is therein.

Shame upon them, and upon those who command them to do evil!

And God shall consume their lives with fire -- and verily, He is the fiercest of avengers.

Men gathered around the house and the eyes of Islam and the Christians wept and the sound of wailing arose betwixt heaven and earth, because of that which the oppressors had wrought.

Verily, We found the Assembly of the Son (Christians) more bitter in their weeping than those of other creeds, and therein are indeed signs to the thoughtful.

And one from among the friends has sacrificed himself and cut his throat by his own hand from the love of God.

This is the like of which We have not heard from former ages.

This is what God hath set apart for this Manifestation as showing forth His Power, for, verily, He is the Mighty, the Powerful.

And he whose throat was cut in Iraq (Baghdad), verily, he is the beloved of martyrs and their sultan.

And that which appeared from him was the proof of God unto all creatures.

The beloved of God are those in whom the Word of God taketh effect and who taste the sweetness of commemoration, and upon whom the fragrance of union hath taken hold in such wise that they separate themselves from whosoever is upon the earth and advance to the Face with brilliant countenances; and though they have committed that which God never permitted, yet God pardoneth them as a favor on His part; verily, He is the pardoner, the merciful.

The attraction of the Most Powerful hath overpowered them in such wise that it seized from their hands the reins of option, until they ascended into the station of presence and disclosure, before God, the Precious, the Wise.

Say: the Servant hath left this world, but He put every tree and stone in charge of the trust which God shall bring forth with the truth.

Thus the True One hath come and the matter hath been decreed on the part of the Designer, the Wise, whose commands the hosts of heaven and earth could not withstand, nor could all the kings and rulers withhold Him from that which He willeth.

Say:

Calamities are as oil for this lamp and through them its light increaseth, were ye of those who know.

Say:

All oppositions displayed by the oppressors are indeed as heralds to this matter and by such the appearance of God and <p92> His affair have been widely spread among the people of the world.

Blessed are ye by reason of that whereby ye left your homes and travelled over the country for the love of God, your Lord, the Mighty, the Pre-existent, until ye came and entered into the Land of Mystery (Adrianople) on a day wherein the fire of oppression was kindling and the raven of separation was crying out.

Ye are the participators in My calamities, because ye were with us on a night wherein the hearts of the unitarians were disturbed.

Ye entered the land in Our love, and ye left it by Our command.

By God, it beseemeth the earth, through you, to make itself great against heaven! How precious is this great and exalted beauty! O ye birds of Eternity, ye were withheld from your nests in the Cause of the Lord, the Unconstrained. Verily, He will make for you lodgings under the wings of the grace of your Lord, the Merciful. Blessed are they who know.

O victim of Mine!

The Spirit is to thee and to him who rejoiceth by thee and from thee findeth My fragrance and heareth that by reason of which the hearts of the seekers are purified.

Thank thou God for that through which thou hast reached the shore of the Most Great Sea and heard the cry of all particles, saying: "This is the Beloved of the World!

And the people of the world oppress Him and do not know Him whom they call upon at all times."

Those who are heedless and who turned away from Him (the Bab) for the sake of whose Beloved they should sacrifice themselves, are in great loss.

How much more then for His brilliant and shining perfection?

Although thine heart would assuredly melt at separation from God, be patient, for thou hast with Him a great station.

Rather, shalt thou stand before the Face, and We will speak to thee with the tongue of might and power, that which the ears of the sincere were withheld from hearing.

Say:

Should He speak one word, verily it would be of greater sweetness than the words of all the people of the world.

This is a Day unto which had Mohamet, the Prophet of God, attained, He would assuredly say: "We have known Thee, O Desire of all the Apostles!"

And had the Friend of God, Abraham, attained it, He would have placed His face upon the earth, humbling Himself, before God, saying: "My heart is at peace, O God of whosoever is in earth and heaven.

And Thou hast caused me to behold the kingdom of Thy Command and the dominion of Thy Might; and I bear witness that at Thy Manifestation <p93> the hearts of those who advance are at peace!"

Had the Interlocutor (Moses) attained it, He would surely say: "Praise be to Thee for that Thou hast shown Me Thy Beauty and hast made Me of those who commune with Thee."

Reflect upon the people and their condition and that which cometh forth from their mouths and what their hands have wrought in this blessed, holy and wonderful Day.

Verily, they who did not obey the Command but turned to Satan are of those who are cursed by all things and they are of the people of fire.

He who heareth My voice will not be affect whatever by the voice of the people of the world; and he in whom the voice of aught that is beside Me taketh effect, verily, he did not hear My voice; he is indeed deprived of My Kingdom and the empires of My greatness and might and is of those who lose.

Grieve not because of that which hath befallen thee.

Verily thou hast forborne for the sake of My love what the majority of the servants have never borne; and thy Lord is the All-Knowing, the Informed.

And He hath accompanied thee in the courts of law and heard that which hath flowed from the water of thy pen in commemoration of thy Lord, the Merciful.

Verily, this is naught but a manifest grace.

And God shall raise up one among the kings who shall succor His saints, for He compasseth all things.

And He shall put into the hearts of men the love of His saints and this is a decree on the part of the Mighty, the Beautiful.

We ask God to make, through thy cry, the breasts of all the servants dilated with joy and to make thee the standard of guidance throughout the empire, and by thee to render the weak victorious.

Thou shalt pay no attention to the grunts of the grunters, but leave them to thy Lord, the Pardoner, the Generous.

Relate to My beloved the stories of the Servant, of that which Thou hast learned and heard; then deliver to them what We have delivered to thee; verily, thy God will strengthen thee at all times, and He is thy guard.

The Supreme Assembly shall magnify thee and the family of God and His household, the leaves who go around the Tree, shall praise thee and remember thee with a marvellous remembrance.

O Pen of Revelation!

Remind him whose letter hath come before the Face in this somber night and who travelled over the country until he arrived and entered the city for the purpose of seeking refuge under the protection of the mercy of his Lord, the Mighty, the Powerful, -- in which city he spent the night, awaiting <p94> the grace of his Lord; and in the morning, by the command of God, he left the city, on which occasion the servant became sad; and God is a witness to all that I say, saying: "Blessed thou art for that by reason of which thou hast received the wine of revelation from the hand of the Merciful in such wise as made thee deny thine own comfort, and because thou art of those who hasten to the region of Paradise, the day-spring of the signs of thy Lord, the Precious, the Peerless."

What a victory it is to him who hath drunk the wine of knowledge from the Countenance of his Lord, and who drinketh again the pure sweetness of this wine!

By God, through this wine will the unitarians soar to the heaven of greatness and glory, and imagination will be altered to reality.

Grieve not because of that which hath befallen thee.

Rely upon God, the Mighty, the Learned, the Wise; and let the corners of the house be founded upon the Books of Revelation; then mention thy Lord and He will make you dispense with all the people of the world.

Verily, He chooseth whom He willeth and He is indeed the Beloved of the devout.

By God, the Supreme Assembly seeth you and pointeth to you; thus the grace of your Lord hath encompassed you.

O would that the people knew that whereof they are neglectful in the Day of God, the Mighty, the Extolled!

Give thanks unto God, inasmuch as He hath strengthened thee with the knowledge of Himself and caused thee to enter into His protection on a Day whereon the unbelievers encompassed the people of God and His saints and drove them forth from their houses with evident tyranny.

And they desired to bring about a separation between us on the shore of the sea; and verily thy Lord is aware of that which is in the breasts of the unbelievers.

Say:

Though ye cut off our limbs, the love of God will not depart from our hearts!

Verily, we were created for sacrifice; therefore we glory over the worms.

TABLET TO THE CZAR

40. O Czar of Russia! Hear the voice of God, the Most Holy King! Then advance unto the paradise which is in the place wherein abideth He who is named with

the most comely names <p95> amongst the most high Assembly and in the kingdom of creation by the name of God, El Baha el Abha, the most shining Glory, Beware lest thy desires prevent thee from turning toward the Face of thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement.

Verily, We heard thy voice wherewith thou hast called thy Lord in thy secret communication, therefore the beneficence of My Providence hath stirred and the sea of My Mercy hath moved, and We answer thee with the truth. Verily, thy Lord is the Learned, the Wise.

One of thy ambassadors assisted Me when I was in prison, in chains and fetters.

Therefore God hath decreed unto thee a station which the knowledge of none comprehendeth save Him.

Beware lest thou change this lofty station.

Verily thy Lord is able to do whatsoever He willeth.

He abrogateth whatsoever He pleaseth, and confirmeth what He desireth, and with Him is the knowledge of all things in a Preserved Tablet.

Beware lest sovereignty prevent thee from the Sovereign; verily He hath come with His Kingdom, and all the atoms cry out: "The Lord hath come in His Most Great Glory!"

The Father hath come, and with Him the Son, who crieth in the Holy Valley: "Here am I, O my God, I am ready!"

Mt.

Sinai surroundeth the House, and the trees vociferously cry: "The Generous hath come, mounted on the clouds; blessed is he who advanceth unto Him and woe unto those who are afar!"

Arise amongst the people with this irresistible command, then summon the nations to God, the Exalted, the Great.

Be not of those who call upon Him by a Name amongst His Names, and when the Named One appears, they turn away from Him and pronounce sentence against Him with evident injustice.

Consider, then, and remember the Days wherein came the Spirit (Christ), and Herod gave judgment against Him.

God helped the Spirit with the hosts of the seen and the unseen and protected Him with the truth and sent Him to another land as a promise on His part.

Verily, He is the ruler over that which He pleaseth.

Verily thy Lord is able to preserve whom He wisheth, even should He be in the midst of the sea or in the mouth of the winged dragon, or under the swords of the oppressors.

Blessed is the king who doth not allow the splendors of his exaltation to

prevent him from turning to the Dawning-place of Perfection, and who casteth away what he hath in the desire to obtain that which is possessed by God.

Verily, is he not <p96> the best of all the creatures before the Truth?

The people of Paradise and those who go about the Throne will bless him in the morning and the evening.

Hear My voice another time from the region of My prison to inform you of that which hath befallen My Beauty by the manifestation of My majesty, that thou mayest know My patience after My power, and My forbearance after My might. By My life, shouldst thou come to know that which hath descended from My pen, and be acquainted with the treasuries of My command, the pearls of My secrets and the seas of My names, and the vessels of My Words, verily thou wilt offer thyself as a ransom in My way through the love of My name and yearning for My kingdom, the mighty, the powerful.

Know that My body is under the swords of the enemies, and My flesh is surrounded with innumerable calamities; but My Spirit is in a state of exaltation the like of which the joy of the world cannot equal. Advance to the Manifested God of the world with all thy heart and say: "O people of the earth, do ye deny Him in whose way the One who hath come with the truth of your Lord, the Exalted, the Great, hath suffered martyrdom?" Say, it is a Message whereby the hearts of the Prophets and the Messengers rejoiced. Lo, this is the One who is mentioned in the heart of the world, and the Promised One in the leaves of the Books of God, the Precious, the Wise. The hands of the Messengers were raised to God, the Mighty, the Powerful. Some of the Messengers lamented over separation from Me, other suffered hardships in My way, and other sacrificed themselves for the sake of My Beauty, were ye of those who know.

Say, verily, I have not intended the mention of Myself, but that of God, were ye of the just; nothing could be seen in Me but God and His Commands, were ye of those who reflect. Say, verily, I am He who is mentioned by the tongue of Isaiah, and the One whose name hath adorned the Bible and the Gospel. Thus hath the matter been decreed in the Tablets of your Lord, the Merciful. Verily He hath testified for Me, and I testify for Him, and God is witness to what I say. Say, the Books were not revealed save for My celebration, wherefrom every advancer will find the perfume of My name and praise; and he who openeth the hearing power of his heart will hear from every word (of the <p97> Books): "Lo, the Truth hath come and He is indeed the Beloved of the worlds." My tongue implicitly admonishes thee for the sake of God, and My Pen moveth in thy mention, after the injury of whosoever is upon the earth, and their perverseness will not injure thee in accordance with that whereunto We were commanded, and do not ask of thee anything whatsoever save to come nigh to that which will profit thee in this world and the world to come. Say, dost thou put to death He who summoneth thee unto everlasting life? Fear God, and follow not every prompting of obstinate pride.

O people of deceit! Do ye behold yourselves in palaces, while the King of Manifestation is in the most ruined of abodes? By My life, ye are in the

graves, were ye of those who perceive! Verily, he who doth not move by the Breath of God, in His Day, is indeed dead before God, the King of Names and Attributes. Arise from the graves of your lusts and advance to the Kingdom of your Lord, the Ruler of the Throne and of earth, that ye may see that which was promised unto you on the part of your Lord, the All-Knowing. Do ye imagine that ye will be profited by that which ye have? It will be possessed by some one in your stead, and ye shall return to the dust without finding any one to succor or help you. Of what use is a life that is ruled by death, or of a duration that vanisheth, or of a grace that changeth? Set aside that which ye have and advance to the bounty of God which hath been revealed in this wonderful Name! Thus hath the Supreme Pen addressed you by the permission of your Lord, El Abha. Should ye hear and attain, say:

"Praise be to Thee, O God, for Thou hast reminded me by the tongue of the Manifestation of Thyself when He was in the Great Prison, in chains and fetters, for the emancipation of the people of the world."

Blessed is the king whose sovereignty does not withhold him from his King, and who advances unto God with his heart.

Verily, he is of those who attain to that which God, the Mighty, the Wise, willeth. He shall behold himself amongst the kings of the Empire of the Kingdom. Verily, thy Lord is powerful over all things. He giveth to whomsoever He wisheth that which He willeth, and depriveth whom He pleaseth of that which He desireth. Verily, He is the Potent, the Able. <p98>

TABLET TO THE POPE

41. O Pope! Rend asunder the veils! The Lord of Lords hath come in the shadow of the clouds, and the matter hath been decided on the part of God, the Powerful, the Unconstrained. Disclose the splendors of the authority of thy Lord; then ascend into the Kingdom of names and attributes; thus doth the Supreme Pen command thee, on the part of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Most Powerful.

Verily He hath come from heaven another time, as He came from it the first time; beware lest thou oppose Him as the Pharisees opposed (Him) without evidence or proof. On His right side floweth the river of grace and on His left side the sweet wine of justice; before Him go the angels of paradise with the standards of Signs. Beware lest names withhold thee from God the Creator of the earth and heaven; leave the creatures behind thee, then advance to thy Lord by whom all horizons were illuminated. We have adorned the Kingdom by our name, El-Abha (The Most Glorious); thus hath the matter been decided on the part of God, the creator of all things. Beware lest conjectures withhold thee after the True Sun hath shone from the horizon of Bayan (Revelation) of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Benefactor. Dost thou dwell in palaces, while the King of Manifestation is in the most ruined of abodes (Acca)? Leave palaces to those who desire them, then advance to the Kingdom with spirituality and fragrance.

Say, O people of the earth! Destroy the abodes of neglect by the hands of power

and composure and build the chambers of knowledge in the hearts, that the Merciful will reveal Himself in them; this is better unto you than that whereupon the sun riseth; to this will bear witness the One on whose part is the decision of the discourse.

The breath of God is diffused throughout the world, because the Desired One hath come in His Most Great Glory. Lo! -- Every stone and clod crieth, "The Promised One hath appeared, and the Kingdom is to God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Pardoner!" Beware lest theology prevent thee from the King of the known, or the world from Him who created and left it. Arise in the name of thy Lord, the Merciful, amidst the assembly of beings, and take the cup of life in the hand of assurance; drink thou therefrom first; then give it to drink to those who advance of the people of <p99> (different) religions. Thus hath the Moon of the Bayan shone forth from the horizon of wisdom and evidence. Rend asunder the veils of theology lest they prevent thee from the region of My Name, the Self-existent.

Remember when the Spirit (Christ) came; he who was the most learned of the doctors of His age gave a sentence against Him in the chief city of His country, while those who caught fish believed in Him; be admonished, then, O people of understanding!

Verily thou art one of the suns of the heaven of names; protect thyself lest darkness spread its veils over it and conceal thee from the light; look at that which has descended in the Book on the part of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Generous. Say, O assembly of learned men, withhold your pens, for the sound of the Supreme Pen hath been raised between the earth and the heaven; set aside that which ye have and accept what We have sent unto thee with power and dominion. That hour which was hidden in the knowledge of God hath come -- hasten unto Him with submissiveness and penitence.

O people of the earth! Say! Lo, I made Myself your ransom for the sake of your lives, but when I come unto you another time I see you fleeing from Me; therefore doth the eye of My compassion weep over My people; fear God, O ye people of observation.

Look at those who objected to the Son (Christ) when He came unto them with dominion and power; how many Pharisees were awaiting His meeting and making humble supplications to God for His appearance; but when the fragrance of union diffused itself and perfection was disclosed, they turned from Him and objected to Him; thus have we expounded unto thee that which was written in the Books and Tablets. None advanced unto the Face (Christ) save a certain limited number who were of those who never had any power among the people; and to-day all those who are in power and dominion glory in His Name (Jesus). Look likewise at this time; how many monks secluded themselves in churches in My Name; and when the appointed time was complete and We disclosed to them perfection they did not know Me, while they called unto Me at eventide and at dawn. We see them veiled from Myself by My Name (Jesus Christ). Verily this is naught but a marvel; say, beware lest celebration preventeth you from the Celebrated, and

worship from the Worshipped.

Rend asunder the veils of imagination; verily this is your Lord <p100> the Mighty, the Omniscient! He hath come for the life of the world and for the union of whatsoever is upon the whole surface of the earth. Come ye, O people, to the Rising-place of Revelation and tarry not even for a moment. Do ye read the Gospel and still do not acknowledge the Glorious Lord? This beseemeth you not, O concourse of theologians! Say, should ye deny this matter, by what proof did ye believe in God? Produce it! Thus the matter hath been revealed by the Supreme Pen on the part of your Lord El-Abha, in this Tablet from whose horizon the Light shone. How many servants are there whose actions and deeds became veils for themselves whereby they were withheld from coming nearer to God, the Sender of Breath.

O concourse of monks! The fragrances of the Merciful have diffused themselves over the beins; blessed is he who rejecteth passion and receiveth guidance; verily he is one of those who have gazed upon the inhabitants of the earth, and whosoever is thereupon is frightened save those chosen by God, the Ruler of persons.

Do ye adorn your bodies while the garment of God is intensely red with blood of hatred by that which came upon Him on the part of the people of willful blindness? Come out of your abodes; then make the servants enter into the Kingdom of God who is the King of the Day of Judgment. The Word, which the Son (Christ) concealed hath appeared; it hath been revealed in the form of man in this time; blessed is the Lord who is the Father, -- He hath come with His Most Mighty Power amongst the nations, turn toward Him, O concourse of the good.

O people of religions! We see you are wandering erringly in the waterless desert of loss; ye are the fish of this sea, why are ye withheld from your creator? Verily the Sea is raging before your faces, hasten unto Him from all regions. This is a day wherein the Rock (Peter) crieth out and praiseth in the Name of the Lord, the Exalted, the Independent, saying, Lo, the Father hath come and what hath been promised unto you in the Kingdom is accomplished; this is the word which was concealed behind the veil of might, and when the promised time came, it shone forth from the horizon of the Primal Will with manifest signs. My body was imprisoned to set you free, and We accepted humiliation for the sake of your glory; follow the Lord, the Lord of Glory and Kingdom and follow not every proud infidel. My body longeth for the Cross, and My head for the spear in the way of the Merciful <p101> that the world may be purified from sin; thus the Sun of Wisdom hath shone forth from the horizon of the command of the King of names and attributes. The people of the Qur'an have arisen against Us and tormented Us with torments whereat the Holy Spirit lamented, and thunder roared, and the eyes of the clouds wept. From amongst the unbelievers some imagined that affliction withholdeth El Baha from that which God the creator of all things, willeth; say unto them, No, by Him who causeth the rains to descend, nothing withholdeth Him from the mention of His Lord.

By God, the Truth! Even though they burn Him on the earth, verily He will lift

up His head in the midst of the sea, and will cry: "Verily, He is God of whatsoever is in the heaven and the earth!" And even though they cast Him into a dark pit, they shall find Him on the summits of the mountains crying, "The Desired One hath come with the authority of might and sovereignty." And though they bury Him in the earth, He will arise from the horizons of heaven and proclaim with the loudest voice, "El Baha hath come to the Kingdom of God, the Holy, the Mighty, the Unconstrained!" And though they shed His blood, every drop thereof shall cry out and call on God by this Name, whereby the perfumes of the garments were diffused through all regions.

Verily, under the swords of the enemies, We call the servants unto God, the Creator of the earth and heaven, and We assist Him so greatly that We could not be hindered either by the hosts of the oppressors or the influence of the liars. Say, O people of the earth, crush to pieces the idols of imagination, by the name of your Lord, the Mighty, the Benevolent, then advance unto Him in this Day, which God hath made the King of Days.

O thou, Chief of the People!

Harken unto that whereby the Shaper of decayed bones adviseth thee from the Religion of His Greatest Name, sell that which thou hast of decked ornaments and expend it in a sovereignty to the King and come out from the horizon of the house (Vatican), advancing to the Kingdom and severing thyself from the world.

Then speak of the celebration of thy Lord betwixt the earth and heaven.

Thus, also, the King of Names hath commanded thee, on the part of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Omniscient, to admonish the Kings, saying, "Be just amongst the people and beware not to aberrate from the ordinances of the Book."

This behooveth thee; beware not to dispose of the world and its gold, leave them to him who desireth them and adopt what <p102> was commanded unto thee on the part of the King of Creation.

Should any one come unto thee with the whole treasures of the earth, turn not thy sight toward them, but be as thy Lord hath been; thus also the tongue of Revelation hath uttered that which God hath made the decoration of the Book of Renovation.

Look at the pearl!

Verily its luster is in itself but if thou coverest it with silk it assuredly veileth the beauty and qualities thereof.

Such is man, his nobility is in his virtues, not in that which covereth him, and not in that wherewith the children delight.

Know, then, that thy ornament is the love of God and thy devotion to naught else save Him, and not to the allurements of the world which thou hast in thy possession: leave them to those who desire them and come to God, who causeth the rivers to flow.

All that was said in the proverbs was said by the tongue of the Son (Christ)

and He who speaketh today doth not utter them; beware not to take hold of the ropes of imagination and withhold thyself from what was ordained in the Kingdom of God, the Mighty, the Bounteous.

Shouldst thou be taken by the intoxication of the wine of the signs, and shouldst thou be desirous to come before the Throne of thy Lord, the Creator of the earth and heaven, let thy garment be My Love, and thy shield My Celebration, and thy providence reliance upon God, the Manifestation of the Powers.

O people of the Son!

We have sent unto you John the Baptist (The Bab who was the precursor of Baha) another time.

Verily He crieth in the wilderness of the Bayan, -- "O Creation of beings, make clear your eyes, the day of vision and meeting hath come nigh; and O people of the Gospel, prepare the way, for the Day whereon the Lord of Glory shall come, hath drawn nigh, prepare yourselves to enter the Kingdom."

Thus was the matter decreed on the part of God, the Cleaver of the Dawn.

Harken unto the strains which the Dove of Eternity hath sung upon the Branches of the Divine Lote Tree and which is vocal with the melody of "O people of the earth, We have sent unto you Him who was named John to baptize you with water that you bodies might be purified for the Appearance of Christ, and that He (Christ) hath purified you with the Fire of Love and with the Water of the Spirit, as a preparation for these days whereon the Merciful hath willed to cleanse your bodies with the Water of Life, by the hands of grace and bounty.

This is indeed the Father, whereof Isaiah <p103> gave you tidings, and the Comforter from whom the Spirit (Christ) hath received His Covenant."

O concourse of learned people!

Open your eyes that you may see your Lord sitting on the Throne of glory and might.

Say, O people of Religions!

Be not of those who followed the Pharisees and thus they were veiled from the Spirit.

Verily, they are not but in forgetfulness and lusts.

The perfection of the Ancient hath come by His Most Mighty Name and hath desired to make the people enter into the Most Holy Kingdom, and that the sincere may see the Kingdom of God before His Face.

Hasten unto Him and follow not every denying infidel.

And if the eye of any one oppose him in this, it behooveth him to pluck it out.

Thus was it written by the Pen of Eternity on the part of the King of the contingent beings; verily He hath come another time for your deliverance.

O people of creation, will ye kill Him after that He desireth for you eternal Life?

Fear God, O people of discernment.

O people harken unto that which is revealed to you on the part of the region of thy Lord, El Abha, turn unto God, the lord of this life, and the life to come; thus commandeth you the Rising-place of the Sun of Inspiration on the part of the Creator of all human beings.

We have created you for the light, and We do not like to leave you for the fire, O people.

Come out from darkness through this Sun which has shone forth from the horizon of the grace of God; then advance unto Him with purified hearts and assured souls, seeing eyes and bright faces.

This is that whereby the King of Fate admonisheth you, from the region of the Most Great Outlook, that ye may be attracted by the Voice to the Kingdom of Names.

Blessed is he who fulfilleth the Covenant, and woe unto him who breaketh the promise and denieth God the Knower of secrets.

Say, Lo!

This is the Day of Grace!

Come ye that I may make you kings of the realm of My Kingdom.

If ye obey Me you will see that which We have promised you, and I will make you the friends of My Soul in the realm of My Greatness and the Companions of My Perfection in the heaven of My Might forever.

And if ye disobey Me, I will be patient through My Mercy, perchance that ye will awake and arise from the bed of negligence, thus hath My forbearance preceded you.

Fear God and follow not those who have turned away from the Face while they call upon Him at eventide and dawn.

Verily the Harvest Day hath <p104> come and things are separated, that which was chosen is stored in the vessels of justice, and into the fire was cast what was fitted for it.

Thus hath decided thy Lord, the Mighty, the Beloved, in this Promised Day, verily He is the Ruler over that which He willeth, and there is no God but He, the Mighty, the Subduer!

The Gleaner did not wish but to store every good thing for Myself and did not speak but to inform you of My Command and guide you into the Path of Him by whose mention the Tablets were adorned.

Say, O people of the Gospel (Christians), We have revealed Ourselves unto you on a previous occasion and ye did not know Me.

This is another time, this is the Day of God, come unto Him, verily He hath come from heaven as He came from it the first time and desired to shelter you under the shadow of His Mercy.

Verily He is the Exalted, the Mighty, the Defender.

Verily the Beloved doth not like you to be burned in the fire of passion, and even were ye veiled it will not be but from your neglectfulness and lack of knowledge.

You mention Me and do not know Me: ye call upon Me and overlook My Appearance after I have come unto you from the heaven of eternity with My Glory the Most Great.

Burn the veils in My name and dominion that ye may find a way to the Lord.

The Glorious One crieth continually from the horizon of the Pavilion of Might and Greatness saying, "O people of the Gospel!

He hath come into the Kingdom who was out of it and today We see you tarrying at the Gate; rend the veils by the Power of your Lord, the Mighty, the Munificent, and then enter My Kingdom in My Name; thus doth He who desireth for you everlasting life, command you.

Verily He is the powerful over all things."

Blessed are they who have known the light and hastened toward it.

Behold!

They are in the Kingdom, they eat and drink with the elect. -- And We see you, O children of the Kingdom, in darkness, -- this is not meet for you.

Do ye fear to confront the light because of your deeds?

Advance thereunto, verily thy Glorious Lord hath honored His country by His coming, thus We teach you the path whereof the Spirit (Christ) hath declared; -- verily I bear witness for Him as He was indeed a witness for Me.

Verily He said, "Come, that I may make you fishers of men," and today We say, "Come, that We may make you vivifiers of the world."

Thus was the decree ordained in a Tablet written by the Pen of Command. <p105>

TABLET TO NAPOLEON THE THIRD

42. O Supreme Pen! Move in commemoration of other kings upon this brilliant and blessed page, that they may arise from the sleep of passion, hear that which is being sung by the Dove upon the branches of the divine Lote Tree, and hasten to God in this wonderful and impregnable Manifestation.

O King of Paris! Tell the priests not to ring the bells. By God, the True One, the most glorious Bell hath appeared in the Temple of the most glorious Name, and the fingers of the Will of thy Lord, the High, the Supreme, ring it in the world of eternal power, through His most splendid Name (Esm-e-ul Abha). Thus

have the mighty signs of thy Lord been revealed once more, that thou mayest arise to commemorate God, the Creator of the earth and heaven, in these days wherein the nations of the whole earth lament, the corners of the countries quake, and the dust of heterodoxy envelops the servants, except those whom thy Lord, the Mighty, the Wise, hath willed. The Unconstrained hath come in the shadow of lights to vivify the beings by the fragrance of His merciful Name, to unite the people and bring them together at this Table which hath descended from heaven.

Beware not to deny the grace of God after its descent. This is better for you than that which ye have, because what ye have will vanish and that on the part of God will endure. Verily, He is the Ruler over that which He pleaseth. The breaths of forgiveness are being wafted from the region of your Lord, the Merciful; he who advanceth unto them will necessarily be purified from disobedience and from every disease and infirmity. Blessed is he who cometh unto them, and woe unto him who turneth away. Shouldst thou turn thy face towards all the things of this world and listen with a spiritual ear, thou wouldst hear them exclaim: "The Ancient hath come, the Lord of the Most Great Glory hath appeared." Everything glorifieth God and praiseth Him; for among them some know God and mention Him, and some mention Him and do not know Him.

Thus we have expounded the command in an evident Tablet.

O King! Hear the voice of this enkindled Fire, from this verdant Tree of El Tor (Mount Sinai) which is elevated at this white and blessed Spot (Acca) behind the Everlasting City, and is vocal with <p106> the melody of "There is no God but Me, the Pardoner, the Merciful."

We have sent One whom We have strengthened with the Holy Spirit, that He may give thee tidings of this Light which hath shone forth from the horizon of the will of Thy Lord, the Exalted, the Most Splendid, and whose effects have appeared in the West, that ye may turn unto Him in this Day which God hath made the choicest of the days; whereon the Merciful hath revealed Himself to whosoever is in the heaven and the earth. Arise to serve God and assist His Cause -- verily, He will strengthen thee with the hosts of the seen and the unseen, and make thee ruler over that whereon the sun riseth: verily, thy Lord is the Mighty, the Potent.

The fragrances of the Merciful have diffused their sweet odors over the beings; blessed is he who findeth their beneficences and advanceth unto them with a firm heart. Adorn thy temple with the embroidered garment of My name, thy tongue with My celebration, and thy heart with My Love, the precious, the powerful.

We have not desired for thee aught save that which is better for thee than anything thou hast in thy possession and in the whole treasury of the earth. Verily, thy Lord is the Omniscient, the All-knowing. Arise among the servants of God in My name and say: "O people of the earth, advance toward Him who hath advanced toward you, for verily He is the Face of God among you, and His evidence in your midst, likewise His proof unto you; and He hath come to you

with signs the like of which the most learned have failed to produce." The Tree of El Tor speaketh in the bosom of the world, and the Holy Spirit crieth among the nations: "Lo! The Desired One hath come with evident Dominion."

O King! The stars of the heaven of theology have fallen. They are those who take as an evidence of the certitude of My Cause that which they have, and who mention God in My Name; but when I come with My Glory they turn away from Me. Verily, are they not of those who are worthless and fallen? This is that whereof the Spirit (Christ) gave you tidings when He brought the Truth, and the Jewish doctors opposed Him, until they committed that whereat the Holy Spirit lamented and those who are near to God wept. Look at the Pharisees; some of them had worshipped God for seventy years, and when His Son came they denied Him; but others who had even committed turpitude entered the Kingdom. Thus the Pen remindeth thee on the part <p107> of the King of the Ancient, for thine information regarding that which hath been ordained aforetime, that today thou mayest be of those who advance.

Say:

O concourse of monks!

Do not seclude yourselves in churches and sanctuaries.

Come forth by My permission; then occupy yourselves with that whereby your souls will be profited, and the souls of mankind.

Thus commandeth you the King of the Day of Judgment.

Be secluded in the fort of My love!

Verily, this is the true seclusion, were ye to know.

He who cleaveth to the house is indeed as one dead!

It is meet for man that he produce that whereby other men shall profit; and he who hath no fruit is fit for the fire.

Thus, as your Lord likewise admonisheth you (verily He is the Precious, the Generous) go forth and marry, that some one after you may arise to take your place.

We have commanded you to abstain from committing adultery -- not from that which proveth faithfulness.

Ye have taken the principles of yourselves and thrown those of God behind your backs.

Fear God, and be not of those who are ignorant.

Apart from man, who will mention Me on My earth, and how will My names and attributes be manifested?

Think of this, and be not of those who are veiled and asleep.

The One who did not marry (Christ), verily He could not find an abode wherein

to stay, nor could He find a place whereon to lay His head, on account of that which the treacherous had wrought.

His sanctity was not dependent upon that which ye know or what ye imagine, but upon that which We possess.

Ask, that ye may know His station, which hath been sanctified above the conjectures of whosoever is upon the surface of the whole earth.

Blessed are those who know!

O King! The world shall perish, and what thou hast, but the Kingdom remains to God, thy Lord, and the Lord of thy fathers who were of yore. It behooveth thee not to condone all those matters thy lust desireth. Fear the means of the Oppressed, and protect Him from the arrows of the oppressors. Because of what thou hast done[1] affairs shall be changed in thy kingdom, and the empire shall depart from thy hands, as a punishment for thy action; then shalt thou find thyself in manifest loss, and commotion shall seize the people there unless thou arisest to assist in this matter and followest the Spirit in this straight path! Thy glory hath made thee proud. Be My Life, it shall not endure, but shall <p108> pass away, unless thou takest hold of this firm Rope. We have seen humiliation hastening after thee, while thou art of those who sleep. It behooveth thee when thou hearest the Voice from the region of Glory to set aside that which thou hast, and say: "Labiek (I am ready), O God of whosoever is in heaven and on earth."
[1 Refers to Napoleon's rejection of a previous Tablet.]

O King!

We have been in the "Mother of Iraq" (Baghdad) until separation drew nigh; then We departed toward the "King of Islam" (Constantinople) by order of the Sultan.

When We came to him We encountered, through the people of deceit, that which could not be explained through utterance nor contained in volumes, and which made the inhabitants of Paradise lament, and the people within the fold of holiness.

But verily, the world is in dense ignorance! ...

Matters waxed more grievous for Us daily -- nay, hourly -- until they brought Us forth from the prison and caused Us to enter into the Most Great Prison (Acca) with manifest apprehension.

It was asked "for what offense were they imprisoned." "They say, because these people desire to renovate religion" was the reply.

Had the old religion really been your choice, then why did ye set aside that which was prescribed in the Bible and Gospels?

Render Us your explanation, O people!

By My Life, there is no escape whatever unto you today, if it is this.

I have been preceded in this very matter by Mohammaed, the Messenger of God,

and before Him by the Spirit (Christ), and before Him by the Interlocutor (Moses).

But if My offense is caused by the exaltation of the Word of God and the manifestation of His command, verily shall I be willing to be the first of culprits, and would never consent to exchange such guilt even for the possession of the kingdoms of heaven and earth.

When We reached this prison We designed to convey to the kings the letters of their Lord, the Mighty, the Laudable. ...

Perchance they will come to the Lord, who hath bounty from God.

Perchance they will turn to the Lord who hath come upon the clouds with evident dominion.

Verily, the greater the calamity, the greater the love of God and His command increaseth in El Baha. ... Should they cover Me with the earth's layers, they will find Me mounting upon the clouds and praying to God, the Mighty, the Powerful. I have sacrificed Myself for the Cause of God, and I long for calamities for the sake of His love and approval; and to this will bear witness all the calamities with which I am surrounded, which no one in the world hath foreborne. <p109>

Let the palaces be for the people of the graves, and empire be to those who desire it; then advance to the Kingdom, for this is what God hath chosen for thee, wert thou of those who draw nigh. And those who do not come to the Face in this Manifestation, verily, they are not alive; they are moved by passion as it pleaseth them. Verily, are they not of those who are dead?

Let thyself be kindled by this fire which the Merciful hath ignited in the midst of creation, that the warmth of His love be manifested by you to the hearts of those who advance. Follow My path, then attract the hearts by My mention, the Mighty, the Powerful. Verily, the one from whom the fragrance is the garment of the celebration of his Lord, the Merciful, is not diffused -- he is not worthy to bear the name man in this age.

Every soul is commanded by God to deliver the truth and work for His Cause, and those who comply with His exalted command should first characterize themselves with the best characteristics and attributes; and then try to deliver the truth to the people, who if they be truthseekers will undoubtedly be attracted by the words of such teachers. If not so characterized, his mere words will not have the least effect in the hearts of the worshippers of God. Thus doth God teach you; verily, He is the Pardoner, the Merciful; that those who do wrong, and oppress others, and at the same time command the people to be just, will by words coming from their own mouths be accused of lying and declared to be liars by the people of the Kingdom and those who move about the Throne of God.

O people of Baha, subdue the cities of the hearts by the sword of wisdom and demonstration; and those who argue in accord with their own desire and lust, they are in obvious wrong. The sword of wisdom is sharper than the sword of

steel -- if ye are of those who know. Draw forth that sword in My name and power, then invade with it the cities of the hearts of those who are fortifying themselves in the fortification of desire. Thus were ye commanded by your God, El Abha, whilst He was sitting under the swords of the disbelievers, that if ye knew of any sin or wrong committed by others, do not make it public nor reveal it to others, that He may not reveal yours; for He is the One who often veileth, the possessor of great bounty.

Look on the world as the temple (body) of a man attacked by disease, whose recovery depends upon the union of all its elements. <p110>

Therefore agree upon that which We have established for you, and follow not the ways of diversity. Verily, your Lord the Merciful loveth to see whosoever is in the world as one soul and one temple (body); therefore avail yourselves of the bounty of God and His mercy in these days the like of which the eye of creation never saw.

Where are the people of vanity and their palaces? Look at their graves and consider! We have made them as a warning to those who see. ... We behold the majority of the people as worshippers of names ... although it is testified to be every intelligent one that the name doth not profit any being after his death, unless it is attributed to God, the Powerful, the Praiseworthy. Thus have imaginations prevailed over them as a punishment for their actions. Look at their belittled minds! Through their utmost exertion and industry, they strive for that which doth not profit them; and should you ask "Is that which ye desire of any profit to you hereafter?" you will find them confounded for a reply, but if among them any one is just he will say "No, by the Lord of the worlds!" ...

TABLET TO THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA

43. O thou Emperor of Austria! The Day-spring of the light of Primal Unity was in the Prison of Acca at the time when thou didst visit the Masjid al-Asqa [the Further Mosque in Jerusalem] but thou hast passed by without even inquiries about Him by whom every house is honored and exalted and every high door is opened.

We destined it (the Temple) the Mikbal of the world for My commemoration, but thou hast rejected the commemoration when He appeared in the Kingdom of God, the Lord and the Lord of the worlds.

We have been with thee under all aspects and found thee clinging to the branch and heedless of the Root. Verily, thy Lord is a witness to what I say -- We were overtaken by sorrows at seeing thee journeying for the sake of Our Name (Christ) and knowing Us not while We were before thy face. Open thine eye that thou mayest see this most noble Outlook; know Him upon whom thou callest day and night and witness the Light which is springing from this magnificent Horizon. <p111>

TABLET TO THE KING OF BERLIN

44. O thou King of Berlin! Hear the call from this manifest Temple, "There is no God but Me, the Everlasting, the Peerless, the Pre-existent." Beware lest delusion withhold thee from the Day-spring of Manifestation; or lust veil thee from the King of the Throne and earth.

Thus doth the Supreme Pen admonish thee. Verily He is the Bounteous, the Generous.

Remember! Where is he who was greater than thou and of more honor and dignity, and where are his possessions (Napoleon the Third)? Awake and be not of those who sleep! Verily, he (Napoleon) hath put behind him the Tablet of God when We informed him of what had befallen Us on the part of the soldiers of oppression. -- Therefore humiliation has surrounded him from all sides until he fell to dust with great loss.

Awake! Consider his condition (Napoleon's) and remember your equals who have subdued the countries and governed the people.

Verily God the Merciful hath made them descend from palaces to graves -- consider and be of the mindful! Verily We desire naught of you, but We advise you for God's sake, and We will be patient as We have been through that which has befallen Us on your part, O ye assemblies of rulers!

TABLET TO QUEEN VICTORIA

45.

O Queen in London!

Hear the voice of thy Lord, the king of creatures, from the Divine Lote Tree that "There is no God but Me, the precious, the wise."

Lay aside what is on earth; then adorn the head of dominion with the diadem of the celebration of thy glorious Lord.

Verily He hath come into the world with His most great glory, and that which was mentioned in the gospel hath been fulfilled.

The land of Syria hath been honored by the advance of its Lord, the king of men, and the exhilaration of the wine of union hath seized upon the regions of south and north, -- blessed is he who discovereth the scent of the Merciful, and advanceth to the dawningplace of Beauty in this clear morning.

By the breaths of their Lord, El-Abha, and the voice of God, the exalted, <p112> The Masjid al-Asqa [the Further Mosque in Jerusalem] and the baths (probably Mecca) have shaken with joy, and every pebble of the earth praiseth the Lord by this most great name.

Lay aside thy desire -- then advance with thy heart to thy Lord, the ancient; Verily we remind thee for the sake of God, and we wish that thy name be exalted in the mention of thy Lord, the creator of the earth and heaven; and He is indeed the witness of all I say.

It hath reached us that thou hast forbidden the selling of slaves and hand-maidens; this is what God hath commanded in this marvellous Manifestation.

God hath recorded unto thee the reward of this; verily He is the discharger of the reward of the well-doers.

Follow that which hath been sent unto thee on the part of one learned and wise; and the one who turneth away and maketh himself great after the proofs have come unto him on the part of the revealer of the signs, verily God will frustrate all his plans; and He is the powerful over all things.

The actions and deeds will be accepted after coming (to the truth), and the one who turneth away from it, is indeed of those who are the most ignorant; thus hath it been decreed on the part of the powerful, the able.

And We have heard that thou hast entrusted the reins of deliberation into the hands of the commonwealth.

Thou hast done well, for thereby the bases of the edifices of all affairs are made firm, and the hearts of those who are under thy shadow (protection), both of the high and low, become tranquil.

But it behooves them to be as trustees amongst the servants of God, and to regard themselves as guardians over whosoever is in all the earth.

This is that whereby they are admonished in this Tablet on the part of one who is the overseer and the wise.

When any one turns toward the assembly, let him turn his glance to the Supreme Horizon, and say, "O God, I ask Thee by Thy most splendid name, to assist me unto that whereby the affairs of Thy servants may prosper, and Thy countries may flourish; verily Thou art powerful over all things."

Blessed is he who entereth the assembly in the regard of God, and judgeth betwixt man with pure justice; is he not of those who prosper?

O ye leaders of assemblies, whether there or in some other country, think of results and speak of that whereby the world and its conditions may be reformed; were ye of those who deliberate.

Look upon the world as the body of a man which was created sound and whole, but diseases have attacked him from various and divers causes and his soul is not at ease for a day, but <p113> rather his sickness increaseth, in that he hath fallen under the control of unskillful physicians who are hurried away by vain desires and are of those who stray madly.

And if one limb of his limbs becomes sound in one age of the ages, through a skillful physician, the other limbs remain as they were; thus doth the wise and knowing One inform you.

And today we see him under the hands of those who are taken by the intoxification of the wine of deceits in such manner that they do not know what is best for themselves, how much more, then, for this arduous and grave matter!

And if one of them endeavor to better his health, his intention will not be but to profit himself thereof whether by name or effect, therefore he will not be able to heal him save to a certain extent.

And that which God hath made the most mighty remedy and the most complete means for its health is the union of whosoever is upon the earth in a single matter, and a single law.

This can never be possible except through a skillful physician, perfect and strengthened by God.

By My life, this is the truth, and aught else is nothing but evident error.

And whenever this most great Physician hath come and the light hath shone forth from the ancient Dawningplace, these false physicians strive to hinder and prevent Him, and become as clouds between Him and the world; therefore he will not recover from his sickness, but will continue in his infirmity until death.

Verily they were not able to protect him and preserve his health, and He who was the manifestation of might among the creatures was prevented of what He desired by that which the hands of the false physicians had wrought.

Look on these days wherein the Beauty of the Ancient hath come with the Most Great Name for the life of the people of the world and their unison, how they rose against Him with sharpened sword and committed that which was dreaded by the faithful spirit, until they confined Him to the most desolate of lands and thus the hands of the truthseekers were prevented from grasping His robe.

It was said unto them, "The Reformer of the world hath come."

They replied: "It hath been ascertained that He is one of those who work sedition."

Nevertheless they never had any friendly intercourse with Him and they saw that He did not preserve Himself, but in all times He was amongst the hands of the people of tyranny; once they imprisoned Him and another time brought Him out, and another time traversed the country over with Him, thus also they pronounced sentence upon us <p114> and God is the witness of what I say; -- that they are the most ignorant people: before the truth, they cut off their arms but do not feel, deprive themselves of the good, but do not know it, and they are likened unto the small boys who cannot distinguish between the corrupter and the reformer, the good and the evil; verily We see them behind the thick veil of ignorance.

O assembly of princes, chiefs, and lords!

Why did ye become as clouds in the face of the sun and prevent Him from giving forth His effulgence?

Lend your ears unto that whereof the Supreme admonisheth you, that your souls may be at rest, then those of the poor and humble.

We ask God that He will keep the kings at peace, verily He is able to do what

He willeth.

O assembly of kings!

Verily We see you increasing your expenditure every year and placing the burden thereof on your subjects; this is naught but manifest injustice.

Fear the sight of the oppressed and his tears, and do not burden your subjects above that which they can bear, neither ruin them to build up your palaces.

Choose for them that which ye choose for yourselves; thus do We expound unto you that which will profit you if ye are of those who inquire.

They are your treasuries and beware lest ye exercise over them that which God hath never exercise, and entrust such treasuries into the hands of thieves; by them ye eat, rule and conquer, and still you make yourselves great against them.

Verily, this is naught but an astonishment.

Having rejected this Most Great Peace it behooveth you to be at peace among yourselves, perchance your affairs may be improved thereby, and also the affairs of those who are under your shadow, to a certain extent.

O assembly of rulers, improve the accordance among you, then you will not be in need of many soldiers and their accoutrements save to a certain degree whereof ye will protect your empire and countries; and beware lest ye lay aside that of which ye were admonished on the part of the Learned, the Faithful.

Be united, O assembly of kings, for by this, the winds of disagreement existing among you will subside, and your subjects and those who are around you will be at rest, were ye of those who know!

If a certain one amongst you should rise against the other, arise all of you and oppose him, for this is nought but manifest justice.

Thus We have admonished you in the Tablet which We sent to you, on another occasion; therefore follow that which hath been revealed on the part of the Precious, the Wise.

Should any <p115> one seek refuge in your shadow, have him protected and betray him not, thus admonisheth you the Supreme Pen, on the part of one Learned and Wise.

Beware, lest ye commit what was committed by the King of Islam when We came unto him by his command, and on that event his representatives pronounced sentence against Us with such injustice that all things lamented and the hearts of those who are near to God were burned; and the winds of lust moved as they listed, and We did not find on their part any stability or steadiness, -- are they not of those who stray madly?

O thou ancient pen!

Withhold the pen and let them wander in the dust of their imaginations; then

remember the Queen, perhaps she will turn with the purest heart to the most great Outlook.

Prevent her eyes from looking but to the region of her Lord, the king of fate, and peruse all that which hath been revealed in the Tablets and Books on the part of the creator of human beings by whom the sun hath been darkened and the moon eclipsed, and whose voice hath been raised between the earth and heavens.

O Queen, advance to God and say, "O my king!

I am the servant and Thou art the King of Kings; I have lifted up the hands of hope to the heaven of Thy bounty and gifts, therefore send down upon me from the clouds of Thy generosity, that which will cut me from all else but Thee and bring me nearer unto Thee.

O my God!

I ask thee by Thy name, which Thou hast made the sultan of names and the manifestation of Thyself to whosoever is in earth and heaven, to rend asunder the veils which intervene between me and the knowledge of the dawningplace of Thy signs and the rising-place of Thy revelation.

Thou art the powerful, the precious, the generous.

O my God!

Deprive me not of the fragrances of the garment of Thy mercy in Thy days, and record unto me that which Thou hast recorded unto thy servants who have believed in Thee and Thy signs, and attained to the knowledge of Thyself, and advanced with their hearts to the horizon of Thy command; Thou art the Lord of the worlds, and the most merciful of the merciful, and strengthen me, O my God, to mention Thee amongst Thy servants, and to assist Thy matter in Thy region, then accept from me that which has passed me on the occasion of the shining of the light of Thy face.

Thou art powerful over all things, and to Thee is El-Baha, O Thou in whose hand is the kingdom of the possessions of the earth and heaven."<p116>

A TABLET TO AMERICA (Translated from Kitab-i-Aqdas)

46. O Rulers of America, and Presidents of the Republic therein! Harken to the strains of the Dove, on the branch of eternity, which are vocal with the melody of "There is no God but Me, the Everlasting, the Forgiver, the Generous." Adorn the temple of dominion with the embroidered garment of justice and virtue, and its head with the diadem of the celebration of your Lord, the creator of the heaven and earth, -- thus doth the Day-spring of the names command you on the part of the One-All-knowing and Wise. The Promised One hath appeared in this exalted station, whereat smiled the mouths of existence of both the seen and the unseen. O people, avail yourselves of the Day of God; -- verily to meet Him is indeed better unto you than that upon which the sun riseth, were ye of those who know!

O concourse of statesmen! Harken unto that which is raised from the Day-spring of Greatness, "That there is no God but Me, the Speaker, the All-knowing." Assist with the hands of justice the broken-hearted, and crush the great oppressors with the scourges of the Commands of your Lord, the Powerful, the Wise!

TABLET TO THE JEWS

47. In the Name of God, the Knower, the Powerful!

Today is the Day wherein the Throne of the Lord calleth among the people unto all the denizens of the earth and commandeth them to glorify and sanctify God.

Today is the Day wherein the angels of heaven continually descend with the chalices of utterance and pitchers of knowledge and, becoming perfumed with the pure and holy fragrances, ascend.

Say: The promised God says: O Concourse of Jews! Ye were of Me, appeared from Me and returned to Me. How is it that ye do not recognize Me now when I have appeared with all the signs? Ye have taken foes for friends and abandoned the real Friend!

In this Day the New Heaven hath appeared and the earth is renewed.

Were ye to gaze with pure eyes, ye would behold the New <p117> Jerusalem; and were ye to turn with attentive ears, ye would hear the voice of God.

In this Day all things call unto you and invite you unto the Lord, while ye are so intoxicated with the wine of haughtiness that ye have not become conscious even for a moment. The ear is to hearken unto My voice, and the eye is to behold My beauty. Hearken unto it and be ye thereby warned!

The pillar of God is being erected and hath become manifest by His providence and command. The time of former things is past and a new time has become manifest, and all things are made new by the desire of God. But only a new eye can perceive and a new mind can comprehend this station. The Beginning and the End bore allusion to one blessed Word and that hath come and it become manifest. That Word is the soul of the Divine Books and Epistles, which hath forever been and will be forevermore. That Word is the key to the most great divine Treasury and the supreme hidden Mystery, which hath ever been concealed behind the veil of preservation. That Word is the same Alpha and Omega prophesied of by John. Verily He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden!

O Abdul Houssein! God willing, thou wilt be confirmed and bear unto the people (the Jews) the glad tidings of what was formerly revealed in the Divine Books. For this glad tidings is similar to the water of life for the dead of the world. Blessed are they who drink thereof and woe unto those who are deprived!

Say: In this Day the City of God hath appeared and is seen in full adornment. This is the City wherein the God of All is become manifest. Reflect upon the words of John, wherein he hath prophesied of the Holy City: "And I saw no

temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it. And the City hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the Glory of God (Baha'u'llah) did lighten it" and so on.

Take the rod of resignation in the name of God and guide the erring people, with entire severance, to the great City of God, that peradventure the wanderers may attain to the real native land and the blind ones may receive discerning sight. Verily, He is the Powerful to do that which He willeth. All things are in the grasp of His Power. Verily, He is the Mighty!<p118>

TABLET TO AN ORIENTAL JEW

48. O Sheikh! Be directed to the shore of the Greatest Ocean, and enter the Red Ark, which God hath prepared for the people of Baha in the omnipotence of the names.

Verily, It (the Red Ark) passeth over land and sea, and he who entereth it is saved, but he who entereth it not is lost.

If thou shouldst succeed and enter, direct thy face toward the Holy of Holies of God, the Omnipotent, the Omnipresent, and say:

"Verily, I beg of Thee, O God, by the greatest splendor of Thy most glorious Baha, and, verily, all Thy Baha contains the greatest Glory!"

Then the doors of the Kingdom shall be opened before thy face, and thou shalt see that which the eyes did not see, and hear that which the ears did not hear. Verily, the Wronged One admonisheth thee as He did before. He desireth for thee to enter the ocean of the Oneness of God, the Lord of the creatures.

This is a Day wherein all things declare and announce to the people this Manifestation, through Whom all that was hidden and stored in the knowledge of God, the Dear, the Glorious, was manifested.

O Sheikh! Thou didst listen to the delightful cooing of the Dove of the Bayan, while on the branches of the Lotus Tree of knowledge; and now hear the delightful chanting of the birds of wisdom that are raised and lifted up into the Supreme Paradise. Verily, He maketh thee understand that of which thou wert heedless.

Listen to that which the Tongue of Power and Might hath announced in the Books of God, the Desired One of all, the Wise. In this time the voice was assuredly exalted from the Lotus Tree in the supreme paradise and commanded Me to mention unto thee that which My Forerunner, who redeemeth Himself for this greatest Message and this right path, hath declared.

He (the Bab) said, that that which He said is the truth, "I have already written a gem concerning Him (the Manifestation); but verily, He is beyond My power of expression; and He cannot be reached, even by that which was mentioned in the Bayan. And until He (exalted and magnified is His Name!) spake concerning this greatest Manifestation and this greatest Gospel, verily, He, <p119> the Manifestation, was magnified and exalted. (So that it is impossible)

that He should be known by that which is beside Him, and become identified by the expression of His creatures. And, verily, I am the first servant who believed in Him and in His texts (revelations) and who partook of the first fruits of the gardens of the paradise of His knowledge, -- the gardens of His utterances. Yes, by His Majesty, He is the truth and there is no God but He! And all are made steadfast by His command."

So chirped the real Dove on the branches of the Godly Lotus Tree. Blessed is the soul who succeedeth by listening to it, and who partaketh and drinketh from the ocean of Godly revelations hidden in Its Word.

And He (blessed and exalted is He!) said also in the Bayan, whose declaration is uplifted: "In the ninth year ye shall attain unto all the good." And in another place He announced:

"And in the ninth year ye shall surely meet God." All these chantings that were manifested through the birds of the cities of knowledge coincide with that which was. Verily, I am God! And thus until the end of what He hath expressed (in that passage), magnified and exalted is He!

The explanation of Lordliness and Godliness hath been mentioned before. We have already torn the veils asunder and disclosed that which bringeth the people nigh unto God, the possessor of the lives.

Blessed is the one who succeedeth in attaining justice and equity in this bounty which envelopeth those in the heavens and earth, as a command on the part of God, the Lord of the creatures.

O Sheikh! Listen with the ear of equity to the chanting of the Gospel. Christ said: (Exalted is His Revelation) after stating the references concerning His return: "But of that Day and Hour no man knoweth; no, not the angels of Heaven, not even the Son of Man Himself, but the Father only." (Matthew xxiv, 36)

The meaning of Father in this passage is God (Glory be to His Majesty!) and He is the true trainer and the real teacher.

Joel said: "For verily the Day of the Lord is great and very terrible and who can abide it?" (Joel ii, 11)

The first verse mentioned of the references given (Matthew xxiv, 36) means that no one knoweth the time of the Manifestation save God, the All-knowing, the Informed. And the second quotation (Joel) expresseth the greatness of the Manifestation. In the same <p120> way it is stated in the Qur'an: "They questioned Thee (Muhammad) concerning the great News." Verily, this is the News whose greatness is mentioned in most of the Books (of difference Dispensations). This is the News whereby all the limbs of the people were shaken, save Him whom God, the Protector, the Victor, the Assister, wisheth. As (this News) was looked upon by the physical eye, all the people and inhabitants of different countries became upset and bewildered, save him whom God desireth.

O Sheikh! The Cause is so great and also the News! Meditate with clear insight and keenness upon the clear texts, the supreme Words, and that which hath been

manifested in these days, that thou mayest discover the hidden mysteries in the Books, and to the uttermost exert thine energy in guiding the people.

Hear with thy real hearing the declaration of Jeremiah:

"Alas, for verily that Day is great, so that none is like it!"

If thou shouldst look and reflect with the sight of equity thou wilt immediately recognize the greatness of this Day. Hear the voice of this Advise, the All-knowing, and let not thy souls be excluded from the Mercy of God, which anticipated all existence -- of the unseen and the seen.

Hear what David chanted: "Who will bring me unto the fortified City?" (Psalms cviii, 10)

O Sheikh! Read what Isaiah hath announced in his Book: "O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain! O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem! Lift up thy voice with strength; be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with power and His Arm shall rule for Him!" (Isaiah xl, 9-10) In this Day all the signs (references) are disclosed and fulfilled. The Great City hath descended from heaven and Zion is re-vivified and rejoiced, by the appearance of the Manifestation of God; and it hath heard the voice of God from all directions and places.

In this Day Jerusalem hath gained the new glad tidings, while the sycamore (wild, natural condition) becomes the cypress (nobility).

Amos said: "Verily the Lord will rear from Zion and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the habitation of the shepherds shall mourn and the top of Carmel shall withdraw." (Amos i,2)

Carmel in the Books of God is termed "The Heap of God," "The Vine of God" and sometimes the Heap of Wilderness (bewilderment); <p121> and this is the station for the bounty of the Manifestation. The Tent of Glory was raised upon it (Carmel) in these days. Blessed are those who advance! Also it was recorded: "Our Lord shall come, and shall not keep silence." (Psalms 1, 53)

O Sheikh! Meditate on the expression which was revealed unto Amos, because it is the desired of all people: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel; for lo! he that formeth the mountains. ..." Revealed by the Merciful in the Qur'an: "Blessed are those who look carefully with clear insight, and blessed are the winners!"

O Sheikh! By the Self (Life) of God! The river of Mercy is flowing, the ocean of Revelation is rolling and the Sun is shining and illuminating.

Now, with an emptied heart, dilated breast and a tongue of righteousness, read these supreme words that were manifested through the Forerunner; (that is to say, the First Point or the Bab).

This is what He said when He was addressing Hadrat' El Azeem:

"This is what He promised thee before answering thee: Wait until nine years have elapsed from the time of the Bayan; then say: 'Blessed is God, the best of all Creators!' And also say, 'It is a Revelation of which no one could have the full knowledge save God, -- not ye people who are heedless.'"

In the ninth year this greatest Manifestation shone forth (in His full Glory) from the Dayspring of God's Will (in such a station) that no one could deny Him save those who are neglectful and doubtful.

We ask God to strengthen His creatures to be directed to Him and to forgive the deeds they have committed in this impermanent life. Verily, He is the Pardoner, the Forgiver, the Merciful.

In another place the Bab declared: "Verily, I am the first servant who believed in Him (Baha'u'llah) and His texts." And he (the Bab) also said in the Persian Bayan: "Verily, He (Baha'u'llah) is the one who pronounceth in all conditions and createth the winds and treadeth upon the high places of the earth. The Lord, the God of Hosts, is His Name." (See Amos iv, 12-13) He said: "The dawn shall be darkened"; that is to say, if any one in the time of the Manifestation of the speaker of Torus consider himself the true morning, he will be darkened by the power <p122> and might of God. He is a false morning; but considereth himself the true one. Woe unto him and woe unto those who follow him without proof from God, the Lord of the creatures.

Isaiah said: "And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that Day." (Isaiah ii, 11) And concerning the greatness of the Manifestation he (Isaiah) said: "Enter into the rock and hide thee in the dust for the fear of the Lord and the Baha of His Majesty." (Isaiah ii, 19) "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it; the Baha of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the excellency of the Lord and the Baha of our God." (Isaiah xxxv, 1-2)

These expressions need no interpretation. They are clear like the sunshine, and like the light gleaming and radiating.

Every just and equitable one can attain the Paradise of knowledge through inhaling the perfume of these meanings; and he will succeed in gaining that wherefrom most people are excluded and veiled.

Say: Be pious toward God, O people, and follow not the false statement of the croakers (Nakazeen) who violated the Testament of God and His Covenant and denied His Mercy which anticipated all in earth and heaven.

Also he (Isaiah) said: "Say to them that are of a fearful heart: Be strong, fear not; behold your Lord!" (Isaiah xxv, 4) This blessed verse demonstrateth the greatness of the Cause, because the sound of the Trumpet will agitate the people, while trembling and fear will possess them.

Blessed is the soul who is illumined by the light of reliance (upon God) and enlightened by the light of self-dedication and withdrawal from all else save

God. Verily, such an one will never be prevented by the hardships and calamities of that Day; neither will he be frightened.

Thus the tongue of Revelation hath declared as a command on the part of the Merciful. Verily, He is the Almighty, the Powerful, the Conquerer, the Omnipotent!

It is incumbent on all who have ears and clear insight to meditate and ponder carefully upon these supreme words, in each of which oceans of meanings and distinct explanations are hidden, that the revelation of the Possessor of all religions may cause all <p123> His creatures to attain the desire and that supreme station which is the dawning of the horizon of this Declaration.

O Sheikh! If thou inhalest from the fragrance of the Revelation even less than the amount contained by the eye of a needle, thou wilt leave the whole universe and advance toward the light of the Face of His Presence, the Desired One.

Indeed there are many hidden meanings in the utterances of His Presence the Spirit (Christ). He mentioned many things, but lack of prepared listeners and of people of insight, caused Him to withhold or seclude them; as He said: "But ye cannot bear them now." (St. John xvi, 12) That dawning of the Revelation (Christ) meant that "His Presence, the Promised One, would mention them" (the many things).

As it was revealed by the Supreme Pen in Kitab-i-Aqdas:

"The many things which occurred on the earth after revealing the texts." In Kitab-i-Aqdas it was revealed as follows: "O land of Ta (Tihran)! Thou shouldst not grieve on account of anything, because God hath already made thee the dawning-place of rejoicing for the creatures. If He wisheth He may bless Thy throne by one who judgeth with justice and gathereth the sheep of God who are scattered by the wolves. Verily he meeteth the people of Baha with joy and gladness, and verily, he is the best of creatures in the presence of God. El-Baha of God and the splendor of those who are in the Kingdom of the Cause be upon him in every time."

Now the foregoing texts were revealed before, but in this moment the following verse is revealed:

"My God, my God! El-Baha prayeth Thee and asketh Thee, by the illumination of Thy Face, by the waves of the ocean of Thy Cause, and the shining of the sun of Thy Revelation, to strengthen the royal justice and equity, and, if Thou desirest, bless the throne and the judgment by him. Verily, Thou art the Powerful above what Thou wishest, and there is no God but Thee, the Hearer and the Answerer!

"Be rejoiced, O Land of Tihran! As God hath made thee the horizon of the Illumination, because the dawn of the Manifestation was born in thee and thou hast been named by that name, whereby the Orb of Bounty hath shone and the heaven and earth were illumined, afterward thy circumstances will be changed and the people of the Republic shall govern thee. Verily, thy Lord is the

<p124> All-knowing the Pacific. Be tranquil through the bounty of thy Lord. Verily, thou wilt be engulfed by tranquillity after agitation. Thus it was preordained in a wonderful new Book."

TABLET TO THE CHRISTIANS

49. In the Name of the Lord, the Lord of Great Glory!

This is a Book from before Us to the one whom the covering of the Names hath not kept from God, the Creator of the earth and heaven, whereby his eyes may be enlightened in the Days of his Lord, the Protector, the Self-subsistent!

Say: O Concourse of the Son (Christians)! Are ye hidden from Myself because of My Name? What maketh ye to doubt? Ye have called for your Lord the Self-dependent, night and day, and when He hath come from the Heaven of Pre-existence, in His Greatest Glory, ye have not approached Him, and were of the heedless. Then consider those who turned away from the Spirit (Christ) when He came to them with manifest power. How many of the Pharisees were abiding in the Temples in His Name, and were entreating because of His separation! But when the gate of union was opened and the light shone forth from the Day-spring of Beauty, they disbelieved in God, the Exalted, the Great, and did not attain to His visitation, after having been promised thereunto in the Book of Isaiah, as well as in the Books of the Prophets and the Apostles. No one of them approached the Day-spring of Favor except those who were of no account among the people, but in whose names all the lords of evident honor boast at the present day. Remember, the most learned doctors of His country in His age condemned Him to be killed, whilst one who was a catcher of fishes believed in Him. Be astonished thereat and be of those who remember!

Likewise look at this time. How many monks were abiding in churches and were calling for the Spirit, and when He came in truth, they approached Him not and were of those who are afar! Blessed is whosoever abandoned them and approached the Aim of all that is in the heavens and earth. They read the Gospel and confess not in the Glorious Lord, after coming in His holy mighty and beautiful Kingdom.

Say: Verily, We have come unto you and have endured the abominations of the world because of your salvation. Do ye flee <p125> from Him who hath redeemed His soul for your lives? Fear God, O concourse of the Spirit, and follow not all learned men who are afar.

Do ye suppose that He hath desired His soul after being at every instant under the swords of the enemy? Or that He desired the world after being imprisoned in the most ruined of cities? Then judge thereupon and follow not the oppressors. Open the doors of your minds; verily, the Spirit standeth behind them.

What maketh ye to keep afar from Him who hath desired to bring ye nigh to the shining abode? Say: Verily, We have opened unto you the gates of the Kingdom; are ye closing the door of your houses before My Face? Verily, this is naught but a great error.

Say: Verily He hath come from Heaven as He came from it the first time; beware lest ye contradict that which He saith, as the nations before you contradicted that which He said. Thus do I make known to you the truth, if you are of those who know.

Surely, the River Jordan hath joined with the Great Sea; the Son in the holy valley calleth "Labieck!" ("I am ready, O my God, I am ready!"); and the Mount circles around the House, and the Tree calleth, "Surely the Desired One hath come in His exalted glory!" Say: Surely the Father hath come and hath fulfilled that whereunto you were promised in the Kingdom of God.

This is the Word the Son veiled when He said to those around Him that at that time they could not bear it; but when the stated time was ended and the hour arrived, the Word shone forth from the horizon of the Will. Beware, O concourse of the Son, cast it not behind you, but hold thereunto! It is better for you than all that which is before you. Verily, He is near to the charitable.

Surely the hour hath passed, the knowledge of which We had veiled from all that is in the earth, and from the Angels of the Presence. Say: Verily He beareth witness to Me and I bear witness to Him; verily, He desired naught but My Person, whereunto bear witness alt hose just ones who know. Verily, We are inviting to God the Lord of the Names, in the midst of afflictions. Say: Continue in that which is promised unto you in the Books of God, and walk not in the path of the ignorant.

Surely My body is imprisoned for the salvation of your souls; then draw nigh to the Face, and follow not all the obstinate proud <p126> ones. Verily, He hath accepted the greatest abasement for your honor, and ye are diverting yourselves in the valley of heedlessness. Verily, He is in the most ruined of houses for your sakes, and ye are sitting in palaces.

Say: Have ye not heard the sound of the voice of the Crier (the Bab) who is crying in the wilderness of The Bayan, proclaiming to your Merciful Lord? Know that surely He hath come in the truth, in the shadow of demonstration, with proof and argument, and the people of unity are beholding the Kingdom before their faces. Blessed is he who approacheth Him, and woe to all deniers and doubters!

Say unto the priest that the Chief hath surely come. Then emerge from behind the veil, in the name of thy Lord, the Lord of the necks, and proclaim to the people this greatest and exalted Manifestation. Verily, the Spirit of Truth hath come to guide you unto all truth. Verily, He speaketh not unto you from Himself, nay rather from before the All-knowing and Wise. Say: He is the One whom the Son hath glorified and hath upraised His command. Abandon that which is before you, O people of the earth, and take that which is commanded you from before the Powerful, the Faithful. Purify your ears and turn your minds to hear the sweet call which hath arisen from the direction of Sinai, the abode of your most glorious (Abha) Lord. Verily, He attracts you unto a station wherein you will behold the Lights of the Face, which hath shone forth from this brilliant Horizon.

Say: O concourse of priests, leave the bells, then come out from the churches. In this Day, it behooveth you to proclaim in this Greatest Name among the nations. Do you choose to be silent whilst all trees and stones are calling out with the loudest voice, "Surely the Lord hath come, the possessor of great glory!" Blessed is he who hasteneth unto Him. Verily he is of those whose names will be established forever, and whom the Supreme Concourse will remember. The command is appointed from before the Spirit in this wonderful Tablet.

He who inviteth the people in My Name, he is of Me, and from him will appear that which will be beyond the power of all that is in the earth. Then follow the path of the Lord, and follow not the heedless. Blessed is the sleeper who will awaken by these powers and will stand up among the dead, directing himself in the <p127> path of the Lord; verily, he is of the essence of the creatures before the True One, and verily, he is of those who have attained.

Say: Verily, He hath surely shone forth from the direction of the Orient, and His Signs have appeared in the Occident. Think thereupon, O people, and be not like unto those who neglected the Remembrancer when He came unto them from the Mighty, the Laudable. Awake by the breezes of God! Verily, they have blown in the world. Blessing to whosoever hath found their fragrance and is of the assured.

Say: O concourse of bishops! Ye are the stars of the heaven of My knowledge. My favor liketh it not that ye fall down upon the face of the earth, but My equity saith, this is that which is appointed by the Son, and whatsoever hath issued from His pure, faithful and true mouth shall not change. Verily, the bell is ringing in My name and is mourning for My soul, but the Spirit is manifest gladness.

Say: The body of the Beloved is yearning after the Cross, and His head desireth the spear in the path of the Merciful. Verily, the assault of the oppressors keepeth Him not from that which He desireth. Surely We have abandoned all things to the meeting of thy Lord the Possessor of Names. Blessed are those who draw nigh to God, the Lord of the Day of Judgment.

O concourse of monks! If ye follow Me I will appoint you heirs of My Kingdom, and if ye disobey Me -- in My forbearance I will endure it patiently: verily, I am the forgiver and the merciful.

O land of Syria! Where is thy righteousness? Surely thou hast attained the honor of the feet of thy Lord. Have ye discovered the fragrance of Union, or are ye of the heedless? Bethlehem is even now stirred by the breeze of God. I hear its call, saying, "O generous Lord, where is Thy great glory established? The breaths of Thy union have already quickened me after being melted because of my separation. Praise be unto Thee, for Thou hast uncovered the veilings and hast come with power in manifest glory!" We called unto it from behind the canopy of majesty and greatness: "O Bethlehem! This Light hath already appeared from the Orient and hath journeyed toward the Occident until it came unto thee in Its latter days. Then tell Me: Do the children know the Father and confess Him or do they contradict <p128> Him as the people contradicted Him before?"

Thereupon its cry arose and said, "Thou art the Knowing, the All-informed!"

Verily, We testify that all things bear witness to Us, whereof some know and bear witness, but the majority bear witness and do not know. Mount Sinai already shakes with the shock of meeting, and hath raised its sweet call to the remembrance of its Lord, the Abha (the Most Glorious) and saith: "O my Lord, I perceive the fragrance of Thy garment as Thou hast approached with signs and hast honored these countries by Thy feet. Blessing be unto Thy people if they know Thee and discover Thy fragrance, and woe unto those who sleep!"

Blessing be unto thee, O thou who hast approached the Face, for thou hast torn off the coverings, broken the idols and known thy Pre-existent Lord. Surely the people of the Qur'an have stood against without any proof or argument, and have tortured Us at every instant with a new torment, supposing, verily, that calamities will prevent Us from that which We have desired; but what they suppose is false. Verily, thy Lord is powerful in that which He desireth.

I passed not by any tree, except My mind addressed it:

"Would that thou wert cut down in My name and that My body were crucified upon thee!" This is that which We have revealed in the Book of the King (Shah of Persia), that it may be a remembrance of Me to the people of religions. Verily, thy Lord is the Knowing, the Wise.

Verily, grieve thou not for all they have committed. Verily, they are dead and not living; leave them to the dead and turn thy face to the Reviver of all creatures. Beware lest thou art grieved by the saying of those who have been negligent. Be steadfast in the Cause and teach the people with great wisdom. In such wise commandeth thee the Lord of the earth and heaven. Verily, He is the mighty, and the generous!

God shall soon exalt thy remembrance and will establish whatsoever thou hast spoken in His love with the Supreme Pen. Verily, He is an assister to the charitable.

Remember from My part he who is named Murad, and say:

"Blessing be unto thee, O Murad, who hath cast away thy desire and seized the desire of all the creatures."

Say: Blessed is the sleeper who is awakened by My breezes!
Blessed is the dead who is quickened by My breaths!<p129>

Blessed is the eye that is enlightened by My beauty!

Blessed is the seeker who sought the tent of My majesty and My greatness!

Blessed is the affrighted one who took refuge under the shadow of My domes!

Blessed is the thirsty one who hastened to the Salsabil of My favor!

Blessed is the hungry one who hastened away from desire because of My passion, and was present at the Table that descended from the Heaven of My grace for My elect!

Blessed is the lowly one who held to the rope of My might, and the poor who took shelter under the shade of the canopy of My wealth!

Blessed is the ignorant one who desired the Kawther of My knowledge, and the heedless one who held the rope of my remembrance!

Blessed is the spirit who was stirred by My breath and entered My Kingdom!

Blessed is the soul whom the fragrance of My union shook and attracted to the Day-spring of My command!

Blessed is the ear which heard, the tongue which witnessed, and the eye which beheld and knew the soul of the Lord, the possessor of Glory and Dominion, and the Lord of Majesty and Might!

Blessed are those who have attained!

Blessed is whosoever is illumined by the Sun of My Word!

Blessed is whosoever adorned his head with the Wreath of My love!

Blessed is he who heard My grief and rose up for My assistance among My people!

Blessed is he who redeemed himself in My path and suffered tribulations for My name!

Blessed is he who was assured in My Word and stood up among the dead for My remembrance!

Blessed is he who was attracted by My melodies and rent the coverings by My power!

Blessed is he who performed My Covenant and was not prevented by the world from entering the court of My holiness!

Blessed is he who cut himself off from all other than Me, soared in the ether of My love, entered My Kingdom, perceived the dominion <p130> of My might, drank the Kawther of My favor and the Salsabil of My grace, and was informed of My command and of whatsoever was hidden in the treasuries of My Words, and shone forth from the horizon of inner significances in My commemoration and My praise! Verily, he is of Mine. May My mercy, grace, favor and glory be unto him!

TABLET TO THE PERSIAN ZOROASTRIAN Baha'is

50. In the Name of God, the Peerless.

Glory befits that discerner who, through one shower of the ocean of His generosity, expanded the firmament of existence, begemmed it with the stars of knowledge, and summoned the people to the most high court of perception and understanding.

This shower, which is the first Word of the Almighty, is sometimes called the water of life, for it quickens the dead souls in the desert of ignorance with the spring of intelligence. Sometimes it is called the First Emanation which

appears from the Sun of Wisdom, and when it began to shine the first movement became manifest and known, then phenomena stepped into the arena of existence; and these appearances were through the generosity of the Incomparable, the Wise One. He is the knower, the giver! The seen and the unseen fail to attain the measure of His understanding. The world of being and whatever has issued from it bears witness to this utterance.

Therefore, it has become known that the first bestowal of the Almighty is the Word. The receiver and acceptor of It is the understanding. It is the first instructor in the University of existence, and is the Primal Emanation of God. Whatever is manifested is the appearance of Its wisdom. All the names originate in His name and the beginnings and endings of all affairs are in His hand.

Your letter came to this captive of the world in this prison. It brought happiness and increased friendship; it renewed the remembrance of the former times. Thanks belong to the Possessor of the universe, who permitted us to meet in the land of Persia. We met, we conversed, and we listened. It is hoped that no forgetfulness shall follow that meeting, that the revolving of the wheel of time shall not take away the remembrance from the <p131> heart, and that the plants of love shall grow out of that which is sown, and become green, verdant and imperishable.

You have asked regarding the heavenly books. The pulse of the world is in the hand of the skillful physician. He diagnoses the illness and wisely prescribes the remedy. Every day has its own secret, and every tongue a melody. The illness of today has one cure and that of tomorrow another. Look ye upon this day, and consider, and discuss its needs. One sees that existence is afflicted with innumerable ailments, compelling it to lie upon the bed of suffering. Men who are intoxicated with the wine of self-contemplation prevent the wise physician from reaching the patient.

Thus they cause themselves and the world to suffer.

They know not the ailment nor recognize the remedy. They take the wrong for the right, the crooked for the straight, the enemy for the friend.

Harken ye to the melody of this Prisoner! Stand up and proclaim; perchance those who are asleep may awaken. Say, O ye dead ones, the generous hand of the Almighty is passing around the water of eternal life. Hasten ye and drink. Whosoever becomes alive in this Day shall never die, and whosoever dies in this Day can never find life.

You have written regarding the language. Both Persian and Arabic are good, for that which one desires to gain from language is attainment to the meanings of the speaker, and this can be accomplished with both. As in this day the Sun of Wisdom has appeared and shone forth from the horizon of Persia, the more you respect this language the better it is.

O friend; when the Primal Word appeared in these latter days, a number of the heavenly souls heard the melody of the Beloved and hastened toward it; while others, finding that the deeds of some did not correspond with their words were

prevented from the splendors of the Sun of Knowledge.

Say! O ye sons of earth! The pure God proclaims, that which in this glorious day shall purify you from the stains of desire and enable you to attain to tranquillity in My straight path and My manifest road. To be severed from attachment means to be separated from those things which occasion loss and lessen the grandeur of man. If the people of the world should attain to the heavenly utterances, they would never be prevented from the ocean of divine generosity. The heaven of righteousness has no <p132> star and never shall have one brighter than this. The first utterance of the Wise One is: O ye sons of earth! Turn from the darkness of foreignness to the shining of the sun of unity. This is that which shall benefit the people of the world more than aught else. O friend! The tree of the Word has no better blossom, and the ocean of wisdom never shall have a brighter pearl than this.

O ye sons of intelligence! The thin eyelid prevents the eye from seeing the world and what is contained therein. Then think of the result when the curtain of greed covers the sight of the heart. Say, O people, the darkness of greed and envy obscures the light of the soul, as the cloud prevents the penetration of the sun's rays. Should one listen with the ear of intelligence to this utterance, he shall spread the wings of freedom and soar with great joy toward the heaven of understanding.

When the world was environed with darkness, the sea of generosity was set in motion and divine illumination appeared so that the deeds were disclosed. This is the same illumination which is promised in the heavenly books. Should the Almighty desire the hearts of the people of the world, He will purify and sanctify them through the power of the Lord, and will pour forth the light of the Sun of Unity upon the souls to regenerate the world.

O people! The word must be demonstrated by the deed, for the righteous witness of the word is action. The former without the latter shall not allay the thirst of the needy nor open the doors of sight to the blind.

The Heavenly Wise One proclaimeth! A harsh word is like unto a sword, but gentle speech is like unto milk. The children of the world attain to knowledge and better themselves through this. The Tongue of Wisdom says: Whosoever possesses Me not, has nothing. Pass by whatever exists in this world, and find Me. I am the sun of perception and the ocean of science, I revive the withered ones and quicken the dead. I am that light which illumines the path of insight. I am the falcon on the hand of the Almighty. I bear healing in My wings, and teach the knowledge of soaring to the heaven of truth.

The Peerless Beloved says! The way of freedom is opened. Hasten ye. The fountain of knowledge is gushing, drink ye. Say! O friend! The tabernacle of oneness is raised, look not upon each other with the eye of strangeness. Ye are all the fruits <p133> of one tree and the leaves of one branch. Truly, I say, whatever lessens ignorance and increases knowledge, that has been, is and shall be accepted by the Creator.

Say! O people, walk ye under the shade of the tree of righteousness, enter ye under the protection of the tent of unity. Say! O thou possessor of sight: The past is the mirror of the future, look and perceive. Perchance, after the acquirement of knowledge, ye may know the Friend and attain to His good pleasure. Today the best fruit of the tree of science and knowledge is that which benefits mankind and improves his condition.

Say! The tongue is the witness of My truth, do not pollute it with untruthfulness. The spirit is the treasury of My mystery, do not deliver it into the hand of greed. It is hoped that in this dawn the world shall become illumined with the rays of the sun of understanding and knowledge, so that we may attain to the good pleasure of the Beloved and drink from the ocean of divine recognition.

O friend! As there were few ears to hear, for some time the Pen has been silent in its own chamber, and to such a degree that silence has had precedence over utterance. Say! O people, words are revealed according to the capacity of the people, so that the beginners may make progress. The milk must be given according to a measure, in order that the babe of the world may enter into the realm of grandeur and be established in the court of unity.

O friend! We have seen the pure ground and cast the seed of knowledge. Now it depends upon the rays of the sun whether it burns up or is caused to grow. Say, today, through the greatness of the Peerless Wise One, the sun of knowledge has appeared from behind the covering of the spirit and all the birds of the meadow of Oneness are intoxicated with the wine of understanding and are commemorating the name of the Beloved. Happy is the one who finds this and become immortal.

EXTRACT FROM THE TABLET REVEALED BY BAHA'U'LLAH TO HIS HONOR, M. ALI,

Upon him be Baha'u'llah. The Supreme Pen commands:

51. O ye friends of the True One, the purpose of enduring these consecutive afflictions and successive sufferings is this: That those <p134> assured in God should deal with one another with the utmost union, in such wise that there may be effaced from among them every difference, duality and strangeness, except in the special ordinance revealed in the Divine Book.

A discerning man will suffer no defect in any matter; all that may happen will indicate his greatness of station and purity of character. For instance, if a person humbles himself for the sake of God before the friends of God, this is humbleness shown to the True One Himself; for this is done by the one as consideration of the other's faith in God. Hence to be humble for the sake of God before another means to be humble before God Himself. In this case, if the other does not behave in like manner, or if he shows forth haughtiness, the discerning man will attain to the loftiness of his own action and to the reward thereof; while the detriment in the action of the other one will return to the latter himself. Likewise, if any one acts with haughtiness, that haughtiness will be directed to the True One. We seek refuge in God from such, O ye possessors of intelligence!

I swear by the Greatest Name, it is a pity that in these days anyone should gaze at transient concerns!

Arise ye in the Cause of God and deal with one another in the utmost love. Consume the egotistical veils with the fire of oneness, sincerely for the sake of God, and consort with one another with cheerful and rejoicing faces. Ye have all seen the characteristics of the True One with your own eyes and that it has be no means been beloved to pass any evening during which any one of the beloved of God shall be annoyed with this Youth.

The heart of the world is enkindled with the divine world. It is a pity for you not to be ignited with this fire. God willing, We hope you will designate this blessed even to be the even of union: All of you must become united together and adorned with the embroidery of excellent and praiseworthy morals.

Let your endeavor be in guiding some soul out of the whirlpool of mortality to the river of immortality, and to behave in such a manner among the servants that the traces of the True One may become manifest in you. For you are the first of the existence, the first who worship, the first of those who revolve around the True One. By the One who caused Me to give utterance to that which He desireth, your names are more famous in the Supreme Kingdom than they are well-known to your own selves. You <p135> should not fancy that this statement is mere imagination. O, that ye could see what your merciful Lord sees concerning the loftiness of your degree, the greatness of your worth, and the exaltation of your position! We beg of God that your desires may not prevent you from that which He hath ordained for you.

We hope that you will deal with one another with the utmost harmony, love and affection, in such wise that the standard of unity will be hoisted through your union and the banner of infidelity reversed, and that ye may precede one another in good deeds and in showing forth the good pleasure of God. His is the command and creation. He doeth whatsoever He willeth and ordereth that which He desireth. Verily, He is the Powerful, the Mighty, the Potent!

TO A BELIEVER

52. He is the Powerful over what was and is.

The signs have appeared, the evidences become manifest and the Promised One hath come in His Name, the Protector, the Self-existent. Verily, He is the stored treasure, the hidden mystery, who hath appeared from the horizon of the world and is calling all nations unto God, the King of Pre-existence, but the people are those who do not hear. They were deceived by their desires in such wise as to make them not hear the voice of God, nor see His extolled station.

Blessed are ye, O people of Baha, for that by reason of which ye have rent asunder the veils, in spite of the people of creation who have denied the grace of God after it hath been caused to descend, and adopted that which they have of imaginations and suspicions. We show unto them the horizon of assurance, but from it they turn away. We let them hear the cooing of the Dove but they do not listen. At all times they are admonished by the Pen of Inspiration but they

remember not. They follow the simple, whom they call savants. Are they not indeed of those who understand not? Verily, those who cannot distinguish between the right and the left pretend to a knowledge of science, and thus they feel themselves great against the Truth, the Knower of the unseen. Say: by the King of creation, ye are of the vile and foolish people and your limbs and substances are quit of you, but ye perceive not.

But as to thee, be tranquil and confident through the bounty <p136> of God. Verily, He is with those who have turned unto Him and who have succeeded in attaining the pure sealed wine.

Those who have associated others with God shall see their lodging in the fire, while those who believed in His Oneness are in the Kingdom of God, the Lord of what was and is.

Thus hath the Tongue of Pre-existence spoken in the Most Great Prison as a favor on His part to thee and to those who fly away in the atmosphere of love. <p137>

CHAPTER THREE
THE NEW AGE

53. In My Name, the Protector over all Names!

Praise and glory belong unto the King of Names and the Creator of Heavens, the waves of the sea of whose appearance are manifest and evident before the faces of all in the world. The sun of His command is submitted to no covering, and His word of affirmation is beyond the reach of denial. Neither the restriction of tyrants nor the oppression wrought by Pharaohs could withhold Him from His Will. Glorified is His Power and great is His Grandeur!

Praise be unto God! Although signs have encompassed the world, and proofs and arguments are shining forth and manifest from all directions like unto the light, yet ignorant people are found heedless, nay, even contradictory. O that they were content with mere contradicting! Nay, but they are all the time plotting to cut down the Blessed Tree. From the beginning of this Dispensation the manifestors of selfishness have exerted themselves with all tyranny and injustice to extinguish the Light of God; but, verily, God prevented them therefrom, and through His power caused the Light to appear and protected it through His might, until the heaven and earth were illumined with its radiance and glory!

54. Glory be unto Thee, O Thou God of the world and desire of nations, O Thou who hast become manifest in the Greatest Name, whereby the pearls of wisdom and utterance have appeared from the shells of the great sea of Thy knowledge, and the heavens of religions are adorned with the light of the appearance of the sun of Thy countenance!

I beg of Thee -- by that Word, by reason of which Thy proof was made perfect among Thy creatures and Thy argument among Thy servants -- to strengthen Thy people in that whereby the face of the Cause will radiate in Thy dominion and

the standards of <p138> Thy power and the banners of Thy guidance will be planted in Thy lands and among Thy servants!

O my God! Thou beholdest them clinging to the rope of Thy grace and holding fast to the hem of the mantle of Thy beneficence. Ordain for them that which may draw them nearer unto Thee, and withhold them from all else save Thee.

I beg of Thee, O Thou King of existence and Protector of the seen and unseen, to make whosoever arises to serve Thy Cause as a sea moving by Thy desire; ablaze with the fire of Thy Sadrat, shining from the horizon of the heaven of Thy Will. Verily, Thou art the mighty one, who neither the power of all the world, nor the strength of nations can weaken. There is no God but Thee, the One, the Single, the Protector, the Self-subsistent! 55. Concerning the progress of existence and the development of men We have revealed that which is the greatest door to the training of the people of the world. All that hath been formerly revealed from the tongue or pen of the people of the past, the King thereof hath indeed revealed in this most great Manifestation from the heaven of will of the Lord of Pre-existence. In former ages it has been said: "To love one's native land is faith." But the Tongue of Grandeur hath said in the Day of Manifestation:

"Glory is not his who loves his native land; glory is his who loves his kind." By these exalted words He taught the birds of souls a new flight, and effaced restriction and blind imitation from the Book. This Oppressed One hath forbidden the people of God to engage in strife and conflict, and summoned them to good deeds and to spiritual and pleasing morals. Blessed are they who adhere thereto, and woe unto those who reject them!

56. O people of God! I exhort you to reverence. Reverence is, in the primary station, the lord of all virtues. Blessed is he who is illumined with the mantle of integrity! He who is endowed with reverence is endowed with a great station. It is hoped that this Oppressed One, and all, will attain to it, adhere to it, hold unto it, and observe it. This is the irrefutable command which hath flowed forth and is revealed from the Pen of the Greatest Name.

57. This Day is a Day wherein the gems of steadfastness must appear from the mine of man. O people of justice! Ye must be <p139> luminous like unto light, and be ablaze as the fire of the Sinaitic tree. This fire of love will assemble all the different peoples in one court; but the fire of animosity is the cause of disunion and conflict. We beg of God to protect His servants from the evil of His enemies. Verily, He is powerful in all things!

58. Praise be to God! The True One -- Exalted in His glory! -- hath opened the doors of the minds and souls through the key of the Supreme Pen. Every one of the revealed Verses is a manifest door to the appearance of spiritual virtues and holy deeds. This voice and this utterance is not particularized to one country or one city. The people of the world in general must adhere to that which is revealed and hath appeared, so that they may attain to the true freedom. The world is illuminated with the lights of the Orb of Manifestation; for in the "year sixty" (1844) the Precursor -- may the lives of all save Him

be a sacrifice to Him! -- announced the glad tidings of the new life, and in the "year eighty" the world attained to the new light and the wonderful life. Now most of the people of the lands are prepared to hearken unto the exalted Word, upon which depends and is based the resuscitation and resurrection of all.

59. In the Prison, Acca, We have revealed in the Red Epistle that which is conducive to the elevation of men and the development of nations. Among others, these utterances have been revealed therein, from the Pen of the King of existence.

The greatest foundations upon which depend the administration of peoples are the following:

60. First: The ministers of the House of Justice must promote the Most Great Peace, in order that the world may be freed from onerous expenditure. This matter is obligatory and indispensable; for warfare and conflict are the foundation of trouble and distress.

61. Second: Languages must be reduced to one, and that one language must be taught in all the schools of the world.

62. Third: All must adhere to the means which are conducive to love and unity.

63. Fourth: Men and women must place a part of what they earn by trade, agriculture or other business, in charge of a trustworthy person, to be spent in the education and instruction of the children. That deposit must be invested in the education of children under the advice of the trustees of the House of Justice. <p140>

64. Fifth: Complete regard should be had to the matter of agriculture. Although this matter is mentioned in the fifth, yet in reality it is endowed with the first station.

65. The fear of God is the real guardian and the ideal protector. Men must adhere and hold fast unto that which is conducive to the appearance of this great gift. Blessed is he who hearkens unto what My Supreme Pen hath uttered, and acts in accord with that which is commanded on the part of the Ancient Commander.

O people of God! Hearken unto the exhortations of the One Friend with the ear of the soul. The Word of God is like unto a tree: its planting ground must be the hearts of the people: cultivate it through the Kawther of wisdom and utterance, so that its roots may become firm, and its branches surpass the firmament.

66. O ye people of the world! The virtue of this most great Manifestation is that We have effaced from the Book whatever was the cause of difference, corruption and discord, and recorded therein that which leads to unity, harmony and accord. Joy unto those who practise!

67. O people of God! In this Day, the gaze of all must be extended only to the

horizon of the blessed Word: "He doeth whatsoever He willeth!" for, if any one attains to this station, he has attained, and is illumined by the light of ideal oneness; and all those outside this station are written and spoken of as followers of superstitions and imaginations in the Book of God.

68. In the principal laws and commandments which have ere this been revealed in the Book of Aqdas and other Tablets, affairs have been placed in charge of just kings and chiefs, and of the trustees of the House of Justice. Upon reflection, men of equity and discernment will witness, with outward and inward eyes, the effulgence of the orb of justice in all that We have revealed. At present that form of government followed by the British nation seems good; for that nation is illuminated both with the light of kingdom and consultation.

69. O people of God! The rightly guided men of learning, who engage in enlightening the people and are protected and preserved from the temptations of inordinate desire -- such men are accounted of the stars of the heaven of knowledge, before God, the Object of all the world. To respect them is obligatory. They are the flowing fountains, the shining stars, the fruits of the blessed tree, the <p141> signs of the divine power, and the seas of the eternal wisdom. Blessed is he who adheres to them. Verily, he is of those who have attained, in the Book of God, the Lord of the great throne!

70. O people of the earth! The first glad tidings which is conferred in this Most Great Manifestation on all the people of the world, from the "Mother Book," is the abolishing of the decree of religious warfare from the Book. Exalted is the Beneficent One, the Possessor of great bounty -- the One through whom the door of grace is opened before all in the heaven and earth.

71. The second glad tidings: it is sanctioned that all the nations of the world consort with each other with joy and fragrance. Consort ye, O people, with all religions with joy and fragrance! Thus hath the orb of permission and desire shone forth from the horizon of the heaven of the command of God, the lord of the creatures.

72. The third glad tidings is the study of various languages. This command hath already flowed from the Supreme Pen. Their Majesties, the Kings -- may God assist them -- or the counsellors of the earth must consult together, and appoint one of the existing languages, or a new language, and instruct the children therein, in all the schools of the world; and the same must be done with respect to writing also. In such case the earth will be considered as one. Blessed is he who heareth the voice and fulfilleth that which is commanded on the part of God, the Lord of the great throne!

73. The fourth glad tidings: let every one of the Kings -- may God strengthen them -- arise to protect and assist this oppressed (Baha'i) community. Each must precede the other in serving and showing love unto them. This matter is obligatory upon all. Blessed are those who practise!

74. The fifth glad tidings: in every country or government where any of this community reside, they must behave toward that government with faithfulness,

trustfulness and truthfulness. This is that which is revealed from the presence of the Ancient Commander! It is obligatory and incumbent on the people of the world in general to assist this most great Cause -- which has descended from the heaven of the will of the King of Pre-existence -- that perchance the fire of animosity which is ablaze in the hearts of some of the nations, may be quenched through the water of divine wisdom and lordly commands and exhortations, and that <p142> the light of union and accord may irradiate and illuminate the world. It is hoped that through the favor of the Appearances of the power of God (i.e., kings and rulers) the armaments of the world may be changed into Peace and corruption and conflict will vanish from among men.

75. The sixth glad tidings is the Most Great Peace, the account of which has been formerly revealed from the Supreme Pen. Joy unto whosoever adhereth thereto and practises that whereunto he is commanded on the part of God, the Knower, the Wise!

76. The seventh glad tidings: Men are permitted to have their choice in the matter of habiliment, and in the cut of the beard and its dressing. But beware, O people, not to make yourselves as playthings to the ignorant!

77. The eighth glad tidings: The pious practises of the monks and priests among the people of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ) -- upon Him is the peace of God and His glory! -- are remembered before God; but in this Day, they must abandon solitude for open places, and engage in that which may profit both themselves and other men. We have conferred permission on them all to engage in matrimony, so that there may be issue from them to celebrate the praise of God, the Lord of the seen and unseen and the Lord of the lofty throne.

78. The ninth glad tidings: The sinner, when in a state wherein he finds himself free and severed from all else save God, must beg for forgiveness and pardon (from God). It is not allowable to declare one's sins and transgressions before any man, inasmuch as this has not been, nor is conducive to securing God's forgiveness and pardon. At the same time such confession before the creatures leads to one's humiliation and abasement, and God -- exalted is His glory! -- does not wish for the humiliation of His servants. Verily He is compassionate and beneficent! A sinner must, between himself and God, beseech mercy from the Sea of Mercy and ask forgiveness from the Heaven of Beneficence, and then say:

79. "O my God! O my God! I beg of Thee -- by the blood of Thy lovers, who were so attracted by Thy sweet utterance that they betook themselves unto the lofty summit, the place of Great Martyrdom -- and by the mysteries concealed in Thy knowledge, and by the pearls deposited in the sea of Thy bestowal, to forgive me, and my father and my mother. Verily Thou art the most <p143> merciful of the merciful! There is no God but Thee, the forgiving, the beneficent!

"O my Lord! Thou beholdest the essence of error advancing toward the sea of Thy gift, and the weak one toward the kingdom of Thy power, and the poor one toward the sun of Thy wealth. O my Lord! Disappoint him not of Thy generosity and bounty; deprive him not of the graces of Thy days, and turn him not away from

Thy door which Thou hast opened before all in Thy heaven and earth.

"Alas! Alas! My transgressions have prevented me from drawing nigh unto the court of Thy sanctity, and my trespasses have kept me afar from turning unto the tents of Thy glory. I have indeed wrought that which Thou hast forbidden me; I have neglected that which Thou hast commanded me! I beg of Thee, by the King of Names, to decree for me from the Pen of grace and bestowal that which will draw me nigh unto Thee and will purify me from my sins which have intervened between me and Thy forgiveness and pardon. Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Bounteous! There is no God but Thee, the Mighty, the Gracious!"

80. The tenth glad tidings: We have removed from the Epistles and Tablets the decree of effacing the Books as a favor from the presence of God, the sender of this great message!

81. The eleventh glad tidings: To study sciences and arts of all classes is allowable; but such sciences as are profitable, which conduce to the elevation of mankind. Thus hath the matter been decreed on the part of God, the Commander, the Wise!

82. The twelfth glad tidings: It is made incumbent on every one of you to engage in some one occupation, such as arts, trades, and the like. We have made this -- your occupation -- identical with the worship of God, the True One. Reflect, O people, upon the mercy of God and upon His favors, then thank Him at dawn and at dusk.

83. Waste not your time in idleness and indolence, and occupy yourselves with that which will profit yourselves and others beside yourselves. Thus hath the matter been decreed in this Tablet from the horizon of which the sun of wisdom and divine utterance is gleaming. The most despised of men before God is he who sits and begs. Cling unto the rope of means, relying upon God, the Causer of Causes. Every soul who occupies himself in an art or trace -- this will be accounted an act of worship before God. <p144> Verily, this is from naught else than His great and abundant favor!

84. The thirteenth glad tidings: The affairs of the people are placed in the charge of the men of the House of Justice of God. They are the trustees of God among His servants and the daysprings of command in His countries.

85. O people of God! The trainer of the world is justice, for it consists of two pillars: Reward and retribution. These two pillars are two fountains for the life of the people of the world. Inasmuch as for each time and day a particular decree and order is expedient, affairs are therefore entrusted to the ministers of the House of Justice, so that they may execute that which they deem advisable at the time. Those souls who arise to serve the Cause sincerely to please God will be inspired by the divine, invisible inspiration. It is incumbent upon all to obey.

86. Administrative affairs are all in charge of the House of Justice; but acts of worship must be observed according as they are revealed in the Book.

87. O people of Baha! Ye are daysprings of the love, and dawningplaces of the providence, of God. Defile not the tongue with cursing or execrating any one and guard your eyes against that which is not worthy. Show forth that which ye possess (of the Truth). If it is accepted, the aim is attained, and if not, interference is not allowable, but leave them to themselves and advance toward God, the Protector, the Self-subsistent.

88. Be not the cause of sorrow, how much less of sedition and strife. It is hoped that ye may be trained under the shadow of the Tree of Divine Providence, and act in that which is desired by God. Ye are all leaves of one tree and drops of one ocean.

89. The fourteenth glad tidings: To undertake journeys for the sake of visiting the tombs of the dead is not necessary. If those who have means and wealth should give to the House of Justice the amount which would otherwise be expended on such journeys, this would be acceptable and agreeable before God. Happy are those who accomplish!

90. The fifteenth glad tidings: Although a republican form of government profits all the people of the world, yet the majesty of Kingship is one of the signs of God. We do not wish the countries of the world to be deprived thereof. It statesmen combine the two into one form, their reward will be great before God. <p145>

91. Agreeable to the requirements of former times, the previous religions confirmed and commanded religious warfare, prohibited association and intercourse with other peoples, and forbade the reading of certain books, but in this most great Manifestation and mighty message, favors and gifts of God have pervaded all peoples, and the irrefutable command is revealed in that which has already been mentioned from the horizon of the will of the Lord of Pre-existence. We praise God -- exalted and glorified is He! -- for that which He hath revealed in this Day, the blessed, the mighty, the wonderful! Were all the people of the world each to possess a hundred thousand tongues, and speak in praise and glorification until the day which hath no end, verily all their thanks would not equal even a single one of the favors mentioned in this Epistle! -- whereunto testifies every man of knowledge and discernment, and every man of wisdom and understanding. I beg of God -- exalted is His glory! -- and entreat Him to enable the kings and sovereigns, who are dawningplaces of power and daysprings of might, to execute His precepts and commands.

Verily, He is the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Bestower of worthiness!

92. Man should know his own self, and understand those things which lead to loftiness or to abasement, to shame or to honor, to affluence or to poverty. After man has realized his own being, and become mature, then (material) means are required. If wealth is acquired through a craft or profession, it is approvable and praiseworthy for men of wisdom, especially for those who arise to train the world and beautify the souls of the nations. These are the cup bearers of the Kawther of knowledge and the guides to the ideal path. They direct the people of the whole world to the right path, and instruct them in

that which is conducive to the elevation and progress of being.

93. The Right Path is a path which leads man to the dayspring of perception and dawningplace of knowledge, and directs him to that which is the cause of honor and glory and greatness.

94. Consort with all religions in joy and fragrance; show forth that which is declared by the Speaker of the Mount; and render justice in affairs. The followers of sincerity and faithfulness must consort with all the people of the world with joy and fragrance; for association is always conducive to union and harmony, and union and harmony are the cause of the order of the world <p146> and the life of nations. Blessed are they who hold fast to the rope of compassion and kindness, and are detached from animosity and hatred!

95. Good character, verily, is the best mantle for men on the part of God; by this, God adorns the temples of His friends. By My life, the light of good character surpasses the light of the sun and its effulgence. He who attains thereto is accounted as the essence of men.

96. The possessors of justice and equity occupy the highest station and loftiest rank: the lights of righteousness and piety shine and radiate from such souls.

97. Knowledge is one of the greatest benefits of God. To acquire knowledge is incumbent on all. These visible arts and present implements are from the results of His knowledge and wisdom, which have been revealed from the Supreme Pen. The Supreme Pen is that pen from the treasury of which the gems of wisdom and utterance, and the arts of the whole world, have appeared and become manifest. In this Day the mysteries of this earth are unfolded and made visible before the eyes, and the pages of swiftly appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world; they display the doings and actions of the different nations; they both illustrate them and cause them to be heard. Newspapers are as a mirror which is endowed with hearing, sight and speech; they are a wonderful phenomenon and a great matter. But it behooveth the writers thereof to be sanctified from the prejudice of egotism and desire and to be adorned with the ornament of equity and justice; they must inquire into matters as much as possible, in order that they may be informed of the real facts, and commit the same to writing.

98. The mysteries of the Resurrection Day and the signs of the "Hour" have all become manifested, but the people are heedless and veiled.

99. Verily, the Precursor (the Bab) has said: "Verily, He (Baha'u'llah) will utter in every state, Verily, I am God! There is no God but Me, the Protector, the Self-subsistent!"

100. In this Day all must adhere to union and harmony, and be engaged in assisting the Cause of God: perchance heedless souls may attain to that which is conducive to eternal salvation.

101. The discord of sects has caused and occasioned weakness.

Every sect has followed a way and held fast to a rope; notwithstanding <p147> their blindness and ignorance they account themselves as endowed with judgment and perception. Among them are the mystics (Sufis) of the Islam religion. By the life of God, this lowers man's station and increases pride. Man must show forth fruit. A fruitless man, in the words of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ), is like unto a fruitless tree, and a fruitless tree is fit only for the fire.

Those souls (Sufis) have affirmed ideas concerning the stages of "Divine Unity" which are the greatest cause of addicting people to idleness and superstition. They have, indeed, removed the distinction and imagined themselves to be God. The True One is sanctified above all; but His signs are manifest in all things. The signs are from Him -- not He Himself -- and all of them are recorded and visible in the book of the world. The plan of the world is a great Book: from it every one endowed with perception can grasp that which will enable him to attain to the Right Path and the "Great Message."

Consider the rays of the sun; its lights have encompassed the world, but these splendors are from it, and from its manifestations; they are through it, but are not itself. Whatever is seen on earth is expressive of His power, knowledge, and grace; while He is sanctified from all. His Holiness Christ says: "Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

102. Verily, We have sounded the trumpet, and that is My Supreme Pen, whereby the servants are prostrated, except those whom God hath protected as a favor on His part; and He is the Pre-existent, the Gracious! O concourse of the learned (ecclesiastics)! Do ye reject the Pen after the voice thereof has been raised? The Kingdom of the Bayan is prepared to hear it; and every utterance is humbled before His great and mighty utterance. Fear God, and follow not superstitions and imaginations; follow Him who hath appeared unto you with manifest knowledge and evident certainty.

103. Praise be to God! The treasury of man is his speech; yet this oppressed one has refrained from speaking, for the deniers are lurking in ambush. Protection is from God, the Lord of the creatures. Verily, We have trusted in Him, and resigned our affairs unto Him; He suffices Us and He suffices all things. He is the <p148> One by whose command and permission the Orb of Power hath shone forth from the horizon of the world. Blessed are those who behold and recognize, and woe unto those who reject and deny!

104. But this oppressed one hath loved and loves the philosophers, that is, those whose philosophy has not been mere words, but who have produced lasting results and fruits in the worlds. To respect these blessed souls is incumbent on all. Blessed are those who practise! Blessed are those who know! Blessed are those who render justice in affairs, and hold fast to the rope of My sound equity!

105. Truly, I say, the fear of God hath ever been the perspicuous protection and solid fortress for the whole community of the world. It is the greatest means for the protection of mankind, and the chief cause of the preservation of

humanity. Yea, there exists a sign in the being (of man) which protects him from that which is unworthy and unbecoming. That sign is called Reverence. But this virtue is assigned to a few; for all are not endowed with this station.

106. At this moment the Supreme Pen exhorts the daysprings of power and dawningplaces of authority, to wit: kings, rulers, chiefs, princes, learned men and mystics, and commands them to hold fast to religion. Religion is the greatest instrument for the order of the world and the tranquillity of all existent beings. The weakness of the pillars of religion has encouraged the ignorant and rendered them audacious and arrogant. Truly, I say, whatever lowers the lofty station of religion will increase heedlessness in the wicked, and finally result in anarchy. Hear, O ye possessors of perception! Then be admonished, O ye who are endowed with sight!

107. O Son of Man! If thou lookest toward mercy, regard not that which benefits thyself, and look to that which benefits all mankind. If thou lookest toward Justice, choose thou for others what thou choosest for thyself. Verily, through meekness, man is elevated to the heaven of power; and again, pride degrades him to the lowest station of humiliation and abasement. O people of God! The Day is great, and the Call is mighty!

108. The greatest gift and the highest blessing, in the primary station, is wisdom. It is the protector of existence, and its support and helper. Wisdom is the messenger of the Merciful One, and the manifestor of the name, the "All-Wise." Through wisdom <p149> the station of man is made evident and manifest. It is the knower and the first teacher in the school of existence, and it is the guide, the possessor of a lofty rank. Under the direction of its influence, the element earth was endowed with pure soul and made to surpass the firmament. Wisdom is the first speaker in the City of Justice; and in the "year nine" (1853) it illuminated the world with the glad tidings of the Manifestation. Wisdom is the peerless Wise One who, in the beginning of the world, ascended the ladder of significances; and when, by the Divine Will, it occupied the pulpit of utterance, it spoke in two words. >From the first word appeared the glad tidings of promise (of reward), and from the second the fear of threat (of punishment). From promise and threat, hope and fear become manifest, and by these two the foundations of the order of the world were established and confirmed. Exalted is the Wise One, the Possessor of great bounty!

109. The light of men is justice; quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity among people. In this exalted Word, the sea of God's wisdom is moving: all the books of the world are not sufficient to contain its interpretation.

110. If the world is adorned with this mantle, the sun of the saying: "On that Day God will satisfy them all with His abundance," will appear and shine forth from the horizon of the heaven of the world. Know ye the station of this utterance, for it is from the loftiest fruits of the tree of the Supreme Pen. Happy is he who heareth and attaineth! Verily, I say, all that has descended

from the heaven of the divine will is conducive to the order of the world, and to the furtherance of unity and harmony among its people. Thus hath the tongue of this wronged one spoken in His Great Prison (Acca)!

111. O ye wise men among nations! Turn your eyes away from foreignness and gaze unto Oneness, and hold fast unto the means which produce tranquillity and security for the people of the whole world. This span-wide world is but one region and one native land. Abandon that glory which is the cause of discord, and turn unto that which promotes harmony. To the people of Baha, glory is in knowledge, good deeds, good morals, and wisdom -- not in patriotism or rank. O people of the earth: appreciate the value of this heavenly Word, for it is like unto a ship for the sea of knowledge, and is as a sun to the universe of perception. <p150>

112. Schools must first train the children in the principles of religion, so that the promise and the warning, recorded in the Books of God, may prevent them from the things forbidden and adorn them with the mantle of the commandments: but this in such measure as may not injure the children by resulting in ignorant fanaticism and bigotry.

113. The trustees of the House of Justice must consult upon the ordinances as they are outwardly revealed in the Book, and then enforce whatever prove agreeable to them of these. Verily, God will inspire them with that which He willeth, and He is the Ruler, the Knower! We have formerly declared that speech was decreed to be in two languages, and that there should be an effort to reduce it into one. So, likewise, should it be with the writings of the world, in order that people may not waste and lavish their lives in the study of the various languages, and that the whole earth may be considered as one city and one land.

114. Truly I say: moderation is desirable in every affair, and when it is exceeded it leads to detriment. Consider the civilization of the people of the Occident -- how it has occasioned commotion and agitation to the people of the world. There has appeared an infernal instrument, and such atrocity is displayed in the destruction of life, the like of which has not been seen by the eye of the world, nor heard by the ears of nations. It is impossible to reform these violent, overwhelming evils, except the peoples of the world become united in affairs, or in one religion. Hearken ye unto the voice of this oppressed one, and adhere to the Most Great Peace!

115. A strange and wonderful instrument exists in the earth, but it is concealed from minds and souls. It is an instrument which has the power to change the atmosphere of the whole earth, and its infection causes destruction.

116. Praise be to God! A wonderful thing is perceived: the lightning and similar forces are subdued by a conductor, and act by man's command. Exalted is the mighty One who hath made manifest that which He desired, through His absolute, invincible command.

117. O people of Baha! Each one of the revealed commands is a strong fortress

for the protection of the world. Verily, this oppressed one wishes only your security and elevation.

118. We exhort the men of the House of Justice, and command <p151> them to guard and protect the servants, maid servants, and children. They must, under all circumstances, have regard for the interests of the servants (people). Blessed is the prince who succors a captive, the rich one who favors the needy, the just who secures the rights of a wronged one from the oppressor, and the trustee who performs what he is commanded on the part of the Pre-existent Commander!

119. O people of the earth! A solitary life and sever discipline do not meet with approval. The possessors of perception and knowledge should look unto the means which are conducive to joy and fragrance. Such practises come forth and proceed from the loins of superstition and the womb of fancy, and are not worthy people of knowledge. Some of the people of the past and of later time dwelt in mountain caves, and other frequented tombs at night. Say: Hearken to the advice of this oppressed one. Abandon that which ye believe, and adhere unto that which the Trustworthy Counsellor commands. Deprive not yourselves of what is created for you.

120. We command the appearances of names and attributes to adhere henceforth unto that which has been revealed in this most great Manifestation, and not to become a cause of discord, and to look unto the horizon of this luminous Word, revealed in this Epistle, unto the end beyond which there is no end. Discord is the cause of bloodshed and entails revolution among the servants (people). Hearken to the voice of this oppressed one, and depart not therefrom.

121. If one ponders over that which is revealed in this Manifestation from the Supreme Pen, he will know for a certainty that, in all that this wronged one hath spoken, He has had no intention to establish any position or rank for Himself. But it has been our aim to uplift men through exalted words unto the Supreme Horizon, and to prepare them to hearken unto that which conduces to the sanctifying and purifying of the people of the world from the strife and discord which result from differences in religions. Whereunto My heart and My pen, My manifest and My hidden (being) bear witness. God willing, all will turn unto the treasuries which are deposited within themselves.

122. O people of Baha! The faculty of meditation is the depository of crafts, arts and sciences. Exert yourselves, so that the gems of knowledge and wisdom may proceed from this ideal mine, <p152> and conduce to the tranquillity and union of the different nations of the world.

123. Ask thou God to strengthen your eyes, and illumine them with a new light; perchance they may attain to that which is peerless and unique. In this Day the verses of the Mother Book are shining and beaming like unto the sun, and cannot be confounded with former and latter words. Verily, this wronged one does not desire to prove His Cause through that which has appeared from others. He is the All-comprehending, and all else save Him is comprehended in Him! Say: O people! Read what ye possess, and We will read what We possess. By the life of

God! Neither the words of the creatures, nor that which all nations possess, is worthy of mention before this utterance. Whereunto testifies the One who hath spoken in all stations. Verily, He is God, the King of the Day of Judgment, and the Lord of the great throne!

124. In this Day a great Banquet is celebrated in the Supreme Concourse; for all that was promised in the divine Books has appeared. This is the Day of the most great rejoicing! All must direct themselves to the court of nearness with the utmost joy, happiness, exultation and gladness, and deliver themselves from the fire of separation.

125. I testify that verily there is no God save Him! and He who hath come is verily the hidden mystery, the concealed secret, the most great Book for the nations, and the heaven of beneficence to the world: He is the mighty sign among mankind, and the dawningplace of highest attributes in the world of emanation. Through Him hath appeared that which was concealed from all eternity, and was hidden from men of discernment. Verily, He is the One whose Manifestation was announced by the Books of God in former and in latter times.

126. Whosoever acknowledges Him, His signs, and His evidences, hath verily acknowledged that which the Tongue of Grandeur hath uttered before the creation of heaven and earth, and before the appearance of the Kingdom of Names. Through Him the sea of knowledge hath moved among mankind, and the running water of wisdom hath flowed from the presence of God, the King of Days. Blessed is the discerning one who witnessed and perceived, the hearing one who heard His sweet voice, and the hand that grasped the Book through the power of its Lord, the <p153> King of this world and the world to come! Blessed is the hastener who hastened toward His Supreme Horizon, and the strong one whom neither the influence of princes nor the clamor of theologians did weaken! But woe unto him who disbelieved the grace of God and His bounty, His mercy and His power! Verily, such a one is of those who reject the proof of God and His argument throughout all eternity.

127. Joy unto him who, in this Day, casts away that which is possessed by the people, and holds fast to that which is commanded on the part of God, the King of names and the Creator of things -- The One who hath come from the heaven of Pre-existence with the Greatest Name, and with a power that the hosts of the earth fail to withstand: whereunto testifies the Mother-Book in the highest station.

128. The first splendor which hath shone forth from the Sun of Truth is the knowledge of God -- exalted is His glory! -- and the knowledge of the King of Pre-existence cannot be attained except by knowing the Greatest Name. He is the Speaker of the Mount who is established and seated upon the throne of Manifestation, and He is the hidden, invisible One, the concealed Mystery.

129. All the former and later Books of God are adorned with His commemoration and speak His praise. Through Him the standard of knowledge is planted in the world, and the banner of unity is raised among the nations. The Meeting of God cannot be obtained save through meeting Him. Through Him appeared all that was

hidden and invisible from all eternity.

130. Verily, He hath appeared in truth, and hath uttered a Word whereby "all in the heavens and earth -- except those whom God wished -- are stunned." Faith in God, and the knowledge of Him cannot be fully realized except through believing in all that hath proceeded from Him, and by practising all that He hath commanded and all that is revealed in the Book from the Supreme Pen. Those submerged in the sea of divine utterance must at all times observe the commands and prohibitions of God. His commandments are the greatest fortress for the protection of the world and for the preservation of mankind. Light is upon those who confess and acknowledge them, and fire is on those who reject and oppose them.

131. The second splendor is steadfastness in the Cause of God and in His love -- exalted is His glory! This cannot be attained <p154> except through knowledge of Him; and perfect knowledge of Him cannot be obtained except by confessing the blessed Word:

GOD DOETH WHATSOEVER HE WILLETH

He who adheres to this exalted Word, and drinks from the Kawther of divine utterance which is deposited therein, will find himself so steadfast that all the books of the world will not withhold him from the Mother Book. O, great is this lofty station, exalted position, and furthermost end!

132. The third splendor is concerning sciences, crafts and arts. Knowledge is like unto wings for the being (of man), and is as a ladder for ascending. To acquire knowledge is incumbent on all, but knowledge of those sciences which may profit the people of the earth, and not of such sciences are begin in mere words and end in mere words. The possessors of sciences and arts have a great right among the people of the world. Whereunto testifies the mother of divine utterance in the Day of Return. Joy unto those who hear!

133. The fourth splendor concerns the declaration of divinity, lordship, and similar statements. Were one endowed with perception to gaze upon this evident, blessed Tree, and upon its fruits, he would verily become independent of all else beside It, and would acknowledge that which the Speaker of the Mount hath uttered on the throne of Manifestation.

134. Praise be to God! It was supposed that at the time of the Manifestation of God, knowledge had become perfect and mature, and had reached the furthermost end. Now it has become evident that knowledge has decreased among the deniers, and has remained in a condition of immaturity.

135. Now man must reflect upon the Worshipper (Bab), and the Worshipped (Baha'u'llah): perchance the people of the earth may attain to a drop of the sea of knowledge, and comprehend the station of this Manifestation. Verily, he hath appeared, and hath spoken in truth. Blessed is he who confesses and acknowledges, and woe unto those who, being remote from God, deny!

136. O ye concourse of earth. Hearken to the voice of the Tree of Paradise, the

shade of which hath encompassed the loftiest positions of the world; and be not of the tyrants of earth who denied the Manifestation of God and His power, and renounced His <p155> bounty. Are they not of the contemptible, in the Book of God, the Lord of the creatures?

137. Glory, shining from the heaven of My providence, be upon thee, and upon him who is with thee and hearkens to thy word in the Cause of God, the Mighty, the Praiseworthy! <p156>

CHAPTER FOUR
THE DEGREES OF DEVOTION

138. Read the Verses of God every morning and evening, and he who does not read will not be known by the Covenant of God and His Testament. And he who turns away from them in this Day, verily he is of those who have turned away from God since the eternity of eternities. O ye servants, fear God! Be not deluded by meaningless repetition of prayers, but worship by day and by night. Should any one read but one Verse of the Verses with fragrance and spirituality, it shall avail more unto him than to read with slothfulness all the Books of God, the Protector, the Self-existent.

139. Teach your children that which is caused to descend from the heaven of might and greatness that they, in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, may read the Tablets of the Merciful in the sweetest of tones. Verily he who is overtaken by the attraction of the love of My Name, the Merciful, will assuredly read the Verses of God in such wise as to charm the hearts of those who are asleep.

140. He who knoweth Me hath known the Intended, and he who turneth unto Me hath turned unto the Adored.

141. The Sun of Truth is the Word of God, upon which depends the training of the people of the country of thought. It is the Spirit of Reality and the Water of Life. All things owe their existence to it. Its manifestation is ever according to the capacity and coloring of the mirror through which it may reflect. For example: Its Light, when cast upon the mirrors of the wise, gives expression to wisdom; when reflected from the minds of artists it produces manifestations of new and beautiful arts; and when it shines through the minds of students it reveals knowledge and unfolds mysteries.

142. All things of the world arise through man and are manifest in him, through whom they find life and development; and man is dependent for his (spiritual) existence upon the Sun of the Word <p157> of God. All the good names and lofty qualities are of the Word. The Word is the fire of God which, glowing in the hearts of people, burns away all things that are not of God. The minds of the lovers are ever aflame with this fire. Outwardly it is burning fire, while inwardly it is calm light. This is the Water which giveth life to all things.

143. We beg of God that we may partake of this life-giving Water of Heaven, and quaff from the spiritual chalice of rest, and thus be free from all that tends to withhold us from approaching His love.

Glory be upon the people of glory!

144. O Son of Man! Wert thou to observe mercy thou wouldst not regard thine own interest, but the interest of mankind. Wert thou to observe justice, choose thou for others what thou choosest for thyself.

145. Verily, man is uplifted to the heaven of glory and power through meekness; again, through pride, is he degraded to the lowest station.

146. O ye discerning ones of the people: Verily, the Words which have descended from the heaven of the will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences and welcome all with the light of oneness. Be the cause of comfort and the promotion of humanity. This handful of dust, the world, is one home: let it be in unity. Forsake pride, it is a cause of discord. Follow that which tends to harmony.

147. Consort with all the people in love and fragrance. Fellowship is the cause of unity, and unity is the source of order in the world. Blessed are they who are kind and serve with love.

148. In this day he who seeks the light of the Sun of Truth must free his mind from the tales of the past, must adorn his head with the crown of severance, and his temple with the robe of virtue. Then shall he arrive at the ocean of Oneness and enter the presence of Singleness. The heart must become free from the fire of superstitions, that it may receive the light of assurance, and that it may perceive the Glory of God.

149. Oneness, in its true significance, means that God alone should be realized as the one power which animates and dominates all things, which are but manifestations of Its energy. <p158>

150. God, singly and alone, abideth in His place which is holy above space and time, mention and utterance, sign, description and definition, height and depth.

151. O my God! O my God! Adorn the heads of Thy chosen ones with the crown of love, and their temples with the robe of virtue.

152. The people of Baha must serve the Lord with wisdom, teach others by their lives and manifest the light of God in their deeds. The effect of deeds is in truth more powerful than that of words.

153. The progress of man depends upon faithfulness, wisdom, chastity, intelligence and deeds. He is ever degraded by ignorance, lack of faith, untruth and selfishness. Verily, man is not called man until he be imbued with the attributes of the Merciful. He is not man because of wealth and adornment, learning and refinement. Blessed is he who is free from the names, seeking the shore of the sea of purity, and loving the melody of the dove of virtue.

154. In this day all must serve God with purity and virtue. The effect of the word spoken by the teacher depends upon his purity of purpose and his severance. Some are content with words, but the truth of words is tested by

deeds and dependent upon life. Deeds reveal the station of the man. The words (of the teacher) must be according to what has proceeded from the mouth of the will of God and is recorded in Tablets.

155. The source of all good is trust in God, obedience to His command, and satisfaction in His will.

156. The principle of religion is to acknowledge what is revealed by God, and to obey the laws established in His Book.

157. The origin of glory is to be content with that which God has provided, and to be satisfied with what He has ordained.

158. The source of love is to advance to the Beloved and to abandon all else save Him, and to have no hope save His will.

159. The principle of faith is to lessen words and to increase deeds. He whose words exceed his acts, know verily that his nonbeing is better than his being, and death better than his life.

160. The root of all knowledge is the knowledge of God: Glory be to Him! And this knowledge is impossible save through His Manifestation.

161. The beginning of courage is effort to promote the Word of God and to remain firm in His love. <p159>

162. The cause of all benefit is to manifest the blessings of God and to be thankful under all conditions.

163. The source of all these utterances is justice. It is the freedom of man from superstition and imitation, that he may discern the Manifestations of God with the eye of oneness, and consider all affairs with keen vision.

164. In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!

Praise be unto God, who caused existence to appear from nonexistence, inscribed the mysteries of pre-existence on the tablet of man, and taught him the explanation of that which he knoweth not; made him a manifest book to such as believed and obeyed, enabled him to witness the creation of all things during this gloomy, disastrous age, and caused him to give utterance on the apex of immortality to a wonderful melody in the "Most Excellent Temple"; so that every one may testify in himself, by himself, in the seat of the Manifestation of his Lord, that "verily, there is no God save Him"; and that all may thereby reach the summit of truth, until no one shall behold anything whatsoever, but that he may see God therein.

165. And I bless and salute the First Sea, branched out from the sea of the Divine Essence, the First Morn dawned forth from the horizon of Unity, the First Sun risen in the heaven of Eternity, the First Fire ignited from the lamp of pre-existence in the niche of Oneness; the one who is Ahmad in the kingdom of the worlds, is Mohamet in the Concourse of the Chosen, and is Mahmood in the realm of the sincere ones. "By whatsoever name ye invoke Him, it is the same; for He hath names" in the hearts of the knowing! Abundant, everlasting and

eternal peace be on his household and companions!

166. By my life, O friend, wert thou to taste these fruits from the verdure of these hyacinths which are planted in the grounds of knowledge, near the manifestation of the lights of the Essence in the mirrors of Names and Attributes, yearning will take the reins of patience and fortitude from thy grasp, thy soul will stir through the flashes of light, will uplift thee out of the earthly abode unto the original, divine abode in the center of significances; and will cause thee to ascend unto such a state that thou wilt fly away in the air just as thou wouldst walk on the earth, and run on the water even as thou wouldst on the ground. May it do good unto <p160> me, unto thee, unto whosoever may ascend to the heaven of knowledge, and to him whose heart is fascinated by the zephyr of assurance wafting upon the garden of his innate heart, from the Sheba of the Merciful!

Peace be unto those who follow guidance!

167. The stages of the journey of travellers from the earthly dwelling to the home have been designated to be seven; some have spoken of these as "Seven Valleys," and others as "Seven Cities." And they have said: "Not until the traveller migrates from self and accomplishes these journeys, will he arrive at the sea of nearness and union, or taste of the peerless wine." The first is

168. THE VALLEY OF SEARCH

The steed upon which to journey through this valley is patience.

In this journey, the traveller will reach no destination without patience, nor will he attain to his aim. He must never become dejected. Were he to endeavor for a hundred thousand years and see not the beauty of the Friend, he must not be downhearted!

It is conditional upon these servants to purify their hearts -- which are the source of the divine treasury -- from every blemish, to turn away from blind imitation which is a trace of forefathers and ancestors; and to close the doors of friendship and enmity to all the people of the earth. In this journey the seeker reaches such a station that he finds all the existent beings bewildered in search of the Friend. Many a Jacob he sees wandering in quest of Joseph. A world of friends he beholds, who are running in search of the desired one, and a universe of lovers he finds, who are journeying after the beloved. At every moment, he perceives a new matter, and at every hour he becomes informed of a mystery; for he has lifted his heart from both worlds, and intended to attain the Ka'aba of the Beloved.

In this journey, the traveller sits on every soil and dwells in every land, and seeks the beauty of the Friend in every face. He searches for the Beloved One in every country; he joins every multitude and associates with every mind; perchance, he may discover the mystery of the Beloved One in some mind, or behold the beauty of the Desired in some countenance. <p161>

If, through the assistance of God, he find, in this journey, a trace of the

traceless Friend and breathe the perfume of the lost Joseph from the harbinger of oneness, he will immediately step into

169. THE VALLEY OF LOVE

and become melted with the fire of devotion. In this valley the heaven of attraction is lifted up, the world-illuminating sun of longing dawns forth and the fire of love becomes ablaze. And when the fire of love is become ablaze, the harvest of reason will be wholly consumed.

At this time, the traveller is unconscious, both of himself and of aught else save himself. He knows neither knowledge nor ignorance, neither doubt nor certainty; neither does he recognize the morn of guidance, nor the eve of error.

The steed of this valley is pain; and without pain this journey will never be accomplished. In this stage the lover has no thought but of the Beloved, and seeks no shelter but the Desired. At every moment he freely gives a hundred lives in the path of the Beloved, and at every step he throws a thousand heads at the feet of the Friend.

O my brother! Not until thou enterest the Egypt of the Spirit, wilt thou attain to the Joseph of the beauty of the Friend; not until thou, like Jacob, give up thine outer eye, wilt thou open thine inner eye; and not until thou art ablaze with the fire of love wilt thou associate with the friend of ecstasy! A lover fears nothing, and no loss can do him harm. Thou wilt see him cool in fire, and find him dry even in the sea.

Love accepts not any existence, nor wishes any life. He finds life in death and glory in shame. Much wit is needed to make one worthy of the ardor of love; and many a head is required to be fit for the noose of the Friend. Blessed is the neck which falleth into His noose, and happy is the head which is dropped on the dust in the path of His love!

Therefore, O friend! be alien to the self, that thou mayest find thy way to the Incomparable One; abandon the mortal earth that thou mayest take residence in the divine nest. Nothingness is needed until thou canst kindle the fire of existence and become acceptable in the path of love. "Love does not accept a soul <p162> alive to its own desires: a falcon preys not on a dead mouse!"

If, by the assistance of the Creator, the lover is released in safety from the claws of the falcon of love, he will then arrive in the realms of

170. THE VALLEY OF KNOWLEDGE

He will be led from doubt to certainty and directed from the darkness of the error of worldly desire to the light of guidance of piety. His inner eye will be opened, and he will engage in close communion with his Beloved. He will open the portal of truth and devotion, and close the doors of superficiality. In this state he will yield to the divine decree, will see war as peace, find the significance of life in death, perceive the mysteries of the "other world" in the regions of creation and in the souls of the servants with the outward and

inward eye; and, with the spiritual heart, he will behold the eternal wisdom in the infinite manifestations of God. In an ocean he will see a drop, and in a drop he will detect the mysteries of an ocean! "The core of whatever mote thou mayest split, therein thou wilt find a sun."

In this valley, through absolute vision, a traveller sees in God's creation neither difference nor contradiction; and at every moment he will say: "Thou canst not perceive any difference in the creation of the most Merciful. Turn thou thine eyes, whether thou canst behold any flaws!" He will see justice in injustice and witness grace in justice; he will find many a knowledge concealed in ignorance, and realize a hundred thousand wisdoms, manifest and evident, in knowledge. He will break the cage of body and desire, and be attached to the spirit of the people of immortality.

If he experiences any oppression he will endure it with patience, and if he sees any wrath he will show forth affection.

This is the condition of the people of this valley. But the people of the valley beyond this see the beginning and the end as one; nay, rather they see no beginning and no end. For they have travelled through the worlds of names, and passed over the worlds of attributes with the swiftness of lightning. As it is said: "A perfect realization of 'Divine Unity' is to strip it from all attributes."

Nay, they pass even beyond this station, as it is said: "Love is a screen between the lover and the Beloved." To say more than <p163> this I have not permission. At this time, the morn of knowledge hath dawned, and the lamps of travelling and wayfaring are put out.

If thou art a man of prayer and supplication, fly on the wings of saintly effort, so that thou mayest see the mysteries of the Friend, and attain to the lights of the Beloved. "We are God's, and unto Him shall we surely return."

After journeying through the Valley of Knowledge, which is the last station of limitation, the traveller reaches the first stage of

171. THE VALLEY OF UNITY

He drinks from the cup of abstraction and gazes on the manifestations of singleness. In this station he rends away the veils of plurality, flies away from the worlds of lust, and ascends to the heaven of oneness. He hears with divine ears, and beholds the mysteries of the creation of the Eternal One with the eyes of God. He steps into the retreat of the Friend, and becomes an intimate in the pavilion of the Beloved. He stretches forth the hand of the True One from the bosom of omnipotence, and shows forth the mysteries of power. He sees no commendation, name or dignity of himself; he sees his own commendation in the commendation of the True One, and beholds the name of the True One in his own name. He will know "all voices to be from the King," and hear all melodies as from Him. He will be establishes on the throne of -- "Say, all is from God," and rest on the carpet of -- "There is no power nor might but through God alone." He will look upon things with the view of oneness; he will

find the splendor of the divine Sun from the invisible Dayspring shining equally upon all the contingent beings, and see the lights of unity manifest and present in all existent things!

All the differences which the traveller sees in the world of Being, during the various stages of his journey, are due to the perception of the traveller himself.

Consider the phenomenal sun which shines forth on all existent and contingent beings with the same effulgence, and pours light upon all things by the command of the King of Manifestation. But its appearance in every place, and the light it sheds thereon, is in accord with the degree of capacity of the place itself. For <p164> instance -- in a mirror it reflects as forms and disks, and this is due to the clearness of the mirror itself. It creates fire in the crystal, while in other things only the effect of its reflection is manifest and not its disk; and, through that effect, it develops everything according to its capacity, by the command of the Causer of effects, even as you see. Likewise, colors also appear with respect to the condition of the place; even as in a yellow glass the splendor is yellow, in a white one the ray is white, and in a red one it is red. These differences are therefore due to the place and not to the effulgence of light; and if the place is confronted by an obstacle such as walls or ceiling, that place is entirely bereft of the splendor of the sun, and the sun shines not thereon.

Thus, some of the weak souls, having enclosed the ground of knowledge within the wall of self and desire and within the veil of heedlessness and blindness, are therefore screened from the effulgence of the Sun of Significances and the mysteries of the Eternal Beloved -- are kept afar from the gems of wisdom of the manifest religion of the Lord of the Messengers, deprived of the sacred home of beauty, and separated from the Ka'aba of glory. This is the state of the people of the age!

When the gaze of the traveller is restricted to a limited place, that is, when he looks as through a colored glass, he then sees (the limitations of) yellow, red or white. It is due to such a view of things that conflict is stirred up among the servants, and a gloomy dust, rising from men of limitation, hath enveloped the world.

Some, however, extend their gaze to the effulgence of the light; and other have drunk from the wine of oneness, and therefore see nothing but the Sun itself. Thus, because of journeying in these three different stations, travellers differ in their understanding and explanation of things. That is why the sign of difference is manifest in the world; for some dwell in the plane of oneness and speak in the world of oneness; some stand in the worlds of limitation, others in the stages of the self, and still others are totally veiled.
Therefore the ignorant of the age, who have gained no portion from the splendor of the Beautiful One, speak in certain words, and in every time and age they inflict upon the people of unity that which only is worthy of and befits their own selves. "If God should punish men for the iniquity, He would not leave on

earth any moving thing; but He giveth them respite unto an appointed time." <p165>

O my brother! A pure heart is like unto a mirror; polish it with the purity of love and severance from all else save God, until the ideal sun may reflect therein, and the eternal morn may dawn. Then wilt thou find clear and manifest the meaning of: "Neither doth My earth nor My heaven occupy Me, but the heart of My faithful servant occupieth Me" -- and wilt take thy life in thy hands and sacrifice it, with a thousand longings, to the new Beloved.

When the lights of the splendor of the King of Oneness are seated on the throne of the heart and soul, His light becomes manifest in all the parts and members. Then will the mystery of the well-known tradition emerge from the veil of obscurity:

"A servant always draws near unto Me with prayers, until I respond unto him. And when I have responded unto him, then I become his ear wherewith he heareth. ..." For the Owner of the house becomes manifest in His house, and the pillars of the house are illumined and effulgent through His light. The action and effect of the light is from the Giver of Light; this is why all move through Him and arise by His desire. This is that Fountain whereof those shall drink who are near unto God.

Let no one suppose these explanations to be redolent of anthropomorphism, or indicative of a degrading or restricting of the worlds of the True One; for God, in His essence, is sanctified above ascent or descent, entrance or exit. He has been, and will be everlastingly independent of the attributes of the creatures: no one has known Him, and no soul has found out His substance. All the sages are bewildered in the valley of His knowledge, and all the saints are perplexed in their endeavor to comprehend His essence. He is purified from being comprehended by all men of comprehension, and is exalted above the knowing of men of knowledge. "The road is barred, and search therefor is rejected. His evidence is His signs, and His beings is His proof."

Yea, such mentions as are made concerning the stages of knowledge apply only to the knowledge of the splendors of that Sun of Truth, become manifest in the Mirrors. The reflection of that light is within the hearts; but it is veiled through sensual coverings and accidental conditions, as is the case with a light enclosed within an iron lantern. When the lantern is removed the radiance of the light will appear. Likewise, when one rends asunder <p166> the illusive veils from the face of the heart, the lights of Oneness will dawn therein. Wherefore it is known that even for the Splendors there is no entrance nor exit; how much less for that Essence of Beings and that Mystery of the Desired One!

Mysteries are many, and strangers are countless. Books are not sufficient for the mystery of the Beloved, nor can it be exhausted in these Tablets, although the mystery is but one word and one allegory. "Knowledge is but one point, but the ignorant have multiplied it."

The journeys in the path of Love have been counted as four: From the creatures to the True One. From the True One to the creatures. From the creatures to the creatures. From the True to the True One.

Consider how you are the first in relation to your son, and the last in relation to your father; how, outwardly, you bear evidence of the inward mysteries which, as a divine gift, are deposited within you. Consequently, being the first, the last, the manifest, the hidden, becomes true of you in the sense (of the four classes of worlds), so that in these four grades bestowed upon you, you may comprehend the grades of the Divine, and that the nightingale of the heart may call out on all the branches of the rose garden of Existence, both invisible an visible, in this melody: "Verily, He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden!"

These sayings are mentioned in connection with the grades of the "worlds of relation"; otherwise, these men who have with one step traverse the worlds of relation and dependence, have taken their seat on the blissful carpet of abstraction, and pitched their tents in the world of independence and command, have consumed all these relations with a single flame, and obliterated all these words with a mere moisture. They swim in the sea of spirit, and roam in the sacred atmosphere of light. How then can words have any identity in this stage, so that any grades of the "First" or the "Last," or any other besides these, be distinguished? In this stage the "First" is identical with the "Last," and the "Last is the same as the "First." "Enkindle a fire with the love of the Beloved One, and consume therewith every thought and pious work."

Peace be on whosoever accomplisheth this supreme journey, and followeth the True One through the lights of guidance. <p167>

After crossing the stages of this lofty, exalted journey, the traveller arrives at

172. THE VALLEY OF CONTENTMENT

In this valley he discovers the breezes of divine contentment, which waft from the desert of the spirit and consume the veils of poverty. There he witnesses the Day wherein "God will make all independent out of His abundance" with his outer and inner eye in the visible and invisible parts of things; he passes from sorrow to happiness, returns from sadness to joy, and changes depression and rejection into gladness and cheerfulness.

Though the travellers in this valley outwardly dwell on the earth, yet inwardly they recline on the high couch of significances, and they partake of ideal, imperishable benefits, and quaff pure, spiritual wine. The tongue is unable to give an account of these three valleys, and utterance falls exceeding short.

Concerning these states the nightingale of the heart has other melodies and mysteries which set the heart in agitation and the spirit in uproar. But this enigma of significance must be revealed only from heart to heart, and confided from breast to breast.

O friend! Not until thou reachest the garden of these significances wilt thou taste of the immortal wine of this valley. If thou tastest thereof thou wilt close thine eyes to all strangers, and drink from the wine of contentment; thou wilt sever thyself from all, and become united with Him, give up thy life in His way, and pour out thy soul freely -- although there is no stranger in this station, that thou shouldst close thine eye. "There was God, but there was nothing with Him." Because in this stage the traveller beholds the beauty of the Friend in everything. In fire he sees the face of the Beloved, in unreality perceives the sign of reality, and through the attributes he witnesses the mystery of the divine substance, for he has consumed the veils with a mere sigh, and removed the coverings with a single gaze. He looks upon the new creation with a discerning sight, and comprehends subtle signs with a pure heart. "At that Day We will make thy sight discerning" is an evidence of this saying, and is sufficient for this instance. <p168>

After traversing the valley of Pure Contentment the traveller reaches

173. THE VALLEY OF ASTONISHMENT

He plunges in the seas of grandeur, and at every moment his amazement increases. Now he sees the body of affluence as indigence itself, and the essence of independence as impotence. Now he becomes astonished at the beauty of the All-glorious, and now he loathes his own being. Many are the trees of significance uprooted by the blast of astonishment, and many are the souls it has exhausted. For this valley sets the traveller in agitation. But such appearances are highly beloved and esteemed in the eye of one who has attained. At every moment he witnesses a wonderful world and a new creation, he adds astonishment upon astonishment, and he becomes dazed at the new creation of the King of Oneness.

Yea, O brother, if we reflect upon any of the creations we shall behold a hundred thousand consummate wisdoms and learn a hundred thousand knowledges. One of these worlds is that of sleep. Consider what mysteries are deposited therein, what wisdoms are therein stored! You sleep in a certain house, the doors of which are closed. All at once you find yourself in a remote city; you enter it without motion of the feet or exhaustion of the body; you see without troubling the eyes, you hear without distressing the ears, and you speak without the use of the tongue. There are occasions when it will happen that, ten years afterwards, you will witness outwardly in the world of time that same thing you have seen this night in dream.

Now, there are many wisdoms visible in this dream; but others than the people of this valley cannot comprehend them as they are. First, what is that world therein, without eye, ear, hand or tongue, one realizes the purpose of these senses? Secondly, this day thou seest in the world of reality the effect of a dream which thou hast experienced in the world of dreams ten years ago. Reflect upon the differences between these two worlds, and the mysteries deposited therein, so that thou mayest attain unto the confirmations and revelations of the Glorified One, and enter into the world of holiness. <p169>

God, the Exalted, has placed these signs within the creatures, so that philosophers may not deny the mysteries of the after life, and not make light of that whereunto they have been promised. For some have clung to reason, and deny whatever cannot be grasped by reason, although the feeble reason can never comprehend these same conditions which have been mentioned, but only the Universal, Supreme Reason can do so.

All these worlds will present themselves in the Valley of Astonishment, and at every moment the traveller seeks for an increase of such worlds without becoming exhausted.

Likewise, ponder over the completeness of the creation of man: all these worlds and all these grades are enveloped and concealed within him. "Dost thou think thy body a small thing, while in thee is enfolded the universe?" Then an effort is needed that we annihilate the animal condition, in order that the meaning of the human may become manifest.

O friend! The heart is a store of divine mysteries; make it not a receptacle for mortal thoughts; and consume not the capital of this precious life by occupying thyself with the evanescent world. Thou art of the world of holiness; attach not thy heart unto the earth. Thou art a denizen of the court of nearness; choose not an earthly home.

Naught shall befall us, save that which God hath decreed unto us! Peace be upon those who follow guidance!

After ascending the lofty heights of astonishment, the traveller arrives at

174. THE VALLEY OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY AND ANNIHILATION

This is the station of dying from self, and living through God, of being poor of one's self, and rich in the Desired One. In this station poverty is mentioned as meaning one's indigence in all that is of the world of creation, and one's affluence in all that is of the worlds of truth.

For when a sincere lover and agreeable friend attains to the meeting of the beloved and desired one, a fire is enkindled from the radiance of the beauty of the beloved and the heat of the heart of the lover, which consumes all coverings and veils: nay, whatever is with him, even marrow and skin, will thereby be burnt, <p170> and naught remain except the Friend. "When the attributes of the Ancient became manifest, then the Interlocutor consumed the attributes of all contingent things."

In this station the one who has attained is sanctified from all that pertaineth to the world. If, therefore, those who have attained to the sea of union do not possess any of the limited things of this mortal world, be these things of material belongings or of selfish thoughts, there is no harm in that. For whatever is possessed by men is confined within its own limits, whereas that which is God's is sanctified from every limitation.

Much reflection should be given this explanation is order that the end may become manifest. "Verily, the just shall drink of a cup mixed with camphor." If

the meaning of "Camphor" be understood the real aim will become evident. This station is that of poverty, of which it is said, "Poverty is my glory." Many are the meanings and grades of the outward and inward poverty, which I do not deem appropriate to mention in this place, and which I therefore reserve for some other time, if God will and the divine decree ordain.

It is in this stage that the traces of all things are destroyed in the traveller, and the beauty of the Face reveals itself from the orient of the eternal world, and the meaning of "Everything is mortal save the face of God," becomes manifest.

O my friend! Hearken to the melodies of the Spirit with all thy heart and soul, and preserve them as the sight of thine eyes; for the divine enlightenments will not always flow, like the vernal rain, upon the soil of human hearts. Although the bounty of the Bountiful One is continual and free from interruption, yet for every time and age a certain portion is determined and a certain benefit is ordained; and these are bestowed according to a certain quantity and measure. "There is no one thing but the storehouses thereof are in Our Hands, and we distribute not the same save in a determinate measure."

The cloud of mercy of the Beloved One will pour down only on the garden of the soul, and it will not bestow this bounty except in times of spring. Other seasons have no portion of this mightiest grace, and barren souls have no share in this favor.

Therefore, so long as the Nightingale of the spiritual planting hath not returned to the divine Rose Garden, and the Lights of the spiritual dawn have not returned to the Sun of Reality, <p171> make an effort -- perchance in this mortal land thou mayest inhale a fragrance from the immortal Rose Garden, and rest forever under the shade of the people of this City. Then thou hast abandoned the drop of life, and reached the ocean of the Beloved One! This is the goal which thou hast demanded; God willing, thou mayest attain thereto.

In this City even the veils of light are rent asunder, and vanish! "To His Beauty there are no veils of Light, and His Face hath no covering save Manifestation." How wonderful that the Well Beloved is manifest as the sun, while strangers are in search of vanities and riches. Yea, He is concealed by the intensity of manifestation, and He is hidden by the ardor of emanation. "The True One hath become manifest, like unto the shining sun. Pity that He hath come to the city of the blind!"

The condition of Ecstasy can penetrate this saying, but not controversy nor conflict. He who hath chosen an abode in this meeting, or discovereth a breeze from this garden, knoweth what I say.

Although these journeys have no visible termination in the world of time, yet, if the Invisible Assistance vouchsafe a devoted traveller, and if the Guardian of the Command help him, he will traverse these seven stages in only seven steps, nay, even in a single breath, if God will or desire. "This is through His bounty to whomsoever He willeth."

Those who soar in the sky of oneness, and who have attained to the sea of abstraction, have accounted this station, which is the station in this city of "Immortality in God," to be the ultimate destination of the Arif and the ultimate home of the lovers. But, to this humble one of the sea of significances, this station is only the first city-wall of the heart, that is, the first arrival of man at the city of the heart.

175. He is the Glory of The Most Glorious!

This is that which descended from the Source of Majesty, through the tongue of power and strength upon the Prophets of the past. We have taken its essences and clothed them with the garment of brevity, as a favor to the beloved, that they may fulfil the Covenant of God; that they may perform in themselves that which He has entrusted to them, and attain the victory by virtue of devotion in the land of the Spirit.

176. O Son of Spirit! The first counsel is: Possess a good, a <p172> pure, an enlightened heart, that thou mayest possess a Kingdom eternal, immortal, ancient and without end.

177. O Son of Spirit! Justice is loved above all. Neglect it not, if thou desirest Me. By it thou wilt be strengthened to perceive things with thine own eyes and not by the eyes of men, to know them by thine own knowledge and not by the knowledge of any in the world. Meditate on this -- how thou oughtest to be. Justice is of My Bounty to thee and of My Providence over thee; therefore, keep it every before thy sight.

178. O Son of Man! In My Ancient Entity and in My Eternal Being was I hidden. I knew My Love in thee, therefore I created thee; upon thee I laid My Image, and to thee revealed My Beauty.

179. O Son of Man! I loved thy creation, therefore I created thee. Wherefore love Me, that I may acknowledge thee and in the spirit of Life confirm thee.

180. O Son of Existence! Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My Love can never reach thee. Know this, O servant!

181. O Son of Spirit! No peace is ordained for thee save by departing from thyself and coming to Me. Verily, thy glory should be in My Name, not in thy name; thy trust be upon My Countenance, not upon thine own; for I will to be loved above all that is.

182. O Son of Existence! My Love is My Fortress. Whoso enters therein is rescued and safe; whoso turns away from it is led astray and perishes.

183. O Son of Existence! By the Hands of Power I have made thee, and by the Fingers of Strength have I created thee. I have placed within thee the essence of My Light: therefore depend upon it and upon nothing else, for My Action is perfect and My Command has effect. Doubt this not, and have no uncertainty therein.

184. O Son of Spirit! I have created thee rich: why dost thou make thyself

poor? Noble have I made thee: why dost thou degrade thyself? Of the Essence of Knowledge have I manifested thee: why searchest thou for another than Me? From the Clay of Love I have kneaded thee: why desirest thou another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, Powerful, Mighty and Supreme.

185. O Son of Man! Thou art My Possession, and My Possession shall never be destroyed: why art thou in fear of thy destruction? <p173> Thou art My Light, and My Light shall never become extinct: why dost thou dread extinction? Thou art My Glory (Baha), and My Glory shall not be veiled: thou art My Garment, and My Garment shall never be outworn. Therefore abide in thy love for Me, that thou mayest find Me in the Highest Horizon.

186. O Son of Light! Forget all else save Me, and be comforted by My Spirit. This is from the essence of My Command: therefore direct thyself to it.

187. O Son of Spirit! Boast not of thine own glory over the poor, for I walk before him, and I see thy miserable condition and ever grieve for thee.

188. O Son of Man! Breathe not the sins of any one as long as thou art a sinner. If thou doest contrary to this command thou art not of Me: to this I bear witness.

189. O Son of Spirit! Know verily that he who exhorts men to equity and himself does injustice, is not of Me, even though he bear My Name.

190. O Son of Existence! Examine thy deeds each day, before thou art judged, for death will suddenly overtake thee, and then thy deeds shall judge thee.

191. O Son of the Supreme! I made death for thee as glad tidings: why art thou in despair at its approach? I made light for thee a splendor: why dost thou hide from it?

192. O Son of Spirit! The Gospel of Light I herald to thee: rejoice in it. And to the state of Holiness I call thee: abide in it, that thou mayest be in peace for ever and ever.

193. O Son of Spirit! The Holy Spirit heralds comfort to thee: why dost thou grieve? The Spirit of Command confirms thee in the Cause: why dost thou remain apart? The Light of the Face walks before thee: why dost thou seek darkness?

194. O Son of Man! Lift up thy heart with delight, that thou mayest be fitted to meet Me, and to mirror forth My Beauty.

195. O Son of Man! Clothe thyself with My Beautiful Garment and forfeit not thy portion from My Living Fountain, that thou mayest not thirst forever.

196. O Son of Existence! Remember Me in My earth that I may remember thee in My Heaven. Thus may our eyes delight therein.

197. O Son of the Throne! Thy hearing is My hearing: hear thou with it. Thy sight is My Sight: see thou with it. Thus mayest <p174> thou attest within thyself My Holiness, that I may attest within Myself a place of exaltation for

thee.

198. O Son of Man! For everything there is a sign. The sign of love is patience through My Ordeal and long-suffering for My Sake.

199. O Son of Man! The sincere lover longs for suffering as the rebel craves forgiveness, and the sinner prays for mercy.

200. O Son of Man! If calamity befall thee not in My path, how wilt thou tread in the way of those who are content in My will? If affliction overtake thee not in thy longing to meet Me, how canst thou attain the Light of the Love of My Beauty?

201. O Son of Man! My Calamity is My Providence. In appearance it is fire and vengeance; in reality it is Light and Mercy. Therefore approach it, that thou mayest become an Eternal Light and an Immortal Spirit. This is My Command; know thou it.

202. O Son of Humanity! Rejoice not if fortune smile upon thee, and if humiliation overtake thee mourn not because of it, for, in their time, they both shall cease and be no more.

203. O Son of Existence! If thou lovest the Immortal and Eternal Kingdom, the Ancient and Everlasting Life, then forsake this mortal and vanishing kingdom.

204. O Son of Man! Thou desirest gold, and We desire thy separation from it. Thou hast realized therein the riches of thyself, while I realize thy wealth to consist in thy freedom from it. By My Life! This is My Knowledge, while that is thine imagining: how can My Thought agree with thine?

205. O Son of Man! Distribute My possessions among My Poor, that in heaven thou mayest receive from the boundless treasures of Glory and from the stores of Eternal Bliss. But by My Life! The sacrifice of the spirit is more glorious, couldst thou see with My Vision.

206. O Son of Man! The Light has shone upon thee from the horizon of the Mount, and the Spirit of Purity has breathed in the Sinai of thy heart. Therefore empty thyself of doubts and fancies; then enter into this Mansion, that thou mayest be prepared for the Eternal Life, and ready to meet Me. Herein there is no death, no trouble nor burden.

207. O Son of Man! My Eternity is My creation. I have created it for thee; therefore make it the garment of thy temple. <p175> My Oneness is My design. I have designed it for thee; therefore clothe thyself with it. Thus thou mayest be a star of My Omnipresence forever.

208. O Son of Man! My Greatness is My Bounty to thee. My Majesty is My Mercy to thee, but that which is due to Me none can realize or comprehend: verily I have treasured it in the stores of My Secrets, in the treasury of My Command -- as a favor to My servants and a mercy to My people.

209. O Son of Beauty! By My Spirit and by My Providence! By My Mercy and by My Beauty! All that I uttered for thee by the Tongue of Power and wrote with the

Pen of Strength, verily, We revealed it according to thy capacity and perception, not according to My State and Reality.

210. O Children of Men! Do ye know why We have created you from one clay? That no one should glorify himself over the other. Be ye mindful of how you were created. Since We created you all from the same substance, ye must be as one soul, walking with the same feet, eating with one mouth and living in one land, that ye may manifest with your being, and by your deeds and actions, the signs of unity and the spirit of oneness. This is My Counsel to you, O people of Lights! Therefore follow it, that ye may attain the fruits of holiness from the Tree of Might and Power.

211. O Children of the Spirit! Ye are My treasures, for in you I have treasured the pearls of My Mysteries and the Gems of My Knowledge. Guard them, lest the unbelievers among My people, the wicked ones among My creatures, should discover them.

212. O Son of Him Who Stood By His Own Entity in The Kingdom of Himself! Know that I have sent unto thee the fragrances of Holiness, have accomplished the Word in thee, have fulfilled the Bounty through thee, and have willed for thee what I have willed for Myself. Therefore be content in Me and thankful to Me.

213. O Son of Man! On the Tablet of the Spirit write all We have uttered to thee, with the ink of Light; and, if thou canst not do this, then make the ink of the essence of thy heart; and, if thou art still unable, then write with the red ink shed in My Path. Verily this is more precious to Me than all else, for this radiance shall last forever. <p176>

214. In the Name of the Mighty Speaker! O ye possessors of intelligence and hearing, the first melody of the Beloved is: O nightingale of Significance, seek no refuge save in the rose garden of significances! O messenger of the Solomon of Love, dwell not save in the Sheba of the Beloved! O phoenix of Immortality, choose no abode except in the Mount of Faithfulness! This is thy station, if thou art soaring to the Placeless on the wings of Love.

215. O Son of Dust! Verily I say the most negligent of the servants is he who disputes and prefers himself to his brother. Say, O brethren! Adorn yourselves with deeds rather than with words.

216. O Sons of Earth! Know the truth that a heart wherein lingers the least trace of envy shall never attain unto My Immortal Dominion, nor feel the fragrances of purity from My Holy Kingdom.

217. O Son of Love! Only one step separates thee from the plain of nearness and the exalted Tree of Love. Plant the first foot and, with the other, step into the Kingdom of Eternity and enter the Pavilion of Immortality. Then hearken to what has descended from the Pen of Glory.

218. O Son of Desire! Listen truly: mortal eye shall never perceive the Everlasting Beauty, and the dead mind delights only in lifeless clay; for like seeks like and has affinity with its own kind.

219. O My Children! I fear that, without having enjoyed the melody of the Nightingale, ye may return to the region of mortality; and, without seeing the beauty of the Rose, ye may return to the water and clay.

220. O Son of Spirit! The time cometh when the Nightingale of Holiness will be prevented from unfolding the Inner Significances, and all shall be bereft of the Merciful Melody and Divine Call.

221. O Essence of Negligence! Alas, that a hundred thousand ideal languages are spoken by One Tongue, and that a hundred thousand hidden meanings are unfolded in One Melody, and there is no ear to hearken, nor any heart to perceive a single letter!

222. O Comrades! The doors of the Placeless are opened, and the City of the Beloved is adorned with the blood of the lovers, but all are bereft of this spiritual City except a few; and of this few have appeared but very few with pure hearts and holy souls. <p177>

223. O People of the Delectable Paradise! Let the people of certainty know that a new Garden has appeared near the Ridvan in the Open Court of Holiness, and that all the people of the Heights, and the temples of the Exalted Heaven, are around it. Therefore endeavor to reach that Station, and discover the truths of the mystery of Love from its red tulips, and unveil abundant knowledge of the Oneness from its eternal fruits. Radiant are the eyes of him who has entered therein with trust.

224. O My Friends! Have ye forgotten that true, bright morn when ye were all in My Presence on that blessed pain under the shade of the Tree of Life, planted in the Great Paradise, when I addressed to thee three Holy Words; ye heard them and were overwhelmed!

225. The Words are these: "O Friends, prefer not your will to Mine; desire not that which I have not desired for thee; approach Me not with dead minds stained with desire and hope." If ye purify your breasts, that condition, and the view of that Open Court, will appear to you, and My Explanation will become manifest.

226. O Dead Men on the Bed of Negligence! Centuries have passed, and ye have ended your precious lives; yet not a single breath of purity hath ever come from you to Our Holy Presence. Ye are drowned in the sea of polytheism while talking of Oneness. Ye have loved that which hateth Me, and ye have taken My foe to be your friend. Ye are walking with mirth and pleasure upon My earth, heedless that it detests you, and that the things of the earth are fleeing from you. Should ye open your eyes but a little ye shall know that a hundred thousand griefs are preferable to this pleasure, and ye will consider death to be preferred to this life.

227. O Son of Passion! The people of wisdom and insight struggled for years, and failed to attain the meeting of the Exalted One, hastened all their lives, and did not see the Most Beautiful; while thou hast arrived at home without hastening, and hast attained the goal without search. Yet, after gaining all

these degrees and ranks, thou wert so veiled with thyself that thine eyes did not behold the Beauty of the Beloved, and thy hand did not reach to the Hem of the Friend. Therefore marvel at this, O possessors of insight!

228. O People of the Country of Love! The Eternal Candle is beset by mortal winds, and the beauty of the Spiritual Servants is <p178> shrouded by the darkness of dust. The King of kings of Love is oppressed under the hand of the subjects of tyranny, and the Dove of Holiness is clutched in the talons of owls. All the people of the Pavilion of Glory and of the Supreme Concourse are mourning and wailing, while ye are living at ease upon the earth of negligence, counting yourselves among the sincere lovers. Therefore that which ye have assumed is false.

229. O Ignorant Ones Who Have a Reputation for Knowledge! Why do ye outwardly claim to be shepherds while inwardly ye have become wolves of My sheep? Your example resembles the star preceding the dawn, which is apparently bright and luminous, but in reality leads the caravans of My City astray, and causes their destruction.

230. O Perfect in Appearance, and Inwardly Defective! Your example is like unto a clear but bitter water, which outwardly seems pure and clean, but when it falls into the hand of the Divine Assayer, not one drop of it is accepted. Yea, the radiance of the sun is cast upon the dust and upon the mirror, but the difference is great between the earth and the guiding stars; nay, that distance is vast.

231. O Son of Generosity! Thou wert in the deserts of nonbeing and, by means of the earth of command, I made thee to appear in the world of possession. I charged all the atoms of dependence and the realities of creation with thy training, so that, before thou didst issue from the womb of thy mother, I ordained for thee two fountains of bright milk. I appointed eyes to guard thee, set thy love in all hearts, and with pure generosity I reared thee under the shadow of My Mercy, and protected thee with the essence of My Grace. The purpose of all this was to enable thee to arrive at Our Eternal Might and to deserve Our Invisible Favors. But thou, O heedless one, when thou didst reach maturity, neglected all My Bounties, and engaged thyself in thy fancy to such a degree that thou didst entirely forget Me and, leaving the house of the Beloved, went and dwelt in the porch of the enemy.

232. O Son of the Earth! If thou desirest Me, desire no other than Me. If thou seekest My Beauty, withdraw thy glance from the people of the world, for My Will and the will of another is like fire and water which cannot be contained in the same mind and heart.

233. O Stranger to the Friend! The candle of thy mind is <p179> lighted by the hand of My Power; extinguish it not with the contrary winds of desires and passions. The healer of all thy troubles is remembrance of Me; forget it not. Make My Love thy capital, and cherish it as the spirit of the eye.

234. O My Friends! Extinguish the lamp of ignorance and kindle the ever-burning

torch of guidance in the heart and mind. For in a short while the Assayers of Being shall accept naught but pure virtue in the portico of the Presence of the Adored One, and will receive none but holy deeds.

235. O Son of Dust! The wise men of the people are those who speak not unless they find a listener; as the cup-bearer never offers a cup unless he find one who desires; nor does the lover cry out from the depth of his heart until he attains to the beauty of the beloved. Therefore sow the seeds of knowledge and wisdom in the fertile ground of the mind, and conceal them there until the hyacinth of Divine Wisdom springs up in the heart and not in the clay.

236. O Son of Spirit! Break the cage, and like unto the bird of love soar in the atmosphere of holiness; leave the self, and rest with heavenly souls upon the sacred Plain of God.

237. O My Servant! Free thyself from the worldly bond, and escape from the prison of self. Appreciate the value of the time, for thou shalt never see it again, nor shalt thou find a like opportunity.

238. O Son of My Maid-Servant! Wert thou to see the immortal Kingdom, verily thou wouldst abandon the mortal possessions of earth; yet there is a wisdom in the former being concealed and in the latter being manifest, and this is known only to hearts that are pure.

239. O Companion of My Throne! Hear no evil and see no evil; degrade not thyself, neither lament. That is -- speak no evil, that thou mayest not hear it; think no the faults of others to be great, that thine own may not seem great; approve not the abasement of any soul, that thine own abasement may not be exposed. Then with stainless mind, holy heart, sanctified breast, and pure thoughts, thou mayest be free during all the days of thy life which are counted less than an instant, and with freedom may return from this mortal body to the paradise of Inner Significances, and abide in the Immortal Kingdom.

240. O Brothers of the Path! Why are ye heedless of the remembrance <p180> of the Beloved, and why are ye far from the Presence of the Friend? The Absolute Beauty is established upon the Throne of Glory, under the Peerless Canopy, while ye are engaged in contention according to your own desire. The fragrances of holiness are wafted, and the breezes of generosity are blowing, but ye have lost the power of scent, and are bereft of them all. Alas for you, and for them who follow in your steps and walk after your ways.

241. O Children of Dust! Let the rich learn the midnight sighing of the poor, lest negligence destroy them and they be deprived of their portion of the tree of wealth. Giving and generosity are qualities of Mine. Happy is he who adorns himself with My virtues.

242. O Son of My Maid-Servant! Let not poverty trouble thee, nor rest assured in wealth. All poverty is succeeded by wealth, and all wealth is followed by poverty. But to be poor in all save God is a great blessing; make it not small, for in the end it will make thee rich in God. This condition is hidden in the verse of the Qur'an: "Ye are poor," but the blessed word, "God only is rich"

shall appear, shine forth and illumine, like the true morn, from the horizon of the lover's mind, and shall be established upon the Throne of Wealth.

243. O Ye Who Boast Because of Mortal Possessions! Know ye that wealth is a strong barrier between the seeker and the Desired One, between the lover and the Beloved. Never shall the rich arrive at the abode of nearness, nor enter into the city of contentment and resignation, save only a few. Then good is the state of that wealthy one, whose wealth preventeth him not from the Everlasting Kingdom, and depriveth him not of the Eternal Possessions. Verily, I declare by the Greatest Name that the light of that wealthy one shall illumine the people of Heaven, as the sun shines upon the people of the earth.

244. O Ye Who are Wealthy on Earth! The poor among you are My trust. Therefore guard My trust, and be not wholly occupied with your own ease.

245. O My Son! The company of the wicked increaseth sorrow, and the fellowship of the righteous removeth the rust of the mind. He who desires to associate with God, let him associate with His beloved; and he who desires to hear the Word of God, let him hear the words of His Chosen Ones. <p181>

246. O Heedless Ones! Think not that the mysteries of hearts are concealed; nay, rather know with certainty that they are inscribed in clear type, and are openly manifest in the Presence.

247. O Son of Dust! Close not thine eye to the peerless Wine of the Eternal Beloved, and open not thine eye to the turbid and mortal wine. Take immortal Cups from the hand of the Cup Bearer of Oneness, and thou shalt become all consciousness, and hear the invisible Utterances of Reality. Say: O worthless ones --

248. O Ye Oppressors on Earth! Withdraw your hands from oppression, for I have vowed to pass not over any one's oppression. This is a Covenant which I have decreed in the Preserved Tablet, and sealed it with the seal of Power.

249. O Rebellious Ones! My forbearance hath made you bold and My patience hath made you negligent, so that ye fearlessly ride upon the steeds of the fire of passion in the pathways of destruction. Perchance ye have thought Me heedless, and considered Me to be ignorant.

250. O Plant of the Earth! How is it that thou wilt not touch thine own garment with hands soiled with sugar, while with thy mind soiled with the filth of passion and lust, thou seekest companionship with Me, and desirest to be directed to the dominions of My Holiness. Alas! Alas! for that which thou hast desired!

251. O Sons of Adam! "The good word" and pure and holy deeds ascend to the glorious Heaven of Oneness. Strive that thy deeds may be cleansed from the dust of hypocrisy and from the turbidness of self and passion, and thus enter the glorious Presence of Acceptance. For soon the Assayers of Existence, in the portico of the Presence of the Worshipped One, shall accept naught but pure virtue, and shall admit none but pure deeds. This is the sun of Wisdom and

Significances which has dawned from the horizon of the Mouth of the Divine Will. Blessed are they who advance.

252. O Son of Delight! The plain of being is a pleasant plain, if thou dost reach it; the home of immortality is a good home, if thou wilt step beyond the dominion of mortality; the ecstasy of wine is sweet, if thou drinkest it from the Chalice of Inner Significances passed by the hand of the Divine Servant. Shouldst thou attain to these degrees thou shalt become free from mortality, affliction and error. <p182>

253. O My Friends! Remember the Covenant ye entered into with Me upon the Mount of Paran, situated under the blessed Shrine of Teman. I took as witness to that Covenant the Supreme Concourse and the dwellers in the City of Life. Now I find none steadfast in that Covenant. Pride and disobedience have indeed effaced it from the minds to such a degree that not a trace of it has remained and, although knowing this, I have endured it patiently and have not divulged it.

254. O My Servant! Thou art like unto a jeweled sword concealed in a dark sheath, by reason of which its value is unknown to the jewelers. Then come forth from the sheath of self and desire, that thy jewels may become open and manifest to the people of the world.

255. O My Friend! Thou art the sun of the heaven of My Holiness; defile not thyself with the eclipse of the world. Tear asunder the veil of negligence, that thou mayest emerge from behind the veil, be uncovered from the cloud, and array all beings with the robe of Life.

256. O Child of My Maid Servant! Guidance hath ever been by words, but at this time it is by deeds. That is, all pure deeds must appear from the temple of man, because all are partners in words, but pure and holy deeds belong especially to Our friends. Then strive with your life to be distinguished among all people by deeds. Thus We exhort you in the holy and radiant Tablet.

257. O Son of Justice! In the eve of beauty, the Temple of Immortality returned to the Sadrat-el-Montaha from the "emerald hill" of Faithfulness, and wept with such a wailing that the Supreme Concourse and the Cherubim wept because of His grief. When He was asked the cause of lamentation and grief, He answered: I was waiting, as commanded, upon the hill of Faithfulness, and found not the fragrance of fidelity from the dwellers of the earth. Therefore I returned and declared unto them that many doves of holiness are suffering under the claws of the dogs of the earth.

Thereupon the Divine Houri hastened, unveiled, from the Spiritual Palace, and questioned their names. All were mentioned save one of the names. And when they insisted, the first letter of that name flowed from the tongue, whereupon the people of the upper chambers hurried forth from their retreats of honor. When the second letter was mentioned, all dropped down upon the <p183> dust. Then came forth from the Retreat of Nearness this Voice: More than this is not permissible. Verily We were witness to that which they have done and are doing at this time!

258. O Child of My Maid Servant! Drink the wine of Significances from the Tongue of the Merciful, and behold the lights of the Sun of Explanation, without veil or cover, from the Dawningplace of the Word of God. Spread the seeds of My Immediate Wisdom in the fertile soil of the heart, and water it with the water of certainty: thus shall the hyacinths of My Knowledge and Wisdom spring up verdantly from the holy city.

259. O My Servants! Ye are the trees of My garden; ye must bear fresh and beautiful fruits, that ye and others may be profited by them. Therefore it is necessary for you to engage in arts and business. This is the means of attaining wealth, O ye possessors of intellect. Affairs depend upon means, and the blessing of God will appear therein and will enrich you. Fruitless trees have been and will be only fit for fire.

260. O My Servant! The lowest of men are those who bear no fruit upon the earth; they are indeed counted as dead. Nay, the dead are preferred in the Presence of God before those who are indolent and negligent.

261. O My Servant! The best of people are they who gain by work, and spend for themselves and their kindred in the Love of God, the Lord of the creatures.

262. The bride of wonderful Significances, who was concealed behind the veils of words, hath appeared through Divine Providence and Heavenly Bounties, like unto the radiance of the Beauty of the Beloved. I testify, O friends, that the Bounty has become complete, the Evidence is accomplished, the Argument manifested, and the Reason affirmed. Now what will your endeavors show forth from the degrees of devotion? Thus are the favors perfected unto all who are in the Heavens and earths. Praise be unto God, the Lord of all mankind!

PRAYERS AND SUPPLICATIONS

263. Praise be to Thee, O God of Names and Creator of Heaven! Praise be to Thee, for Thou hast made known unto Thy servants Thy Day, wherein the River of Life streamed forth from the finger of Thy Generosity, and the Fountain of Revelation and Unity became <p184> manifest by Thy Manifestation, to all who are in Thy earth and heaven.

O God! This is a Day the Light of which Thou hast sanctified above the sun and its effulgence. I testify that this Day is illumined by the Light of Thy Face and by the effulgence of the dawning Lights of Thy Manifestation.

O Thou, my God, and the Beloved of my heart! With the name of this Day Thou hast adorned Thy Tablet, which is known only to Thee. Thou hast called it The Day of God. Nothing is to be seen therein but Thy Supreme Self, and naught is to be remembered save Thy sweetest Name. Wherefore, when He appeared, the foundations of nations trembled, the learned were bewildered and the wise men were confounded, save those who came near unto Thee, took from the Hand of Favor the pure wine of Thy Inspiration, and drank in Thy Name, saying: "Praise be unto Thee, O Desire of the Nations! Praise be to Thee, O Beloved of the hearts of the yearning!"

264. Glory be unto Thee, O God, for Thy Manifestation of Love to mankind! O Thou, who art our Life and Light, guide Thy servants to Thy Way, and make them rich in Thee and free from all save Thee.

O God, teach them Thy Oneness, and give unto them a realization of Thy Unity; that they may see no one save Thee. Thou art the Merciful and the Giver of Bounty!

O God, create in the hearts of Thy beloved the fire of Thy Love, that it may burn away the thought of everything save Thee.

Reveal unto them, O God, Thy Exalted Eternity; that Thou hast ever been and will always be, and that there is no God save Thee. Verily, in Thee will they find comfort and strength!

265. I testify, O my God, that Thou hast created me to know Thee and to adore Thee. I testify at this instant to my powerlessness and to Thy Power; to my poverty and to Thy Wealth. There is no God but Thee, the Protector, Self-Subsistent.

266. Thou art my God and my Beloved! Shower upon me, from the right side of Thy Mercy and Providence, the holy waves of Thy Beneficence, to lift me from myself and from the world, unto the shore of Thy Presence and Communion. For Thou art <p185> powerful to do whatsoever Thou wishest and Thou art ever pervading the universe!

267. I arise in Thy Shelter, and it behooveth him who seeketh Thy Protection to be under the shield of Thy Guard and in the fortress of Thy Defence. O my Lord, enlighten me inwardly by the lights of the daybreak of Thy Manifestation, as Thou hast enlightened me outwardly by the light of the dawn of Thy Favor.

268. Thou art the Praiser and the Praised One! O my God, and my Master, and my Desire! This, Thy servant, desireth to sleep in the shelter of Thy Mercy and to rest under the shadow of the dome of Thy Favor, assisted by Thy Protection and Thy Guard. O my Lord, I invoke Thee, by Thine Eye which sleepeth not, to protect my sight from beholding aught beside Thee: then increase its light by witnessing Thy Signs and by looking toward the horizon of Thy Manifestation. Thou art He before whose appearance of might the existence of power is subdued. There is no God but Thee, the Powerful, the Conquerer, the Unconstrained!

269. Praise be to Thee, O God my Lord! Every time I try to mention Thee my dreadful sins and awful crimes prevent me, and by them I find myself removed from Thee and prevented from calling upon Thee for help. But my assurance of Thy Generosity and my full trust in Thy Bounty enables me to mention Thee and ask of Thee what Thou hast to give.

O my God! I beg of Thee -- by Thy Mercy, which was before all things existing, and to which all those who are in the depths of the seas of Names did bear witness -- leave me not to myself, for it always desires to do what is wrong. Keep me in the stronghold of Thy Shelter and amid the surroundings of Thy Protection.

O my God! I do not want but what was appointed to me by Thy Power; and this is what I have chosen to myself -- that Thy good Destiny and Judgment may confirm me, and that I may be exalted by what Thou hast written and ordained for me.

I beg of Thee, O Thou, Beloved of the hearts of Thy lovers -- by the manifestation of Thy Commandments, by the depths of Thine Inspiration, by the heights of Thine Exaltation, and by the stores of Thy Wisdom -- forbid me not from visiting Thy sacred house <p186> and holy abode. Permit me, O my God, the privilege to drink from the fountain of its holy place, to wander about its courts, and to stand beside its gates. For Thou art He who is, was and ever shall be Powerful and Mighty! Nothing can be hidden from Thy Knowledge! Thou art He who has all power, majesty and glory! Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds!

270. O Thou, by whose Name the sea of joy moveth and the fragrance of happiness is wafted! I ask Thee to show me, from the wonders of Thy Favor, that which shall brighten my eyes and gladden my heart.

271. In Thy Name, the Sufficer, the Healer, the Fulfiller, the Loftiest, the Supreme, the Baha-El-Abha!

I ask Thee by Thine Ancient Beauty, and I supplicate Thee by the manifestation of Thy Greatest Majesty, and Thy Name, around which the heavens of the Manifestations revolve; by which the waters of the oceans overflow, the full moons appear, the lights diffuse, and verily, the visible and the invisible, the mysterious and the celebrated; by which all sorrow will be turned into joy and all disease will be turned into health, and by which every sick, afflicted, unfortunate and constrained one may be healed, to suffice to heal this weary, sick-worn one of the seen and the unseen disease.

Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Conqueror, the Mighty, the Living, the Forgiver!

272. O our God, we beg of Thee by the King of Names and Maker of heaven and earth, by the rustling of the leaves of the Tree of Life and by Thine utterances, through which the realities of things are drawn unto us, to grant that the unity in the Love of God may be speedily established throughout the world; that Thou wilt guide us always and unmistakably to whatever Thou wouldst have us to do, and that we may ever be strong and fully prepared to render instant, exact and complete obedience.

273. A pure heart create within me, O my Lord! A tranquil soul renew within me, O my Hope! Through the spirit of command make me firm in Thy Cause, O my Beloved! By the light of guidance show unto me Thy Path, O my Desire! By the might of loftiness cause me to ascend to the heaven of Thy Sanctity, <p187> O my Beginning! Through the worlds of immortality cause me to rejoice, O my Lord! By the melodies of eternity tranquillize me, O my Companion! By the riches of Thy Pre-existent Countenance deliver me from all else save Thee, O my Lord! And by the interpretation of Thy Everlasting Identity rejoice me! O Thou who art more apparent than my appearance, O Thou who art hidden in my inmost heart!

274. O my God! Make Thy Beauty to be my food and let Thy Presence be my drink. Let my truth be in Thy Will, and my deeds according to Thy Command. Let my service be acceptable to Thee, and my action a praise to Thee. Let my help come only from Thee, and ordain my home to be Thy Mansion, boundless and holy. Thou art the Precious, the Ever-present, the Loving.

275. O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy Great Purpose. May they follow Thy Commandments and abide in Thy Law. Help them, O God, in their endeavor, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God, leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of Knowledge, and cheer their hearts by Thy Love. Verily, Thou art their Helper and their Lord!

276. He is the Everlasting Being!

This is a message which We have appointed as Our meeting for those who advance toward God in this Day in which all countries are changed.

The one who reads that which is revealed in this Tablet from the direction of the Throne, and doubts the reality of meeting his Lord; verily, he is of those who deny God, who causeth the mornings to break forth!

O birds of Paradise! Hear the voice of the Beloved in these days wherein the feet of the people deviate.

On account of your advancement the Supreme Concourse hath rejoiced; but because of your not having attained the meeting, and being thirty while near the ocean, the cry of mourning and weeping has been raised by the inhabitants of the cities of eternity.

This is indeed good; that this rejoicing and sorrow seem to unite and to embrace one another in the Day of God, the Omnipresent, the Dear, the Chosen! <p188>

The bellies of the polytheists are burned by that which We have uttered aforetime, and for this reason they dissemble day and night against My soul.

Blessed are you, since ye have entered the city and attained that which your Lord, the Dear, the Giver, desireth.

It is incumbent upon you that gladness and exultation shall be manifest in your faces; so that every soul may find in you submission and forbearance. Thus it is preordained from the Pen of El-Abha. Verily, your Lord the Merciful is the knower of that which is secret and manifest!

Ye are in the shadow of My providence and under the Dome of My mercy. Verily, the sight of God is directed toward you, O ye possessors of clear insight.

Blessed are ye; those who love you and those who advance toward you sincerely, for the sake of God, the Dear, the Almighty!

God beareth witness, and those who are encircling the Throne, that ye have victoriously attained His meeting, and have circulated around the Holy of

Holies of His Cause, and were present before His Face. Verily, He is the powerful over all that He wisheth! There is no God but He, the Dear, the Bestower!

By Myself! We have accepted from you that which ye desired, and We will be with you in all times.

El-Baha be upon you on the part of the Dear, the Helper! <p189>

CHAPTER FIVE

THE INNER SIGNIFICANCES TABLET OF WISDOM

277. In His Name, the Originator, the All-knowing, the Wise! This is a Book which the Merciful hath caused to descend from the Kingdom of His utterances.

It is indeed the spirit of life to whosoever is in the realm of creation. Exalted is God, the Lord of the people of existence.

In this great Tablet He mentioneth him who is mentioning His Lord; verily he is En-nabell (Muhammad).

O thou Muhammad; hear the voice which is raised from the highest region of greatness and from the lofty Sadrat elevated upon the land of Zaafaran, "that there is no God but Me, the Omniscient, the Wise."

278. Be as the blowing wind of the Merciful to the trees of the created world, and rear them up in the name of thy Lord, the Equitable, the Learned One. Verily we desire to mention unto thee that which will be commemorated by all people that they may cast away what they have and turn their faces unto God the Lord of the sincere. Verily we admonish the servants in these days wherein the face of justice has become clouded with dust, the cheeks of ignorance brightened and illumined, the shame of the mind manifested, repose and faithfulness have disappeared, while calamities and afflictions have prevailed, covenants have been violated and promises broken. In these days people have become ignorant, unable to distinguish between that which opens their eyes, and that which blinds them, that which leads them astray, and that which guides them into the right path.

279. O people, shun vice and adopt virtue, be perfect examples unto people, and become a monitor whereby mankind is preached to and admonished.

280. He who arises with steadfastness to serve the cause of God must be a manifestation of wisdom, striving to remove ignorance from amongst human beings. <p190>

281. Say! Let your word be one and agree in your opinions and make your mornings preferable to your evenings and the morrow better than yesterday. The merit of man depends upon his service and perfection and not upon the ornaments of riches, and wealth. Let your words be free from falsehood and lust, and your actions sanctified and above suspicion and pure from hypocrisy.

282. Say! Spend not the wealth of your precious lives on lustful desires and do

not confine things only to your private interests, but bestow when you have and be patient when you have not. Distress is followed by affluence and confusion by clearness. Shun mendacity and slothfulness and take hold of that whereby the people will be profited, whether young or old, aged or widows.

283. Say, beware of sowing the tares of discord among the creatures or the thorns of doubts and suspicions in the pure and brilliant hearts.

284. Say, O beloved of God, commit not that which will disturb the clearness of the pure water of love or sever the perfumed ties of friendship.

285. By my life, you are created for love and affection and not for hatred and obstinacy.

286. Boast not of love to your own people but of love to your fellow creatures. Glory not in loving your homes but in loving the whole world.

287. Let your eye be chaste, your hand faithful, your tongue truthful, and your heart instructed. Abase not the glorious station of the learned and do not belittle the honor of the chief men who justly judge amongst you.

288. Let equity be your army, reason your arms, and pardon and forgiveness your character and nature. By my life, it grieved me to hear of the sorrows thou hast mentioned. Regard not the people and their actions; but look to the truth and His dominion, verily He shall mention thee in that which was the origin of the gladness of the world.

289. Drink the pure water of pleasure from the cup of the utterances of the day-spring of the Manifestation, who remembers thee in this strong fort. Spare not any effort within thy power to establish the truth with wisdom and explanations, and destroy falsehood from amidst the creatures, thus doth the dawningplace of knowledge command you from this brilliant horizon.

290. O thou utterer of My Name! Consider the people and <p191> what they have done in My Days; we have revealed to one of the Emirs that which made all the living on the earth impotent to produce the like and we asked him to confront us with the savants of this age in order to make manifest unto him the proof of God, His argument, His greatness and His authority. We did not desire in that anything save pure goodness; but, verily he has committed that which made the denizens of the cities of equity and justice lament. Thus it was judged between Me and him -- verily thy Lord is the controller, the informed one.

291. The case being as thou seest, how could it be possible for the Divine Bird to fly away in the atmosphere of explanations, after his foremost feather have been broken by the stones of suspicions and hatred and He was imprisoned in a cave built of shining rock. By God, the people are indeed great oppressors.

292. Referring to that which thou hast mentioned regarding the beginning of creation, know that this is a matter which differs in proportion to the difference of minds and visions -- shouldst thou say "Be and it is" it would be right. Shouldst thou say the same as recorded in the Holy Books, verily there will be no doubt about it; because it has been caused to descend on the part of

God, the Lord of the worlds. Verily it was as hidden treasure and this is a state which could not be interpreted by any interpretation or explained by any explanation. In another place it is said, "My desire to be known made me create."

293. The Truth was, and creation has been under His shadow since the beginning which has no beginning; but this was preceded by the priority which has no priority, and by the Cause that could not be known by the learned knowers.

294. That which is in existence was before but not in the condition wherein it is seen today. The worlds were formed through the force emanating from the re-action of the active and passive principles; although the worlds are always the same, nevertheless they change constantly. Thus doth this Instructor who is greater than this great structure (creation) inform thee.

295. Verily the actor and the acted upon were created by the unresisted Word of God, which is indeed the cause of creation, and aught beside His Word was created and caused.

296. Verily thy Lord is the explainer, the wise. Then know that the Word of God (exalted and glorified is He!), is far superior to what is comprehended by the senses; because it does not belong to <p192> the nature nor essence, rather it is sanctified from the known elements and free from comprehended and high rudiments. It became manifest without an utterance made, or a voice breathed. It is the command of God, the protector against all the worlds.

297. Verily the Word of God has never ceased to descend upon the world. It is the overflowing, the greatest bounty, which was the cause of abundance. It is the being which is sanctified from what was and is. Verily, we do not desire to explain the particulars of this condition, because the ears of the objectors are stretched out that they may hear that whereat they would object to God, the protector, the self-existent. Being unable to comprehend, through the mysteries of science and wisdom, that which hath appeared from the day-spring of the Light of Unity, they therefore object and make a clamour. But the fact is that they object to that which they know themselves and not to that which was expounded by the Expounder, and predicted by the Truth, the knower of the seen and the unseen.

298. All of their objections will return upon themselves, but by thy life, they do not understand this.

299. It is an indisputable fact that there is nothing without an origin, as there is no building without a builder. This is indeed that cause which hath preceded existence which is advanced with the embroidered garment of priority though subject to renovation and production at all times, and under all circumstances; exalted is the Wise who hath created this great and noble structure.

300. Look at the world and ponder over it. Verily it will reflect to you the book of its very self, and that which is recorded therein by the pen of thy Lord, the maker, the informed.

301. That book will show thee that which is therein and upon and will distinctly give thee such explanation that will make thee independent of any other eloquent explainer.

302. Say, nature, with the whole of its being, is nothing but the manifestation of My Name, the maker, the creator, but its manifestations may differ through a certain cause of causes, which differences are indeed signs to those who perceive. Nature is the manifestation of the will of God in the apparent world. Verily it is the preordination on the part of One, the predestinator and omniscient. Should it be said that nature is the Divine Primal Will, manifested in the created world, no one has the right to object to that, for a great power is ordained therein of which the limit and <p193> essence could not be comprehended by the people of the world. Verily the clear sighted cannot see in it aught save the transfiguration of My Name, the creator. Say, this is a state to which corruption has no access. This is a being which made nature confounded regarding His appearance, His proofs and His effulgence, which encompassed the worlds.

303. It does not become thee to have regard either to the former things or the latter; but speak of this Day and that which hath appeared therein; verily it sufficeth the whole world.

304. Verily, all explanation and indications concerning such questions, will only tend to cool the warmth of being and for this reason it becometh thee only to utter in this Day that which will enkindle the hearts, and make the bodies of the advancing fly upward. He who believes today in this new creation and beholds the impregnable Truth as being the guardian and protector over it, verily he is of the people of vision before this greatest Outlook; to this the discerning and confident bear witness. Walk above the world by the power of the Greatest Name that thou mayest see the secrets of pre-existence and know that which none know of. Verily thy Lord is the upholder, the wise, the all-knowing. Be as an artery pulsating in the body of the created world that, through the heat produced by the motion, the hearts of the hesitators will be quickened. Thou hast associated with Me and seen the sun of the heaven of My wisdom, and the surges of the sea of My utterances when we were behind seventy thousand barriers of light. Verily thy Lord is the faithful, the perfect. Blessed is He who attains unto the overflowing bounty of this sea in the days of his Lord, the bounteous, the wise one.

305. When we were in Iraq, in the house of one known as El-Majeed, we have pointed out to thee the mysteries of nature, its origin, and the cause; but after we left the house, our utterances became only confined to "verily there is no God but Me, the forgiver, the generous."

306. Be the deliverer of the cause of God in such wise that through thine utterances, the tree will be set on fire and made to utter, "Verily there is no God but Me, the Mighty, the Unconstrained."

307. Say, the Bayan is an essence which seeks penetration and uniformity, -- the former is dependent on thinness, and thinness belongs to the empty and

clear hearts; and the latter state is dependent <p194> on being blended with wisdom which we have revealed in the Books and Tablets.

308. Reflect on that which was caused to descend from the heaven of the will of God, the bountiful, that thou mayest know what we have desired in the depth of the verses.

309. Verily, those who have denied God and adhered unto nature as nature is, are indeed void of both sciences and wisdom, -- are they not of the erring?

310. Verily those people have never attained unto the highest station or unto the utmost desire; accordingly their eyes were shut and their thoughts varied. Had it not been for that, the chiefs of the people would have confessed in God and acknowledged His dominion; to this will bear witness thy Lord, the protector, the self-existent. And when the eyes of the people of the East became satiated and gratified through the arts, crafts and industries of the people of the West, they adhered to the effects and neglected the cause and the originator.

311. However, those who were they day-springs of wisdom had never denied the causer, the maker, and the creator of the origin of such a progress and advancement; verily thy God knoweth, but the majority of the people do not know.

312. Under the circumstances it will be advisable to mention in this Tablet some of the words of the wise people and savants for the sake of God, the ruler of names, that through such words the eyes of the servants may be opened and they may thus believe that He is the maker, the potent, the originator, the producer, the all-knowing, the wise.

313. Although it is at present considered that the savants of today have been the most important element and factor in the influence and progress of arts and sciences, yet, if with a discerning eye such matters are examined and investigated, it will positively appear that the great part of knowledge and arts was taken from the seers of old, who were indeed the means of laying the solid foundation of wisdom, facilitating its building up, and strengthening its basis; thus does thy Lord the ancient inform thee.

314. Not only that, but also the ancients had received their sciences from the prophets who were the day-springs of the divine wisdom and the manifestations of the heavenly mysteries.

315. From among the people some have attained unto the pure and clear water of their utterances, and others have only drunk <p195> the sediments of the cup; every one receiving his share according to his own capacity, -- verily He is the equitable, the wise.

316. Empedocles who was famous in wisdom was a contemporary of David. Pythagoras was a contemporary of Solomon the son of David. Both received wisdom from the source of wisdom (Solomon). Pythagoras was the one who thought that he had heard the rustling sound of the Ark and thus attained unto the station of

authority. Thus doth thy Lord, if He will, detail every matter; verily He is the omniscient, the encompasser.

317. Verily the foundation and origin of wisdom were the prophets themselves; but the inner significances and mysteries of wisdom became diversified according to the differences of vision and reasoning powers of people.

318. We will inform thee of a report of a day whereon one of the prophets hath spoken among the people of that of which He was taught of the powerful, -- verily thy Lord is the inspirer, the mighty, the impregnable. When the springs of wisdom and utterances had gushed forth from the source of His explanations, and the exhilaration of the wine of knowledge had taken possession of those who were standing at His door, they said, "Now we are filled with the spirit." From among the people were some who had accepted this statements and various utterances and thus they became leaders followed by others. Verily should we wish to mention their names and give all that concerns them in full detail it would take a long time and cause us to deviate from the intended point in view -- verily thy Lord is the wise, the all-knowing.

319. And from amongst them some others have drunk the sealed wine which was opened by the key of the tongue if the day-spring of the signs of thy Lord, the mighty, the bounteous.

320. Say, philosophers have never denied the Ancient; rather the majority of them passed from this life in deep grief because of not knowing Him, as was testified by some of them. Verily thy Lord is the informer, the learned one.

321. Consider Hippocrates! He was one of the greatest philosophers, and yet he believed in God and acknowledged His dominion! After him came Socrates. He was a wise, virtuous and devout man. He devoted his life to developing spirituality -- admonishing the people to shun passion and lust; setting aside the <p196> seductions of the world, he secluded himself in a cave in the mountain, and prohibited the people from worshipping idols. He taught them the way of the Merciful, until at the ignorant ones assailed him, took him and slew him in a prison. Thus doth also the swift pen relate to thee what a clean and acute sight that man had in philosophy! Verily he was the master of philosophy and a very wise man.

322. We do indeed testify that he was the "Knight of Wisdom" to which he became a steady and permanent servant, thus rendering a more important service than any other philosopher. He was an able man, and had a thorough knowledge of all the sciences of that day, as known amongst the people, and also of that which was hidden and beyond the limit of their knowledge. He had, as it were, a sip of this Greatest Sea when it overflowed with this pure and brilliant water. He is the one who became acquainted with the specific and uniform nature which controls the world and which, in the order of things, bears the same relation as does the spirit to the body of man. On these transcendent problems he gave special comments, which, if the savants of today were asked to demonstrate, they would prove incapable even in comprehending: Verily thy Lord speaketh the truth, but the majority of the people do not understand.

323. After Socrates came the divine Plato. Verily, he was the disciple of Socrates and he sat on the chair of wisdom after him. He confessed his faith in God and His signs, which are the guardians over what man was and is.

324. Then came Aristotle, the famous wise man. He was the one who discovered the theory of motion. All of these were of the chiefs and leaders of the people, and all of them confessed God and acknowledged the Ancient in whose grasp the reins of science were held.

325. I will also mention unto thee that which was said by Pliny, who, in his Natural History, was conversant with what Kikmat (the father of wisdom, Socrates) had said regarding the mysteries of creation. Thus all may become assured of what We have revealed unto thee in this illustrious Tablet, which, if pressed with the hands of justice and knowledge, would give vent to the Spirit of Life for the quickening of whosoever is in the contingent world. Blessed is he who swims in this sea and praises his God, the mighty, the beloved. <p197>

326. The fragrance of inspiration hath been diffused from the Verses of thy Lord, in such a manner that they could not be ignored by any one save by him who is deprived of hearing, sight, reason, and all human senses. Verily, thy Lord testifieth but the people do not know or understand. He was the one who said, "I am Pliny, the wise, the performer of miracles and charms." He is the one by whom arts and sciences were spread, such as were not produced by others. He was the one who ascended to the heights of humility and supplication. Hearken unto that which he said in his prayers before the Independent, the Exalted; "I arise between the hands of my Lord, mentioning His favors and bounties, and describing Him as He desireth Himself, that I may be a mercy and guidance to those who accept my words." He also continues saying: "O Lord, thou art God, and there is no God but thee. Thou art the creator, and there is no creator but thee. Strengthen me and uphold thou me, for my heart is trembling, my limbs are shivering, my mind is lost, and my reason is extinguished. Therefore, give me power, and let my tongue speak that I may utter that which is wisdom. Thou art the Omniscient, the Wise, the Ancient, the Compassionate." Verily he was the sage who became conversant with the mysteries of creation, and of the signs and token which were hidden in the Tablets of Hermes.

327. Verily, we do not desire to mention more than we have: rather we say that which the Spirit hath imparted to us, "There is no God but He, the All-knowing, the Mighty, the Protector, and Powerful and Extolled."

328. By my life! This is a day wherein the Sadrat doth not desire but to utter to the world, "There is no God but Me, the Peerless, the Informed." Had it not been for My love unto thee, I would not have mentioned what is herein. Know, therefore, this station! Then keep it as thou keepest thine own eyes and be grateful.

329. Thou, indeed, knowest that we have never read the books of the people, or ever become conversant with what they know of science. But whenever we wish to mention anything concerning the utterances of the learned and wise, -- that

which is in existence and that which books and tablets contain, become manifest before the face of thy Lord in a clear Tablet. Thus we see and then write what we see. Verily, His knowledge encompasseth the heavens and earth. This is a Tablet wherein is written by the Hidden Pen <p198> the science of what was and is, and of which there has been no interpreter save my wonderful tongue.

330. As to what My heart is and the concerns thereof, God hath assuredly made it free from all conceptions of the learned and pure from all utterances of the sages. Verily, it speaketh of God alone. The tongue of greatness bears witness thereof in this clear Book.

331. Say, O people of the earth! Beware lest the mention of wisdom withhold you from the Day-spring and the Dawning-place thereof. Cling to your Lord, the protector, the wise! Verily we have ordained unto every land a destiny, unto every hour a fate; unto every utterance a time, unto every circumstance a word. Consider the case of Greece! Verily, we made it the center of wisdom for a long period. But when the time of its end came, its throne became levelled, its tongue dumb, its lamp extinct, and its standard reversed. Thus we give and take away. Verily thy Lord is the taker, the giver, the mighty, the potent.

332. We have committed to the charge of every land the Sun of Knowledge so that when the time comes, from it will beam a command on the part of God, the all-knowing, the wise. Should we wish to enumerate unto thee every tract of land in the earth, and that which is therein and what has appeared out of it, verily, we are able to do so; for the knowledge of thy Lord hath indeed encompassed the earth and heavens.

333. Then know that the ancients have produced that which the modern sages have not produced. Among the former was Martos who invented a machine to convey sounds a distance of sixty miles. Not only he, but also others have discovered many wonderful things such as the people of this never saw. Verily thy Lord maketh to appear in every country that which He desireth, as a wisdom on His part. He is indeed the controller, the wise!

334. He who is a true philosopher, never denies God and His authority which is the protection against all the world. In truth some sages have produced that which the people have profited by, and we have upheld them by a command on our part. Verily, we are able to do this! Beware, O ye my beloved, lest ye deny the supremacy of my sages, the servants whom God hath made the day-springs of His name, the creator amidst the worlds! Make an effort that from you may appear arts and the things whereby everyone, whether young or old, may profit. Verily, we are quit of the foolish and ignorant ones who think that wisdom is confined <p199> to speaking of desires and passions or to turning away from God, the Lord of the worlds, as we hear the same today declared by those who are heedless.

335. Say, the beginning of wisdom and knowledge and its origin, is to confess and acknowledge that which God has made manifest -- because through it, order has been firmly established and thus become a coat of mail for the preservation of the body of the world. Ponder over this, that ye may know what was uttered

by My supreme pen in this magnificent Tablet!

336. Say, everything that relates to order or rule, of which ye debate and discuss, has been derived from every word of the words which have been revealed by the Might of His utterance, who is the potent, the impregnable.

337. Thus we have related unto thee that which will gladden thy heart and console thine eye, that thou mayest arise with steadfastness to serve the cause amongst the people of the world.

338. Say, praise be to God, O God, My God! I ask Thee, by Thy Name, whereby the light of wisdom hath shone forth when the atmosphere of His utterances has moved amongst the creatures, to strengthen me by Thy powers, and make me commemorate Thy name in the midst of Thy servants.

O God, I have turned my face unto Thee, cutting myself from aught beside thee, and taking hold of the hem of Thy garment and of Thy bounty. Cause me, therefore, to utter that which will draw the minds and make the souls and spirits soar upwards. Then uphold me in Thy cause, in such wise that I may not be hindered either by the influence of the oppressors, or by the power of the unbelievers of the inhabitants of Thy kingdom. Make me as a lamp in the midst of Thy realm which will guide all those in whose hearts the light of Thy knowledge doth exist, and in whom Thy love is planted. Verily thou art the powerful over that which thou willest, and in Thy grasp is the kingdom of creation.

There is no God but Thee.

TABLET OF JOSEPH

339. O Joseph! My demonstration was brought to its fulness and completion for all that are in Heaven and on earth, before I made myself known, because it appeared with such wonderful condition that no one could find any way to delay or oppose. <p200>

340. Meditate upon the nations of former ages, and why they were excluded from approaching the shore of God, and prevented from the beauty of the eternal majesty. If thou lookest with clear insight thou wilt perceive that all are deprived of the bounty of God, on account of the veils of words, imaginations, and invented proofs. In the day of God, though the beauty of God was like the sun in the heaven, shining and radiating, still they were veiled on account of their superstitions and imaginations. Notwithstanding they were commanded in all the Tablets not to cling to anything between earth and heaven in the time of the Manifestation, but to adhere only to the root of the Cause and that which is manifested through Him, yet they deviated from the right path, and adhered to the idea that the way to know God (who is exalted and holy above all), depends upon believing and disbelieving the people. Woe upon them! Being remote (from God) because of their willingness to know God through that which is beside Him! This is impossible, because the ancient essence is known by Himself and all things which are known are made possible through that which flows from the Pen of His command. Exalted is He! That He should be known

through that which is beside Him is impossible, because, verily all else beside Him was created as thou art.

341. In this day all those on earth and in heaven, are viewed (by God) as being in one region. Every soul which is cut wholly from all else save Him and soaring to the heaven of knowing Himself (God), that soul is and will be of those who are faithful to God and is of His saints even though he should not be known by others. And he who denies (or rejects) will be considered as one of the lowest of the creatures in the sight of God, even if he is of the chiefs among the people; because God (exalted is His mention!) hath never been and never shall be related or attributed to any one of the creatures.

342. All (people) were created alike by the (the blow of the) breath of His command, and the loftiness, exaltation and debasement appeared among the people after they had been created.

343. Every soul who accepts the word of God while hearing it, verily he is of the inhabitants of the supreme kingdom and of the confirmed ones in the paradise of Abha, and those who do not are mentioned as the people of Hades.

344. In this day, if any one desires to be in relationship with the tree of the Cause, he must withdraw himself from all that is in <p201> heaven and on earth, and advance toward the great aspect (God) with a pure and shining heart and a sanctified soul.

345. Now, if any soul desire to know God (exalted is His Majesty!) through other means, he will never succeed, and will never understand; because all beside Him are limited with the (evident) limitations of possibilities and are brought unto existence by (His) power of creation.

346. Through that which is created and limited the Essence of the Ancient was not and never will be known.

347. Hear the Lordly commandments and the tones of the eternal holiness, and turn from the left hand of uncertainty and superstition to the right hand of assurance; ponder carefully with thine insight upon the manifestations of God and the conditions of eternal holiness; cleanse the eye from unsatisfying views, that thou mayest see the manifestations of the majestic oneness in everything; purify thine ear from the saying of all the people, that thou mayest hear the holy and God-like tones from all directions and sanctify thy heart from the confused worldly allusions of the past, that thou mayest perceive the plain, direct, wonderful words revealed, and victoriously succeed to the stream of eternal holiness and the pure wine which has no likeness. This is the command of JAMAL EL QUEDAM (The beauty of the ancient) to thee.

348. Concerning what thou hast asked about the (beginning of the) creation (its) end, assembling, resurrection, path, paradise and fire, know verily that all are true and that there is no doubt about them, and he who is faithful and has clear insight can see with his inward and outward eyes all these ranks and stations in every time, because, such an one will be, in any time, neither prevented from the bounty, nor excluded from what he wishes.

349. If thou soarest unto the heaven of goodly bounty, thou shalt see the sign of God manifested in all manner of things brought into existence in every time, whether of the past or the future; because, verily, the bounty of God hath never been nor ever will be specialized in any one thing.

350. The explanation of what God intended by the (words) assembling, resurrection, paradise, fire, etc., which are mentioned in the divine Tablets, is found only and especially at the time of the Manifestation; for example, at the time of the Manifestation the tongue of God utters the Word, and through the Word, which <p202> comes forth from His mouth, the paradise, fire, assembling, resurrection, path and all that thou hast asked, and that which thou hast not, will be disclosed and manifested.

351. Every soul who sincerely accepts the Word of God, hath verily passed through the (right) path and succeeded in approaching the paradise of (God's) pleasure, and hath assembled with those who are near to God, -- the chosen ones.

352. He, in the presence of God, will be considered as one of the inhabitants of the Paradise and of the confirmed ones of the Supreme Kingdom; and every soul that rejects is in fire and considered as one of those who are in relationship with denial and Sejjin (Hades) and assembled in the shadow of the polytheists.

353. That which has (just) been mentioned, represents all these stations which in the time of the Manifestation appear through the Word.

354. But the souls who succeed in attaining the pleasure of God and believing in His cause, will gain the reward of their deeds in the world to come, after their spirits leave their bodies; because all seen things in their world are not ready (nor able) to bear more than that (which has been given to them).

355. Though the worlds of God are circulating around this world, yet for each soul in any of these worlds (there is) a fixed and pre-ordained command.

356. Do not think (or imagine) that anything mentioned in the Books of God is false and foolish; verily God is exalted above all that.

357. I swear by the sun of the horizon of the meanings, that there are for ever and ever many divine paradises which have no equal nor comparisons.

358. In (this) the first life the meaning of paradise is pleasing God, and entering His Cause!

359. But after departing from this world the faithful ones will enter into paradises which have no likeness, and enjoy winning graces which are beyond comprehension: verily those paradises are the fruits of their deeds which they have accomplished in this world.

360. Dost thou not see that if any one of God's creatures serves the other, or performs work for him, he receives his reward and compensation for it? Then how can it be said that the All-generous <p203> commandeth His creatures (to do

according to) His ordinances and after that excludeth them from His Mercy?

361. Praised is He, and praised is He above that; exalted is He, and exalted is He above what the creatures imagine about Him!

362. In this day, all those ranks (asked about) are witnessed; therefore, blessed is the soul who victoriously succeedeth in attaining the Paradise of Abha, which is, was and ever will be supreme of all paradises.

363. If purified ears and matured souls shall be found, then continually will be mentioned that which is from the wonderful bounty of God; that all may be purified and emptied of all that they perceived, understood or witnessed; and advance toward the highest aspect.

364. But of what benefit is this! since through all the training of the point of the Bayan (the souls of all beside Him be a sacrifice for Him!), these creatures have not progressed from the seed to the first station of the embryo; therefore, when will they reach the condition of the body? And beside all these there are several stations which have not been mentioned. Woe upon those who changed the grace of God that was bestowed upon them, so that by their being in existence, the heaven of meanings was prevented from mentioning them (the stations), and their conditions!

365. Thus ponder carefully upon the conditions of these creatures and be one of their witnesses.

366. The paradise and fire in the apparent life, were and will ever be, the acceptance and the rejection; and after the ascension of the spirit, there are paradises which have no equal and also fire which has no likeness, which are the fruit of the deeds of the advancer and the opposer, who will be in such condition; but no soul understood or ever will understand these stations save God.

367. And for the faithful one (the believer) many stations were created, above what was heard; this is from the wonderful gifts of God, which are prepared in the Paradise of everlasting majesty. In the same way stations were created for the denier, of eternal and everlasting torment beyond what was heard.

368. Hereby we bear witness, that the path is lifted up in truth, the balance is laid in Justice, the manifestation assembled, the hidden issues disclosed, the clarion pealed, the trumpet sounded, the fire burst forth, the paradise approached nearer, the proclaimer announced, the heavens rolled together as a scroll, the <p204> ground leveled, the breeze of God wafted, the Spirit of God sent, the beauteous damsels adorned, the youths beautified, the mansions assured, the securities of the upper apartments (of Paradise) inlaid with precious stones, the waters overflowed, the fruits hung low, the fruits plucked, the texts revealed, the deeds of the deniers effaced, the deeds of the advancers confirmed, the Tablet which kept in Heaven manifested in truth, the written Tablet pronounced with authority, and the Desired One of all existence, the beloved of all creatures, the worshipped of those on earth and in heaven, hath been manifested in the temple of a Youth, with the tongue of everything

declares, "Verily, blessed is God, the creator of the creatures."

369. O my servant! O Joseph! hear the tones of God, and do not compare this day with any other day, neither the wonderful sweet words of God with any other words; look to the apparent matters with thine own eye, and do not follow any one in knowing the great and brilliant Orb.

370. In this day, the beloved of God must not hesitate or delay an instant in teaching the Cause of the manifestation; and reconciling words to the religion of majestic oneness; because, verily, in this day, to the soul who is the cause of guidance to another soul the recompense of a martyr in the way of God will be assuredly recorded by the pen of the Cause for his deed.

371. This is from the bounty of God unto thee. Do according to what thou hast been commanded and do not be of those who tarry.

372. And El-Baha is upon thee and upon those who are with thee, if thou art steadfast in this sublime and most exalted Cause.

TABLET OF THE MANIFESTATION

373. In the name of God! The Most Holy, the All-knowing! The Mighty!

374. O thou who art gazing toward the direction of God and submerged in His Nearness and Good-pleasure!

375. Know thou that, verily, the "Manifestation" is not composed of the four elements (earth, fire, air and water), nay, rather, He is the Mystery of Oneness, of the Ancient Identity, the Eternal Essence and the Unknowable Reality, and that, verily, He can <p205> never be known by any other save Himself. Therefore, one can never realize that He hath appeared from any of the four elements, or from any of the substances mentioned by the tongues of philosophers, or from any of the four expressions of nature, such as heat, cold, dry and wet, inasmuch as all these are created by His command and will, which has ever been and shall ever be separate and apart from all else; even as He is now, in truth, on the throne of excellence and in revealed verses unto thee, which are creative in kindling the fire of Love within thy heart.

376. Is there anything endowed with utterance in the world that may be able to speak with Him? Or any revealer to arise with Him in His Cause? Or any existing to claim the existence for himself? No, by thy Lord, the clement! All are evanescent and as nothingness! Were one to be known by any beside Him, it would never be proven to have its essence sanctified from any similitude, its identity purified from likeness and its singleness from any created appearance.

377. He is a sea upon which no one can sail, inasmuch as all that thou mayest see in heaven and earth is created by His Word.

378. By Myself, the True One! Were His servants to know Him as He is to be known, they would all sever themselves from everything, and would make themselves subject to Him, their King, and the sultans would abandon their crowns and hasten toward His direction in the path of His good-pleasure; but

since He was hidden from them, they have fixed their gaze upon others beside, and are flying with the wings of eagles, in the sky of their superstitions and imaginations.

379. Testify thou with thine essence, then with thyself, and then with thy tongue, that, verily, there is no God but He! No other save Himself can know Him, and no one can ever approach Him! Verily, He is not a Manifestation in Himself, but rather He is a Manifestation in His Identity, and this is what We have mentioned to thee in the Divine Mystery, and in the Eternal Essence.

380. As to the bodies, verily, they are as thrones for His Manifestation, of which no one is informed save Himself. These bodies, although they have appeared in the world of creation, in the temple in which ye have been informed of them (Moses, Jesus, etc.), yet were ye to gaze upon them with the eye of reality and innate <p206> consciousness, ye would testify that although they are created from the elements, yet they are sanctified from them to such an extent that there is no similitude between them.

381. Consider the diamond -- can the stone be compared to it? Thus hath appeared in the Bayan, from the presence of thy Lord, the mighty, the powerful, the potentate! Were they not to be their temples, the bodies of His servants would not have been created. Wert thou minutely to consider, thou wouldst find that, verily, all in heaven and earth are created from their outward temples, and that all of the worlds of thy Lord seek help from the appearance of the Manifestation of God, the protector, the self-subsistent!

382. In every world, He appears according to the capacity of that world. For example, in the world of spirits He manifests Himself to them and appears unto them with the signs of Spirit. So, likewise, in bodies, in the world of names and attributes; and in the worlds which are not known to any save God. All of these worlds have their position from this Manifestation. He appears unto them in His form, so that He, their Lord, may direct them, and draw them nearer to the seat of His Command, and cause them to attain to that which was ordained for them. As His Reality is not known, so likewise all that is related to Him is not known, except to a certain degree.

383. Think over thine own identity. Would it not consist in the expression and order of the five senses? Otherwise the limbs would become inactive; the eye would never see, the ear would never hear, the tongue would never speak, the hand would never grasp and the form would never move, -- although He sways and rules over all, for God has made the use of all dependent upon Him. Yet He sees through the eye, hears through the ear, and speaks by the tongue. Wert thou to reflect upon this, thou wouldst find even this to be His Guidance in such manner that His dignity is not defective through these attachments and instruments.

384. Consider a goldsmith; verily, he makes a ring, and although he is its maker, yet he adorns his finger with it. Likewise God the Exalted, appears in the clothing of the creatures. This is through His favor, so that His servants may not flee from Him, but that they may approach Him and rest in His Presence,

hear His wonderful melodies and be benefited by that which proceeds <p207> from His mouth, and by that which He reveals unto them from the heaven of His Will. There is wisdom in this. Wert thou to reflect upon it with the duration of God, thou wouldst discover at every moment that which thou hadst not found before.

385. Verily, were God the exalted to appear in His (proper) grade and form, and in a manner befitting His Station, no one could ever approach Him or endure to be near Him.

386. For example, consider the throne, the seat and the chair. All of these are made by certain of His creatures, through the confirmation which descends upon them from the heavens of His grace and the clouds of His bounty. He establishes Himself upon them. Before He is seated no one knows them, or considers them important, for they find them simply articles made by their own hands; but when He is established upon them every relation is cut from them and they become the Throne of the Merciful God, and the realities of all things that are created in heaven revolve around them. Then only the most discerning, the most perceiving of the perceiving, can realize their value.

387.

Every one who is endowed with a clear insight will behold that They (the Manifestations) were created before the creation of heaven and earth, and that this has ever been the Throne of the Merciful, and will forever be as it was; that there is no relation, connection, similarity or reference between that Throne and all else save it, and that all things testify with their inmost tongue; "Verily, these (bodies) are the Thrones of the Merciful One."

They have no like in creation, nor any equal in the world of emanation.

From their elements all have appeared in such wise that thou wilt find that, verily, from their Fire the fire hath appeared in the universe and hath spoken in the Blessed Branch of Unity, in the lofty Sinai of Moses the Interlocutor, and that from their Waters thou findest every soul living and immortal.

So, likewise, after this manner, consider its other elements; but with manifest certainty.

This was the mention of the place whereon He was established.

How much above this, then, will be the station of His Chair, and that upon which He stands? (The prophets.) All that which We have revealed and mentioned unto thee in this Tablet is according to the language of the people of creation; otherwise, by the One in the grasp of whose power are all things, verily, We have utterances concerning this station such as are not <p208> befitting to mention in these days, during which the people have differed, and have cast the Lord of Lords behind them, and have made an idol by the hands of lust, and have circled around it and become of those who are attached to it.

388. Blessed art thou for that which God hath desired for thee, because thou hast walked in the path of His good-pleasure until thou hast presented thyself before His Face, the shining, the radiant!

389. His Manifestation for His creatures has ever been through His creatures, just as He manifested Himself unto thee in truth, and delivered thee from the depths of the suggestions of those who have denied God and have striven with Himself, and at every moment have taken for themselves other gods than God, and are of the people of oppression and error in the Manifest Book of Might. Wert thou to be submerged in the sea of power and might thou wouldst surely know, verily, God, who is wonderful to make even one of these things made by Him, to be the maker of all that which He desires. There is no God but He, the Powerful, the Mighty! Every power is in this, wert thou to reflect! Every grace is in it, wert thou of those who perceive! I beg of God to manifest His Cause in all countries, and that the servants may attain such a position that He may explain to them that which He desires, without veiling or concealment; that He may teach them the wonders of His knowledge and provide them with the fruits of the tree of His grace and beneficence, and that all may become affluent through His affluence, and that all may become powerful through His power, the impregnable, the high and inaccessible!

390. By the One, through whose command all are moved, had I found the people as We created them, I would have opened a door of doors of mercy and inner significances, so that they would behold all the mysteries with their eyes, and subdue all lands through the names of their Lord. But thou beholdest the creatures, and hearest that which proceeds from their mouths; therefore the bounty is restrained, except so many of its drops as thou hast discovered. Verily, thy Lord witnesseth and is well informed thereof. Were We to manifest Ourselves more than that which We have manifested, dogs and deniers would surround Us.

391. Thus hath the Cock of the Throne crowed and the Dove cooed. Beware, that thou mayest be of the thankful. Praise be unto God, the Lord of the creatures! <p209>

DISCOURSE OF THE TEMPLE

392. This is the Sura of the Temple which God has made the mirror of His Names between the earth and heaven and the sign of His remembrances among the people of the world.

393. He is the Wonderful, the Most Glorious!

Glory be to Him who hath caused the signs to descend to those who perceive!

Glory be to Him who hath caused the signs to descend to those who understand!

Glory be to Him who guideth whomsoever He wisheth to His path! Say, verily, it is the path of God to those who are in heaven and on earth: Blessed are they who hasten toward it.

Glory be to Him who hath caused signs to descend to those who know!

Glory be to Him who speaketh from the might of command, and who is not known to any save his noble servants.

Glory be to Him who elevateth whom He willeth to the heaven of bounty, and bringeth down that which He pleaseth to a predetermined measure.

Blessed is He who doeth what He pleaseth by a command on His part; verily He is the True One, the knower of secrets and unseen things.

Blessed is He who giveth by inspiration to whom He willeth that which He wisheth through His hidden and irresistible command.

Blessed is He who assisteth whom He pleaseth by the hosts of the unseen; verily He is the doer of that which He willeth, and He is the Mighty, the Self-existing!

Blessed is He who strengtheneth whom He pleaseth by the dominion of His Power, and confirmeth whom He wisheth to accomplish what He willeth; Blessed are they who know!

Blessed is He who hath ordained to everything a measure decreed in a hidden Tablet!

Blessed is He who hath caused to descend upon His servant that by reason of which all the hearts and minds will be enlightened.

Blessed is He who hath cause to descend upon His servant, that kind of calamity, whereby the hearts of those who rested <p210> inside the awnings of eternity, were burned (with anguish); then also the hearts of those who are near!

Blessed is He who hath caused to descend upon His servant, from the cloud of fate, the arrows of disaster -- and still He findeth Me in supreme patience.

Blessed is He who hath ordained to His servant that which was not ordained to any other one of His servants: Verily He is the One, the Mighty, the Self-subsistent.

Blessed is He who hath caused to descend upon His servant, from the clouds of the detestation of those who closed their eyes and feigned to take no notice, the spears of the irreversible decree -- and still He sees Him offering great thanks.

Blessed is He who hath cause to descend upon His servant that which equals the weight of the earth and the heaven, for which We indeed praise Him; and of this no one is cognizant save those who understand.

Glory be to Him who hath placed His Beauty under the claws of the rancour of the immoral; verily We are contented with that, and no one can comprehend this save the discerning.

Glory be to Him who hath entrusted el-Huseyn[1] amongst the factions of the enemies while at all times, the spears of hatred and ill-treatment were brought upon His body; verily We thank Him for all He hath decreed upon His servant, the sad, the distressed.
[1 Baha'u'llah.]

394. But when I saw myself at the culmination of calamity, I heard, from above my head, the most wonderful and melodious voice, and when I turned I witnessed a Maiden of the celebration of the Name of my Lord, suspended in the air on a level with my head. I saw her, that she was indeed rejoicing within herself as though the embroidered garment of pleasure was manifesting itself upon her face, and the brightness of the Merciful was apparent upon her cheeks, and between the earth and heaven she was uttering a call, by which all the hearts and minds will be drawn, and at the same time, gladdening all the limbs of my internal and external being, with glad-tidings that made my soul rejoice, and those of the noble servants. Then, with her finger, she pointed to my head, and addressed all those in heaven and earth, saying: "By God, This is indeed the Beloved of the universe, but ye do not understand! This is the Beauty of God among you, and His <p211> Dominion within you, if ye are of those who know! This is the Mystery of God, His Treasure, the Command of God, and His Glory, to those who are in the Kingdom of power and creation -- were ye of those who reason! This is the One whose meeting will be longed for by all those who dwell in the everlasting spiritual world, and who have taken a station for themselves in the tents of El-Abha -- while ye yourselves are turned away from His Beauty!

"O people of the Bayan! Should ye not assist Him, God will assist Him by the hosts of earth and heaven and those of the Unseen, through His Command which is 'Be' and it is! And He will send forth by His Will certain people who are unknown to any one but Himself, the Protector, the Self-existent, and purify them from the stain or surmise and passion, and elevate them to the rank of sanctity, and by them He will cause to appear the traces of the Glory of His Kingdom on earth: thus was it decreed on the part of God, the Mighty, the Beloved!"

395. O people of the Bayan; do ye deny the One for whose meeting ye were created, and still ye are of those who sit in your place and rejoice? Do ye object to Him, the one hair of whose head is, before God, better than all there is in heaven and earth -- and still do ye scoff at Him?

396. O people of the Bayan! Show forth that which ye have, that I may know by what proof ye have believed in the manifestation of the command of God in the past, and today by what evidence do ye magnify yourselves?

397. By the One who hath created Me from the Light of His Beauty, I have never found among the neglectful, one of such negligence, or among the ignorant, one of such ignorance, as ye are.

398. Ye take as an evidence of your belief in God, the Tablets which ye have in your possession, but when the signs came down and the Lamp gave light, ye denied the One through whose Pen all matters were decreed in a preserved Tablet. Do ye read the signs and deny their originator and revealer? Thus hath God seized your sight as a punishment for your actions -- were ye of those who perceive! Do ye write the verses at even-tide and dawn, and from the One who caused them to descend ye conceal yourselves? And today the Supreme Assembly will see you in the mischief of your deeds and disavow you wilst ye are of

those who do not hear -- and the one will ask, and then another: "What do these ignorant people say, and in what vale do they rest? Do <p212> they close their eyes, while yet they see?" By God, O people, the inhabitants of the Cities of Names became perplexed by your actions, and still in the barren valley ye are bewildered, and do not perceive.

399. O Thou Supreme Pen! Hear the voice of Thy Lord from the divine Lote-Tree in the brilliant spot of unity, that thou mayest find thyself in exhilaration and cheerfulness by the melodious voice of Thy Lord, the Merciful, and be sanctified from all sorrows through the strong fragrance which was diffused from the region of My Name, the Pardoner; then, from this Temple, send the Temples of Unity to speak in the Kingdom of Creation, of their Lord, the Supreme, the Most Glorious, and be of those who obtain light by the lights of their Lord. Verily We have ordained this Temple the beginning of the existence of the new creation, that each one may become convinced that I am indeed able to do what I wish, by merely saying, "Be" and it is. By the shadow of each letter of the letters of this Temple, We will send forth people whose number is not known to any save God, the Protector, the Self-existent; and from it (the Temple) God shall create certain people who will not be veiled by the illusions of those who acted wrongfully against God, and they will drink, at all times, the pure water of life: Verily, are not they of those who are successful?

400. They are those servants who have stations themselves in the shadow of the mercy of their Lord, and were not prevented by the preventors; and in their faces the brightness of the Merciful is manifested, and from their hearts the mention of My hidden and Mighty Name is heard: they are those whose lips when opened in praising their Lord, all, whosoever is in earth and heaven, will praise with them -- though there are but few people who do hear -- and when they mention their Creator, all things will mention with them the same: Thus God hath preferred them to all creation, but indeed the people do not know. They move around the command of God just as the shadow moveth around the sun.

401. Open your eyes, O people of the Bayan, that ye may witness! -- and by the movement of these people all things will move, and by their quiescence all things will rest -- were ye of those who believe: By them the people of unity have come to the Koblat of the Horizons (The Manifestation) and calmness and forbearance became manifest amongst the good, and through them the earth was stationed, and the clouds gave out rain, and the table of knowledge <p213> was descended from the heaven of bounty -- were ye of those who understand: These people are the keepers of the command of God on earth, protecting its beauty against the dust of surmise and suspicion; they do not fear for themselves, but will sacrifice themselves in the Cause of God, for the hope of meeting the Beloved who hath appeared by this Name, the Mighty, the Able, the Precious, the Holy.

402. O Thou this Temple, arise by Thyself with an affair, whereby the contingent beings will arise; then assist Thy God with that which we have given Thee of power and might! Beware not to fear in a day whereupon all things do fear. Be the Manifestation of My Name, the Protector, the Self-existent.

403. Render Thy Lord victorious by that which is within Thy Power, and do not look to the creatures and that which comes from their mouths, save as to the voice of an insect in an endless and boundless valley. Drink the pure water of life in My Name, the Merciful, then give to drink to those who are near (to God) of the people of this rank, that which will make them cut themselves from the Names, and cause them to enter into this blessed and extended shadow.

404. O this Temple, We have assembled by Thee all the things, and that which was created in the earth and heaven, and asked them of that by reason of which We administered the oath upon them in the beginning of eternity: Lo! We found the majority of them possessed of dull tongues and glazed eyes, and the minority of bright faces and voluble tongues -- and out of these, We have sent forth a creation of what was and is: thus hath God kept their faces aloof from turning to the polytheists, and made them dwell in the shadow of the Lote Tree of Himself; and thus He hath brought down upon them a calmness and strengthened them with the hosts of the seen and the unseen.

405. O Thou, the Eye of this Temple! Look not to the heaven and what is therein, nor to the earth and whatsoever is thereupon; verily We created Thee for My Beauty -- Lo, this is It! Look as it pleaseth Thee and prevent not Thine eye from the Beauty of Thy Lord, the Precious, the Beloved. Through Thee We shall send forth Iron Eyes and everseeing sight whereby they shall see the signs of their Creator, and turn away their eyes from that which the worldly wise have comprehended. Through Thee We give the power of sight to whomsoever We please, and seize those who were <p214> prevented from this bounty. Verily, are they not drinking from the cups of imagination and they know not?

406. O Thou, that faculty of Hearing! Purify Thyself from the cry of every forsaken crier; then hear the voice of Thy Lord. Verily He revealeth unto Thee from the direction of the Throne, that indeed there is no God but Me, the Precious, the Powerful, the Protector, the Self-existent. Through Thee We shall send forth purified Ears that will listen to the Word of God and to that which became manifest from the dawningplace of the Revelation, Thy Lord, the Merciful; verily do thy not find them melodious, the songstresses from this blessed and laudible place?

407. O Thou, the Tongue of this Temple! Verily, We have created Thee in My Name, the Merciful, and taught Thee that which was stored in the Bayan (the revelation) and made Thee to speak for the sake of My great commemoration in the contingent world: Therefore do Thou utter this commemoration (precious and wonderful), and fear thou not from the manifestation of the Satan. Verily for this Thou wast created by My Command, the Protector, the Self-existent. By Thee We made the tongue utter the revelation of that which was, and by My Dominion We utter of that which is. By Thee We send forth speaking tongues that move with praise in the Supreme Assembly, and amongst the people of creation.

408. Thus have the signs descended, and the matter been decreed on the part of the King of Names and Attributes. Verily thy Lord is the True One and the knower of all the unseen. Verily nothing can prevent them (tongues) from

praising their Creator; and by them all things will rise for the commemoration of the King of Names -- verily there is no God but He, the Able, the Mighty, the Beloved.

409. The tongues of the commemorators never speak unless reinforced by this Tongue, from this station -- but there are few of the people who know. Every one is able to praise his Lord and utter His remembrance, but some of the people understand and remember and some remember but do not understand.

410. By God, there is no escape today for you and no refuge for any one save from the Mercy of God on the part of His Bounty -- verily He is the Forgiving, the Generous. Say, O people! Set aside that which ye have; then enter into the shadow of thy Lord, the Merciful. This is better for you than that which ye have done <p215> or do -- fear God and deprive not yourselves from the fragrances of the days of the King of the Names and Attributes and change not the Word of God, nor transpose its meaning -- fear God and be of those who are devout. Say, O people! This is the hand of God which has been above your hands -- were ye of those who reason.

411. Through It We have ordained the good for the heaven and earth in such a manner that no good becomes manifest unless it is produced from IT -- thus have We made IT the source and the store of good to all that which has been and will be. Say, all that has flowed in the tablets of the rivers of demonstration and explanation was connected with this Most Great Sea -- were ye of those who perceive: And that which was detailed in the books was traced to this Supreme Word which shone from the Mouth of the Will of El-Abha (the Most Glorious) in this manifestation whereby the mouths of the seen and the unseen were wreathed in smiles. God shall send forth from the sleeves of might the Hands of power and victory, and certain people to assist this Servant, and to cleanse the earth from the impurity of every abandoned polytheist, and they shall arise in favor of this matter, and open the countries in My Name, the Powerful, the Self-existent, and enter their boundaries, and their threats shall overtake all the servants; this is from the strength of God: Verily His strength is great in favor of justice.

412. Verily He is the encompasser of whosoever is in earth and heaven, and causeth to descend that which He pleaseth to a predetermined measure. Should anyone of those people rise up and confront whatsoever is created in the universe, he would certainly be the conquerer through the victory of Myself. This is from My power, but My people do not know; this is from My dominion, but My creatures do not understand; this is from My command but My servants do not perceive; this is from My victory, but mankind is not grateful, save those whose eyes God has illumined by the light of the knowledge of Himself, and whose hearts He hath made the stores of inspiration, and whose souls the carriers of His command; these are the people who from the garment of His Name, will inhale the fragrances of the Merciful, and at the signs of God they are continually rejoicing, and those people who denied and associated others with God, will have the wrath of God upon them, and to the fire be dragged and in its strata they shall <p216> show forth their grief; thus do We classify the

signs and explain the truth with evident proofs, hoping that the people will ponder over the traces of their Lord.

413. Say, verily, the fates of all things were ordained in this Temple, the treasured, the illustrious, and in IT was stored the science of earth and heaven, and the science of that which was and is, and by the fingers of the skill of thy Lord, was written in this book which the learned were unable to comprehend. He hath created in IT the temples which were not known to any save God -- were ye of those who believe.

414. Blessed is the one who reads it and ponders over it and is of those who understand. Say, nothing is seen in My temple, but the Temple of God, and in My beauty, but His Beauty, and in My being but His Being, and in Myself but Himself, and in My movement but His Movement, and in My acquiescence but His Acquiescence, and in My pen but His Pen, the Precious, the Praiseworthy.

415. Say, there hath not been in My soul but the truth and in Myself nothing could be seen but God. Beware that ye mention not the two signs -- all the particles in Myself speak, "verily there is no God but Me, the One, the Single, the Precious, the Beloved" -- everlastingly in the spiritual world I was uttering "Verily I am God and there is no God but Me, the Protector, the Self-existent," and in the Kingdom of Names I everlastingly utter, "Verily, I am God, there is no God but Me, the Precious, the Beloved."

416. Say, Verily the Lordship is my Name and for it I have created manifestations in the Kingdom; verily We have been free from them -- were ye to bear witness: And the Divinity is my Name, and for it we have made places of rising to encompass all servants and make them worshippers of God -- were ye to believe: And thus know all the Names (Prophets) -- were ye to know.

417. Say, the fecundation of bounty has been wafted over all things in this day and everything has generated and brought forth its own kind, but verily the majority of the people have turned away from it -- the trees bring forth the beautiful fruit, -- the seas, the brilliant jewels, -- man, knowledge and science, -- the universe, the transfiguration of the Merciful -- and the earth, that which no one comprehendeth, save the True One, the knower of secrets and unseen things. <p217>

418. Everything shall bring forth its own species. Blessed is the God who is the sender of this bounty, which surrounds all things that have appeared, and all that which is still hidden; thus have we created the beings of this day unequaled, but the majority of mankind do not perceive. Say, if the bounty of God cannot be known as it is, how would it be possible then to know Himself, the Protector, the Self-existent?

419.

Say, verily, We have caused the signs to descend after nine conditions, each of which is a proof of the dominion of God, the Protector, the Self-existent, -- any one of these condition is sufficient to convince whosoever is in heaven and earth, but the majority of the people are heedless.

Had We willed We would have revealed the signs after other conditions, whose number could not be reckoned.

Say, O people, fear God and do not move your false tongues about that which God doth not like, -- be ashamed before the one who formed you through a drop of water as ye do know.

Say, verily, We have created whosoever is in the heaven and the earth, after the nature of God.

And he who advanceth to this Face will appear in the condition wherein he was created, and he who secludeth himself, will be secluded from this surrounding and hidden bounty.

Verily, We did not prevent anything from attaining this bounty, but We created all things equal according to their kind, and propounded to them the fidelity of Our love by a word on Our part; and he who remembereth will escape and believe and be of those who will be saved from the terror of the Day, and he who turneth away will deny God, the Protector, the Self-existent.

By the Word, We separated the servants and classified them, verily We are the Separators.

Say, the Word of God is not likened unto the words of His creatures; verily it is the king of words, as His Soul is the king of souls, and His Command is the protector over that which was and is.

420. Say, O people, we ask a word from you by the Most Great Truth -- and we will take God as a witness between us, verily He is the Beloved, the Beneficent; -- present yourselves before the Throne of God, then let your speech be unprejudiced and be ye of those who are just. Was God the powerful over His matter, or were ye of those who are powerful? Was He the unconstrained in Himself, as ye say, "verily He doeth that which He pleaseth, nor is asked concerning that which He wisheth," or, are ye yourselves the unconstrained, <p218> and say this word merely be tradition, in the same manner as was said by your fathers, in the times of the messengers? Although He was unconstrained in Himself, He hath shown the manifestation of his command by signs, which are unequaled by anything either in heaven or on the earth, -- and he hath appeared after a condition the like of which hath not appeared in creation -- just as that of which ye have seen and heard when the Light of the horizons shone forth from the regions of Iraq (Baghdad) with evident dominion. All things return to the signs and these are the signs of God, the King, the Protector, the Precious, the Mighty! Beside these He hath appeared with a Command whereto all the contingent beings have confessed its authority and no one denied this save the iniquitous infidel.

421. For the Day of God is He Himself, who hath appeared with the truth and will never be followed by the night, or limited by the remembrance, were ye of those who know.

422. O Temple of Holiness! Verily We have made Thy heart the store of knowledge

of that which was and is and the rising place of Our science which We have ordained to the people of the earth and heaven that the beings should be filled abundantly through Thee, and by the wonders of Thy sciences, would attain the knowledge of God, the Able, the Supreme, the Great. Verily the science which is attributed to Myself was not known to any one, nor will it be known by any soul, neither could it be endured by any one of the world. Should We produce but one word of it all the souls would be disturbed, the supports of all things be destroyed and the feet of the accomplished deviate. We have in Our possession a science of which, should We convey but one word to the beings, every one would be made to believe in the Manifestation of God, and His Knowledge, and be acquainted with the secrets of all sciences, and attain a position whereby they would find themselves able to dispense with the sciences of both the ancients and moderns.

423. We have also other sciences of which if We speak but a single letter the people will not be able to hear its mention. Thus we have informed you of the Science of God, the Knower, the Informed. Had We found vessels We would have laid in them the treasures of Knowledge and would have taught them that of which one letter will encompass the whole world. <p219>

424. O Heart of this Temple! Verily we have made Thee the rising-place of My science and the manifestation of My wisdom to whosoever is in heaven and on earth. We have made the sciences to appear from Thee and to Thee shall we return them; then they will be sent forth from thee for another occasion as a promise on Our part, -- verily We have been the doers. We shall raise up from Thee people of wonderful sciences and powerful arts and will show forth from them that of which the heart of no servant could ever conceive: Thus we give to whomsoever We please that which We please and take from the one whom We desire that which We have given him, and govern by Our command that which We will. Verily should We, by the sun of Our Providence reveal Ourself upon the mirror of the existing beings in one hour, and take away from them the lights of Our revelation in another hour, -- We are indeed able, -- and no one dare ask "Why?" or "How?" Verily We are the doers of that which We please and will not be questioned as to that We have done, and no one doubts this save the doubting infidel.

425. Say, Our power cannot be hindered and Our authority shall never be annulled; We elevate whom We please to the glory of might and power; then bring him back, should We will, to the lowest of the low. Do ye think, O people of the earth, if We were to elevate any one to the divine Lote Tree, that My Power and dominion could be prevented from controlling him? No, by Myself, but rather should We please, We will bring him again to the dust in an instant. Look at the tree. We plant it in the garden and water it by the water of Our Providence; and when it becomes of great stature, puts forth green leaves and bears the best fruits, We then send upon it the sweeping wind of command, uproot it and leave it upon the surface of the earth; thus have We been doing and thus will We do with everything -- this is from the wonders of Our laws before and after in all things, were ye of those who see. No one can see the

wisdom of this save God, the Powerful, the Precious, the Wise! Do ye deny, O people, that which ye see? Woe unto you, O assembly of abnegation: And the One who doth not change is He Himself, the Merciful, the Clement, were ye of those who reflect. Beside Him every one changeth by the will on His part and He is the Almighty, the Precious, the Wise.

426. Should We desire to show forth from an atom, suns without <p220> beginning and without end, We are indeed able and We can make them all appear in a moment by My command. Should We please to produce from a drop of water the seas of the heaven and earth and from a letter the science of what was and is, we are indeed able -- verily it is an easy matter.

427. Thus I have been able from the first which has no beginning to the last which has no end; but My creatures became heedless of My power and turned away from My dominion and disputed Me, the Knower and the Wise. Nothing can move between the heaven and earth without My permission and no soul can ascend to the Kingdom without My Command; but My creatures veiled themselves from My power and authority -- and were of those who are negligent. Say, nothing can be seen in My manifestation but the manifestation of God -- nor in My power but the power of God, were ye of those who know! Say, the maxim of My creatures is likened unto that of the leaves of a tree -- they appear and feel themselves independent, but of their root they are neglectful. Thus We propounded a proverb unto Our servants, the wise, perhaps they will elevate themselves from the vegetable degree and attain the station of accomplishment in this confirmed and valid matter. Say, they are likened unto a whale in the water; verily the water is its source of life but it indeed does not know that the source of its life is from the Presence of the Precious, the Wise; it is veiled from it to such an extent that if asked about the water and its qualities, it does not know.

428. In like manner in these days do ye see those who deny and associate others with God and adhere to one Name of the Names, but turn away from the One who created these Names; verily we testify that they are of the people of fire. They ask the Sun of that which the shadow hath said, and the Truth of that which the preachers uttered; -- were ye of those who bear witness. Say, O people! The sun hath nothing in itself but its effulgence and that which appears from it, and all things beside it are illuminated by its light. Fear God and be not of those who are ignorant. Some of them asked about the light. Say, open thine eyes that thou mayest see the effulgence surrounding the horizons; verily it could be seen by the naked eye -- this is a light which hath shone and appeared from the horizon of the dawn of knowledge with evident brightness. Do ye ask the Jews whether the Spirit (Christ) was of a truth from God? Or the idols, whether <p221> Muhammad was a Prophet (Messenger)? Or the people of the Qur'an concerning the Reminder (the Bab) of God, the Supreme, the Great?

429. Say, O people, set aside that which is in your possession (religious doctrines) at the appearance of this Manifestation and take what ye have been commanded. This is the command of God unto you, -- verily He is the best of

commanders. By My Beauty, in saying these words it was My aim only to bring the servants nearer to God, the Precious, the Praiseworthy. Beware not to do with Me that which ye have done with My precursor (the Bab) and when the signs of God are descended upon you from the region of My Munificence, do not say that they were not descended upon El-Fitrat, verily El-Fitrat was created by My Words and revolves around Me, were ye of those who believe. Blessed is He who hath found the fragrances of the garment of knowledge from the revelation of His Lord the Merciful; verily they were spread over the universe and by them the contingent world was perfumed. Blessed is the one who scenteth its fragrance and advanceth to God with an enlightened heart.

430. O ye assembly of divines! Should ye shun the wine and what resembles it of that which was forbidden you in the Book, it is not a thing to glory over at all, for in practising such habits you will lose your dignity before the people, your affairs will be changed and your shame become manifested; but the glory is in your submissiveness to the word of the truth, and in cutting yourselves secretly and openly from everything besides God, the Powerful, the Able. Blessed is the learned who doth not allow science to intervene as a veil between him and the Known, and when the Self-existent cometh, he advanceth unto Him with a bright face -- verily he is of the divines, -- by whose wit the people of paradise will be exalted, and by whose lamp whosoever is in heaven and earth will be illuminated. Verily he is one of the heirs of the Prophets and he who sees him hath seen the truth, and he who advanceth towards him hath advanced to God, the Mighty, the Wise.

431. O ye dawning places of science, beware not to be changed in yourselves; because of such a change, most of the servants change; verily this is an oppression on your part upon yourselves -- to this will bear witness every informed knower. Ye are likened unto a spring which when changed, all the river branching <p222> out from it will be changed; fear God and be of those who are pious.

432. And this is man, when his heart becomes corrupted all the other limbs will be corrupted; so also the tree, -- if the roots are corrupted, all the branches, twigs, leaves and fruits will follow the same process: Thus We have propounded proverbs that ye will not veil yourselves by that which ye have, from what was ordained unto you on the part of the Precious, the Generous. Verily should We take a handful of dust and embroider it with the embroidered garment of the Names, -- We are indeed able and this is a bounty of My part upon it and not according to its deserts. Thus hath it descended of a truth from the presence of the abode of the Omniscient.

433. The voice of the Merciful was raised, and from behind it the voice of Satan also. Blessed is the one who heareth the voice of God, and turneth to the direction of the Throne, the noble and holy outlook. He who hath in his heart less than a mustard seed of love for anything beside Me, verily he cannot enter My Kingdom, and My proof of this is that whereby the face of the Book of Existence is adorned, -- were ye of those who know.

434. Say, this day is the day whereon the Most Great Bounty has appeared, and nothing, either in the supremest heaven or in the lowest earth, but utters in My mention and sings in the praise of Myself -- were ye of those who hear. O Temple of the Manifestation! Blow thou the horn in My Name: Then, O Temple of the Secrets! Breath thou into the fife in commemoration of thy Lord, the Unconstrained: Then, O Maid of Paradise! Come out of the chambers of the Garden and say to the inhabitants of the universe, "By God, He hath appeared, the Beloved of the world, the Intended of the knowers, the Worshipped of whosoever is in the heaven and the earth and the Adored of the ancients and moderns. Beware of hesitating to accept this Beauty, after the Ruler of Might, Power and Glory hath appeared. Verily, He is the truth and everything besides Him on the part of His servants is annihilated and lost at the appearance of His lights. Hasten to the river of bounty and be of the impatient, and he who hesitates for an instant, God will frustrate his plans and bring him back to the station of overwhelming grief and constraint. Thus how terrible is the residence of those who hesitate!" <p223>

TABLET OF AHMAD

435. O My servants! The Ancient Beauty commands: Hasten to the shadow of immortality, nearness and mercy, from the shadow of desire, remoteness and heedlessness. Be ye resigned like unto the earth, so that the fragrant, sacred, multicolored myrtles of My Knowledge may grow in the soil of existence. Be ye ablaze like unto fire, so that ye may consume thick veils and quicken and immortalize cold and veiled bodies through the heat of the divine love. Be ye pure like unto air, so that ye may enter the sacred abode of My Friendship.

436. O servants! If ye be informed of the wonders of My generosity and grace which I have deposited in yourselves, ye will certainly be cut from all directions, and, seeking to know your own selves, which is identical with knowing Myself, will find yourselves independent of all else save Me, and will see the ocean of My providence and the deep of My beneficence in yourselves, with your outward and inward eye, as manifest and clear as the sun shining from the name of Abha.

437. Do not waste this most wonderful, most holy station through the promptings of fancy and desire and through the falsehood of superstition and blindness. Ye are in likeness as a bird, which, with all joy and fragrance, soars in the utmost security in the cheerful air of the Praised One; then in the imaginary hope of grains, it inclines toward the mud and water of the earth, and, with all eagerness, besmears itself with mud and mire; and when it attempts to re-ascend it finds itself unable and a captive, for as much as wings besmeared with water and clay are not capable of flight. At that time, that bird of the exalted heaven finds itself a dweller in the mortal earth.

438. Now, O servants, do not besmear your wings with the mire of heedlessness and imagination and the earth of animosity and rancor, that ye may not be deprived and prevented from soaring in the sacred heaven of knowledge.

439. O servants, if ye are possessors of insight, enter the city of the seeing;

if ye are of the people of hearing, step into the land of the hearing; and if ye are possessors of heart, choose an abode in the fortress of the assured ones; so that in these dark days ye may not be prevented from witnessing the lights of the Beauty <p224> of Abha. For this year is the year of the most mighty purification and the most great tests.

440. O servants! Inscribe the exhortations of the Spirit with the pen of resignation and the ink of submission and assurance upon the tablet of the heart and turn thereto in every instant, lest ye neglect a single letter thereof, and advance to the true God with all exertion, turning away from all else save Him. For this is the root of the leaf of command grown upon the Divine Tree!

441. This world is a show without reality, and is a non-existence adorned in the form of existence. Do not attach your hearts thereto. Do not sever yourselves from the Creator and be not of those who are heedless!

442. Truly, I say, the world is like unto a mirage which has the show of water. The thirsty make abundant efforts in their search, but, when reaching it, remain deprived and portionless. Or, it is like unto the image of a loved one which is destitute of life and soul. When the lover reaches it, he finds it of no worth and value, and finds no gain save great pain and despondency.

443. O servants! If in these visible days and this present world matters appear from the realm of decree contrary to your wish, be ye not depressed, for happy and divine days shall come and spiritual worlds of holiness shall become manifest. In all those days and worlds, for you a portion is ordained, a sustenance is determined and a food is established. Ye shall certainly attain to all these, were ye to exchange the garment of mortality for the garment of immortality and enter the station of the Paradise of Abha, which is the everlasting abode of glorious, sacred souls. All things are a proof of your existence, if ye emerge from the gloomy dust of non-existence. Be not grieved at the hardships of these numbered days, and be not dejected if your outward bodies are destroyed in the path of the Beloved One, for every destruction is followed by a construction and a paradise of rest is concealed in every hardship.

SOUL AND SPIRIT

444.

Note that the soul, which is common to all the creatures of God, comes into existence after the amalgamations of the matter and their attainment to the degree of maturity; as in the case of the semen, which, after its development into that state which <p225> was ordained for it, God then will manifest in it the soul which was therein secluded; verily, thy Lord doeth what He pleaseth and commandeth that which He willeth.

As to the soul, which is the one intended, verily, it is sent forth by the Word of God, and it is that which, when kindled by the force of the love of its Lord, will not be quenched, neither by the waters of rain, nor by the seas of

the world.

It is indeed that kindled fire which is burning in the human Lote Tree, uttering, "Verily, there is no God but He," and he who heareth its voice is of those who are successful.

On leaving the body, God will send it forth after the best form and cause it to enter into a high heaven.

Verily, thy Lord is powerful over all things.

Know also that the life of man is from the Spirit, and to turn the spirit in one direction, beside the other direction, is indeed from the soul.

Reflect upon this which We have expounded unto thee, in order that thou mayest know the Soul of God, who hath come from the dawningplace of grace with manifest authority.

Know also that the soul hath two wings.

If it flieth in the air of love and the consent of God it will be attributed to the Merciful, but if it flieth in the air of lust it will be attributed to Satan.

May God protect us and you against it!

O assembly of knowers!

And if it is kindled by the fire of the love of God it will be the tranquil and pleasing soul, but if it be kindled by the love of lust, it is the passionate soul.

Thus have We given unto thee full details that thou mayest be of those who reflect.

445.

O Supreme Pen!

Mention to him who hath turned to his Lord El Abha, that which will make him independent of the world.

Say that the spirit, the mind, the soul, the hearing and the sight are one; but differ by the differentiation of the causes, as in the case of man, to wit:

Ye see that whereby man understands, moves, speaks, hears and sees, all of which are through the power of his God in him, but each one in itself differing by the difference of the causes; verily, this is indeed the truth.

For example, if all these faculties are turned to the cause of hearing, then the effects of hearing and its results become manifest.

And so if they are turned to the cause of sight, another trace and another result will appear.

Think of this, that thou mayest reach the intended goal and find thyself

independent of that which is mentioned by the people, and be of those who are confident.

And thus if turned unto the brain, the head, etc., the manifestations of mind and soul <p226> will appear.

Verily, thy Lord is the powerful over that which He wisheth.

We have expounded all this in the Tablet which We caused to descend in reply to the one who inquired about the explanation of the separate letters (alphabetical characters) as mentioned in the Qur'an.

Peruse them that thou mayest know that which was revealed from the might of God, the Precious, the Praiseworthy.

We have accordingly used abbreviations in this Tablet.

We ask God to enable thee to know from this abbreviation that which could not be accomplished by deliberation and memory, and to make thee to drink from this cup that which is in the seas.

Verily, thy Lord is the Benefactor and Owner of the most solid might.

446. But concerning that which ye asked about the spirit and its everlastingness after its ascension: Know that it will ascend at the time of its departure until it enters the presence of God in a form which throughout all centuries and times and throughout all circumstances and events of the world will remain unchanged, but will be everlasting as the perpetuity of the Kingdom of God, His Sovereignty, His Power and His Might, and from it will appear the traces of God, His qualities, providences and favors.

447. The Pen cannot move at the mentioning of this station as it is in its supremacy and exaltation. The hand of the divine Bounty will cause the spirit to enter into a station which cannot be comprehended by expression, nor be explained by all the creatures of existence. Blessing be upon the spirit who departs from the body purified from the doubts and superstitions of the nations. Verily it moves in the atmosphere of God's desire and enters into the supreme paradise. All the angels of the supreme paradise attend and surround it, and it will have fellowship with all the Prophets of God and His saints, and speak with them and tell them what happened to it in the Cause of God, the Lord of the universe.

448. If any one could realize what hath been assigned in the Kingdom of God, the Lord of the and the dust, he would immediately yearn with a great longing for that immovable, exalted, holy and most glorious station.

449. O Abdul Wahal, now listen in the Persian language. My Baha is upon thee. As you asked about the immortality of the spirit, this Wronged One beareth witness to its eternality; and <p227> as to your question about its form, it cannot be described and is not needful to be expressed, but only something need be known. Prophets and Messengers came only to guide the creatures to the straight path of God, and in order that people might be trained. Then at the

time of their ascension, with a perfect holiness and separation, and having been cut off from the things of this world, they repair to the Supreme Station. By the Self of God, the rays of those Spirits are the cause of the development of the people and the station of the nations. These are the leaven of existence and the greatest cause of the appearances of divinity and the works of the universe. By them the clouds will shower and the plants of the earth spring up. Not one thing of all the things is without cause, reason and beginning.

450. The greatest cause is that the Spirits above us were and are forever equal, and the difference between this earthly kingdom and the other is like the difference between the embryonic world and this world: though, after ascension, it (the spirit) will enter the presence of God in a form suited for eternality and the Kingdom. And this eternality is the eternality of time, not the essential which has reason, but the eternality of the essential has no cause; this is only to God. Blessed are the wise. If you ponder carefully over the actions of the Prophets you will bear witness that there are other worlds besides this. The learned men of the world confess and bear witness to that which has been revealed in the Holy Books, as it has been revealed by the Supreme Pen in the Lawh-el-Hekmat (Tablet of Wisdom).

451. Even the naturalists who are simply holding to laws, confessed and wrote that the Prophets were wise men and they said they spoke of the stations of paradise and hell, bliss and torment as a means of educating the people. Now consider well that these wise men held that these Holy Ones -- in any time they were, are, or will be found -- are the foremost of all.

452. Some of those holy Prophets are known to be the wise men and the Messengers of God. Now, all of them, if they believe that the worlds of God are only this world, -- would not put themselves in the hand of the enemies and endure such hardships and difficulties as are beyond comparison. If any one with a pure heart and clear intelligence thinks about that which has been revealed from the Supreme Pen, at once with tongue of honesty he will say that now the truth is evident. But what you <p228> asked about the resurrection was quite sufficiently revealed in the Kitab-i-Iqan.[1] Blessing be upon the wise.
[1 Book of Ighan (Chapter One).]

THE SUN OF THE SOUL

453. You asked concerning mankind (other than the prophets and saints) whether, after apparent death, they will remain, or perish, and if we say they will remain, then, if the person has insanity or other form of illness, will his feelings and perception cease; and as death is the destruction of the material composition and elements, then how can it be after death the form of personality and feeling will be understood, conceived or apprehended, as the material combination has disintegrated?

454.

You know that the spirit is permanent and steadfast in its station and the feebleness of the sick person is due to preventing causes.

Yet in fact the feebleness will never approach the spirit.

For example, when you look at the lighted lamp you find it shining and radiating, but if there is something before it, then the light will be prevented, yet in its sphere it is radiating, but by the means of prevention, its light was kept from shining forth.

In the same way with the person, while he is in the diseased condition the manifestation of the power and might of the spirit will be prevented and concealed on account of the means of prevention; but after the spirit leaves the body, it will appear with such power, might and superiority that all ordinary comparison is impossible.

The choice, pure and holy spirits are and will be in perfect might and joy.

For example, if a lighted lamp is put under an iron lantern its light will never come forth, yet it is shining just the same.

Look toward the sun when it is behind the cloud, shining and gleaming in its rank, but owing to the cloud its illumination seems weak.

Now suppose that this sun is the human spirit and all other things are body, and that by its light and rays, all the body is lighted and illuminated.

This is so when no means of prevention will be found to veil the light.

Now the appearance of the sun seems very weak behind the veil when the cloud exists; though the land is illuminated by the light of the sun, yet this light is always weak; but after the cloud passes away, the illuminations are again manifested.

In the two cases <p229> the sun was the same in its rank; likewise the sun of the souls, which is named, mentioned as, and ever will be called, the spirit.

455. And again look to the weakness of the fruit which is in the tree before it comes forth. It is in the tree in such a very weak condition that it cannot be seen, and if any one cuts the tree into pieces, he will never find the minute atom of the fruit, nor the form; but after it comes forth from the tree it will appear with a wonderful, beautiful embroidery and irresistible power, as is seen in the fruit of all trees. Some fruit ripen after they are plucked from the tree.

456. Now numerous examples have been mentioned that thou mayest understand what is desired. Compare it with what thou hast asked from God, thy Lord, and the Lord of the creatures.

457. God, exalted is His mention, is able to manifest and explain all the boundless sciences, in one of the examples mentioned among the people.

458. The Hand of Might is opened for stating every example, and for every word the Hand of Protection is raised, and no one can know that save him whom God willeth. And when the seal of the attar vessel is broken off by the Hand of Might, then the fragrance will be perceived.

459. The command is in the grasp of the Hand of God. He bestows and He withholds; He causeth blindness and He openeth the eyes; He doeth as He willeth and commandeth as He wisheth.

TO THE PEOPLE OF BAHA

460. In the Name of God, the One! Say, O friends! The former lying caused the succeeding Beloved [1] to be hanged and martyred by the bullet of opposition. Meditate upon the lying, unfaithful, perfidious souls who were appearing among the people with the pretence of righteousness, faithfulness, devotion and abstinence from what is unlawful, until ye be guarded and saved from the terror of this greater Day.
[1 The Bab.]

461. One of these has mentioned Jabulka and another gave reference to Jabulsa and another lying one put in the minds of the people an imaginary temple and fixed that on the throne of superstition. This unfair one mentioned Nahia Mocaddassah (the holy direction) and another unreasonable one attributed to him many <p230> (of his own) utterances. Therefore these false and unpleasant affairs became the cause of killing the King of the City of Unity through complete opposition.

462. If the Hand of Godly Power will take away all the veils (of hallucination) you will witness new affairs and hear new, wonderful utterances. Now He speaks one Word, so that it may, perchance, be a fence betwixt the right and the wrong; and the Word is as follows: "Sanctify your ears from what those people say who attribute themselves to the Bayan and deny its Revealer, its King and sender"; as all these veiled souls are merely following the former (veiled) souls. Blessing be upon the eye which looks and perceives. Verily, it is from the most powerful and strongest souls mentioned in the presence of God.

463. Now hear what My Forerunner[1] announced before, and His speech is the truth. "The one who is one year old in the Day of His (Baha'u'llah's) manifestation, is greater than all those of the Bayan." Because of the providence and kindness, these expressions flowed from the pen of the Chosen. Now be watchful and say: "Praise be unto Thee, O God of the creatures!" The party of the Shiites who count themselves the saved and the favored ones, and content their souls that they are the greatest of all the creatures, copied some saying which were continuously handed down that any one who prophesies that the Promised One will be born is an infidel and has no religious faith. So these sayings have been the cause of martyrdom of a great number who were without censure or guilt, until Nukta'olla (the First Point, -- the Bab), (many the souls of all be a ransom to Him!) was born from the lumbar vertebrae of a well-known person in Faars, and He declared Himself as the Ghaim (the Promised One among the Shiites). Immediately those who followed the superstitions and hallucinations were lost. And the Cause appeared to all the creatures like the light of the sun. Yet that party of neglect and rejection deviated and stood steadfast in purpose to kill the Essence of Existence.
[1 The Bab.]

464. O people of Baha! The Possessor of the names says: "Meditate upon these events that ye may really break the idols of superstitions and imaginations; so that ye may not be engulfed by the new hallucinations to which those of the Bayan who are now <p231> avoiders are clinging. Stand steadfast for spreading the Cause with the Godly power and might, and defend the servants from the oppositions of the polytheists, and from the superstitions of the erring and neglected souls, and meditate upon the hidden mysteries."

465. Up to the time of the Manifestations, the people of the Furkan (Qur'an), that is to say, the party of the Shiites, did not understand the Day of God, nor the way of the Manifestation. They seemed to be entirely excluded from the ocean of knowledge and prevented from the lights of the sun of realities. The Cause of God appeared and spread in a way directly opposite to what they perceived and clung to, through their evil thoughts and superstitions; and these simple souls who count themselves among all as the most pious and ascetic of the creatures, stood with (awful) oppression in such a way that the Supreme Concourse and the inhabitants of the cities of the names and the worldly kingdom were all stunned.

466. Hereby the Supreme Pen pronounced, as a favor from Him, that ye may know what hath been hidden from you, and observe what was hidden behind the veil, and the deeds of those who wandered in the wilderness of superstitions and hallucinations and decided upon the sentence (of killing) the One who came by the truth from the presence of God, the Almighty, and the Omnipresent.

467. O drinker of the pure, sealed wine! The Name of Omnipresence says: "Meditate on the people of the party which counts itself forgiven and saved, that during the appearance of the trial (test) they became of the deeply wicked, transgressive, denying and rejected party; and they were mentioned and recorded in the Godly Book by the Supreme Pen as the appearance of denial. God willing, all the people of Baha who are mentioned in the Omnipotence of the names as the people of the Red Ark, must appear with such rectitude and uprightness as is suited for the greatest Cause and blessed Day. This day is the day of serving and standing steadfast. If a child will stand uprightly in this Cause, he will be more powerful than all the followers of the Bayan, with the witness of God and the witness of Him who appeared before and announced to the people the great news."

468. In the Tablets which were revealed in Iraq and Ardisherr (the land of mystery, or Adrianople) and Sijan Orzan, the <p232> greatest prison of Acca, We have said to all friends and made announcement about the appearance of the croakers (Nakazeen) and the birds of night and the book of the Sejjien (books written against the Cause) and the tablets of fire, that they may stand steadfast in such a way that all the creatures and what they have could not falsify these fixed and established records; and they must be like the mountains, not the leaves which are shaken by the wind and are turned with the slightest breeze. In the same way the All-knowing taught you, and the Knower, the Announced, caused you to know and guided you to the right path.

469. Exert your intelligence and with perfect humbleness and submissiveness beg of the Powerful and the Almighty that He may strengthen you in what is adorned by His graciousness; and to make the circumstance favorable to you in the deeds which shall be mentioned of you through the eternity of the Kingdom, in the Book of God everlastingly.

470. O beloved! In this Day the door of heaven was opened by the key of the Name of God, and the ocean of liberality is manifested and rolling before all faces, and the sun of providence is shining and gleaming. Do not exclude yourselves; and do not destroy your most precious time by being influenced by the speech of this or that person. Confirm the back of energy! Do your best in training the people of the world. Do not consider that the Cause of God is the cause of opposition, hatred and wrath. The Tongue of Greatness says that what is intended by that which was revealed from the heaven of the Will in this holy and supreme Manifestation is uniting the people in love and friendship towards all.

471. The people of Baha who have drunk of the pure wine of reality must associate with all the world with the perfect spirit of joy and fragrance; and remind them of that which is for the benefit of all. This is the command of the Wronged One to His saints and sincere ones.

472. The creatures were created through love, and all are commanded to live in friendship and unity. Now look to this carefully and mention this blessed word which hath shone forth from the horizon of the mouth of the King of Unity.

473. Do not allow the opportunity to fall from your grasp; and spend not your time uselessly. I swear by the ocean of Godly knowledge that a moment in these days is more excellent than <p233> past centuries and ages; to this beareth witness your Lord, the Chooser, the Generous.

474. God willing, may ye burn up the curtains of prevention by the fire of the love of the most Merciful and illumine the hearts by the light of His Face. This Day is the day of this confirmed blessed Word which the Tongue of Unity has uttered before, "Everything is perishable but His Face."

475. This Day is the Day of God and God alone is speaking in it; and none should be mentioned save Him.

476. Where are the purified eyes of clear insight? And where are the withdrawn and illuminated hearts? This Day is the day of eyes, ears and hearts. Beg of God that ye may possess these three, that ye may be withdrawn from the veils and sanctified. Because a thine veil -- the thinnest -- prevents the eye from seeing, the ears from hearing, the heart from understanding.

477. Ponder carefully on this Supreme Pen: "O Children of Knowledge! The physical eye will be prevented from seeing the world and what is in it by a very thin lid; then what will be the consequence if the veil of avariciousness covers the eye of the heart?"

478. "I was in My Ancient Essence and My Everlasting Being; I foreknew My love

in thee; therefore I created thee and laid upon thee My likeness and manifested to thee My Beauty."

479. O people of Baha! Ye are in homes and the Wronged One is in the greatest prison. While He is immersed in the ocean of trials He mentions every one of you with verses and utterances; that if one letter of these words shines forth in the beings of existence, the word of "Thou art the Beloved" will appear in all in such a way that all may see and read.

480. Do not throw from your hands this boundless bounty. And do not be neglectful regarding what happened to this Wronged One and you in the Cause of God. Understand your rank and protect your stations by the Name of God, because the polytheists and repudiating ones and the perfidious ones appeared with the clothes of unity, advancement and truthfulness and they spent the zeal of their envy in misleading the people.

481. Verily, your Lord the most Merciful says the truth and announces to you the bounty and guideth you to the right path.

482. Leave the ways of the people and count that the paths of <p234> the negligent ones are the lost and destroyed paths, and say: verily, He never walks in your paths and never does as ye have done. He hath already appeared and manifested His right path and taught all His true way.

483. Blessing be upon the soul who hastened to the ocean of the mercy of His Lord; and the ear which heard the cry of the Supreme Pen; and the eye which saw His wonderful verses and the tongue which pronounced His most beautiful praise.

484. Say: Verily, be merciful to yourselves and do not follow those who renounced God and His texts, and repudiated His demonstrations and His proofs and stood steadfast in their avoidance with professed opposition.

485. Verily, He (Baha'u'llah) in the greatest imprisonment called the kings and the servants to the Greatest Name, who was hidden in the Knowledge of God and mentioned in the Books of the Messengers of God.

486. O Beloved! All of you are mentioned in the Books of God always. If some of the saints of God do not succeed in receiving each a special Tablet, they must know confessedly and certainly that their names, advancement and nearness, according to their stations, are mentioned and recorded in the Book from the Supreme Pen.

487. Now beg of God assistance that ye may succeed by that which will be the cause and purpose of your mention everlastingly. Verily He seeth and heareth and He is the Learned, the All-knowing.

488. The world is in an evanescent condition, and after a time those who are upon the earth will go to the graves.

489. By Him who caused all else to pronounce the praise of Himself, the world and what is witnessed therein, to the one who has clear insight, will never be equal to one word of the Words of God; because it is forever and ever

transitory and evanescent; but the Word of God is eternal and everlasting, as the eternality of the names and qualities.

490. No wise one will, for the sake of a day or two, give up the everlasting Grace. I say the truth, -- the spirit was and is always desiring to purport of the paradise of disclosement and meeting; but the hallucinations and desires which do not appease, preclude it from the kingdom of nearness.

491. Ye must burn up the veils with the fire of certainty and <p235> with the light of faith illuminate the hearts and minds. Exert your intelligence that ye may drink from the Kawther of certainty which is ever flowing from the right side of the Godly Throne. The one who will gain this is of the people of eternity mentioned on the Red Page. Praise be to God, the providence of God and His benevolence guide the advanced ones to the right path and cause them to succeed in gaining the greatest donation and greatest gift. Understand the station of yourselves and in every case be awakened, because the misguiders were and are in ambush for the faithful guides. Verily, your Lord, the Merciful, is the All-knowing, the All-wise!

492. Is there (seen) any truthful seeker who is excluded from the the bounties of the Generous? Or any advancer who desires with perfect righteousness the extreme Place, and was barred from it? No, by the Self of God! If some of the Unitarians (those who believe in the unity of God), the near ones and the sincere do not succeed apparently to what they desire, this is owing to the mystery of the highest wisdom of God. So they must not be saddened, because for everything there is a special fixed time, and when that arrives, it appears in truth from the presence of God, the Lord of the worlds. Be rejoiced, O saints of God and His friends, that My Supreme Pen mentioned you in the night in which the Tongue of Greatness declared, "Verily there is no God but He, the Assister, the Single, the Generous, the Praiseworthy."

493. Blessing be upon him who succeeds in gaining the great uprightness! Verily he is from those of the supreme Paradise in the Book of God, the Possessor of the names, the Cleaner of heaven, who appeared with the truth, with evident authority. Beware that the veils of the names deprive ye not from their King, Revealer and Creator, -- cling to the robe of the Providence of thy Lord, the most Merciful and adhere to His brilliant train.

He who lives according to what was ordained for him, the Supreme Concourse and those of the supreme Paradise and those who are dwelling under the dome of greatness, will pray for him, by a command from God, the dearest and the praiseworthy.

494. So the Wronged One mentioned you, while in the imprisonment of the negligent ones, and taught you what brings you near in every case to God, the powerful, omnipotent, the dearest, the unique. Verily, We command all the wisdom and clear explanation in the Cause of their Lord, the All-merciful, as We commanded <p236> them before. Verily He is the Adviser, the All-faithful. Now here is a Word which We revealed in several Tablets. It is commanded that He who believes in God during this Manifestation, must adhere to it, and be of

the confirmed ones, and We prohibit all from what displeases God. And We ordered for them that which will rejoice the hearts of the nations.

495. Verily, He is the Compassionate, the Generous. "Associate, O My friends, with all the people of religions with joy and fragrance. Beware that ye make not the Word of God the cause of oppositions or contrast, or for the purpose of causing hatred among you. Say: be sincerely pious toward God, O people of the earth, and be not found among the negligent ones."

496. Verily He commands you that from which He may find the fragrance of the spirit, if ye are of the wise. El-Baha is upon you and upon those with you and upon those who love you and serve you and hear from you what was written from the Supreme Pen in this Cause, the assured, the manifested, the perspicuous.

THE MOST GREAT INFALLIBILITY

497. This is the Epistle of God, the Protector, the Self-subsistent!

He is God! Exalted is His state, in wisdom and utterance! Praise be unto God who is single in grandeur, power and beauty, is One in glory, potency and majesty, and who is sanctified above being comprehended by reflection, or having any peer or equal. His right path hath verily been made clear by the most eloquent utterance and speech. Verily He is the independent, the almighty!

498. When He purposed a new creation He sent forth the manifest and luminous Point from the horizon of desire, and the Point went round through every sign, under every form, until it reached the ultimate station, by a command from the presence of God, the Lord of mankind. Verily it (the Point) is the center of the Circle of Names, the end of the appearances of "letters" in the Kingdom of Emanation. Through it appeared that which indicates the most concealed Mystery, the adorned allegory, the manifest One who is expressive of the Greatest Name in the brilliant Tablet and in the holy, blessed White Epistle.

499. And when the Point was united with the second letter which is manifest in the beginning of the "Messani," the spheres <p237> of utterance and significances revolved, the eternal light of God shone forth and stood high upon the heaven of demonstration, and two orbs of light were produced there from. Glorified is the Merciful One who cannot be referred to by any allusion, or expressed by any expression, or known by any explication or described by any traces. Verily He is the Commander, the Bestower -- in the Origin and Return!

500. And He appointed unto them (i.e., those two orbs) protectors and guardians out of the hosts of power and might. Verily He is the protector, the mighty, the unconstrained!

501. Praise be to God who manifested the Point and sent forth from it the knowledge of what was and is; who made it (the Point) the herald of His Name, the precursor to His most great manifestation, by which the nerves of nations have quivered with fear and the Light has risen from the horizon of the world. Verily it is that Point which God hath made to be a sea of light for the sincere among His servants and a ball of fire for the deniers among His

creatures and the impious among his people -- i.e., those who have changed God's favors, rejected the bread of heaven in their hypocrisy and led their friends to an unhappy dwelling. They are such men who manifested forth hypocrisy in the world and violated the Covenant in the Day wherein the temple of pre-existence is established upon the most great throne. The herald is crying from the "right side of the sacred valley" (saying): O concourse of the Bayan! Fear the clement One! This is the One of whom Muhammad, the Messenger of God, made mention; and before him the Spirit (Christ), and before him the Interlocutor (Moses)! This is the Point of the Bayan who calleth out before the Throne, saying: In Truth, ye have been created for the remembrance of this most great message and this most firm path, which was hidden in the minds of the Prophets, concealed within the breasts of the chosen ones, and written by the Supreme Pen in the Tablets of your Lord, the King of Names!

502. Say: Die in your wrath, O ye people of discord! He hath indeed appeared, from whose knowledge naught is concealed, and He because of whom the face of knowledge smiles (with joy) hath come, and by whom the kingdom of utterance is adorned! Every advancer toward God, the King of religions, hath advanced. By Him every sitting one hath risen up and those lying down have hastened to the mount of assurance. This is the Day which God <p238> hath made to be a grace unto the pious, a punishment unto the wicked, a mercy unto those who advance and a wrath unto those who deny and turn away! Verily he hath appeared with a power from His presence and hath revealed that which naught in His heaven and earth can equal! Fear the clement One, O people of the Bayan! and commit not what was wrought by the people of El-Forkan (Qur'an) who professed faith during nights and days, but when the Lord of men came, they denied and disbelieved, until they condemned Him in such injustice, whereat the "Mother-Book" lamented in the (Day of) Return. Remember; then look at their deeds and words, their grades and stations, and at that which proceeded from them when the speaker of the mount spoke, the trumpet was sounded and all in the heavens and earth were stunned -- except a number of the "letters" of the Face.

503. O concourse of the Bayan! Abandon your superstitions and imaginations! Then gaze with the eye of justice unto the horizon of the Manifestation unto that which hath appeared and hath inflicted upon Him. He is the One who hath accepted all calamities for the sake of the declaration of His command and the promotion of His Word. He hath been once imprisoned in Ta (Tihran), once in Mein (Mazarandan) and then again in Ta, for the sake of the cause of God, the Creator of heaven; during which He hath been in chains and shackles, in longing for the Command of God, the Mighty, the Gracious!

504. O concourse of the Bayan! Have ye forgotten My Commandments and that which hath proceeded from My pen and hath been uttered by My tongue? Have ye preferred your suspicions before My certainty and your desires before My way? Have you forsaken the precepts of God and His commemoration and abandoned the ordinances of God and His commands? Fear God! Leave superstitions unto their manifestors, and suppositions unto their sources, and doubts unto their originators. Then advance with shining faces and brilliant hearts toward that

horizon from which the Sun of Assurance hath shone, by a command from the presence of God, the King of religions.

505. Praise be to God! who hath made the "Most Great Infallibility" a cuirass for the temple of His command, in the kingdom of emanation; and hath decreed for none else any portion <p239> from this lofty grade and supreme station! Verily, this (i.e., the Most Great Infallibility) is a mantle spun by the fingers of power for His own exalted self. Verily, this does not become any one except Him who is established upon the Throne of "He doeth whatsoever He willeth." Whosoever acknowledges and confesses that which is written at this moment by the Supreme Pen is verily of the people of unity and of the followers of singleness, in the Book of God, the King of origin and return.

506. And when Our Words reached this point, the fragrance of knowledge wafted and the orb of oneness shone forth from the horizon of the heaven of utterance. Blessed is whosoever is attracted by the voice to the lofty apex and furthermost end and learned from the sound of My Supreme Pen that which is desired by the Lord of this world and the world to come! Verily, he who does not drink from Our sealed choice wine, the seal of which We have broken by Our Name, the self-subsistent, is verily one who has not attained to the lights of Oneness or known the purpose of the Books of God, the Lord of the heaven and earth, the King of the next world and the present one; and such an one is accounted of the polytheists in the Books of God, the knower, the omniscient.

507. O thou honorable questioner! We testify that, verily, thou hast adhered to abundant patience in the days wherein the Pen was withheld from flowing and the Tongue from utterance in mention of the "Most Great Infallibility" and the most mighty sign, which thou hast asked this oppressed one to remove for thee its veils and coverings and to explain unto thee its mystery, its grade, its station, its position, its rank, its exaltation and its loftiness.

508. By the life of God! Were We to expose the pearls of argument as concealed in the shells of the sea of knowledge and assurance and send forth the faces of significances hidden in the chambers of utterance, in the paradise of knowledge, the clamor of the (religious) doctors would be raised from every direction, and thou wouldst find the people of God in the claws of the wolves who have disbelieved in God, in the origin and return. We did, therefore, restrain the Pen for a long space of time, as a wisdom from the presence of the clement One, and to the intent of protecting Our friends from those who have exchanged the benefit of God for their infidelity and entitled their people to the abode of perdition. <p240>

509. O thou gazing questioner and O thou whom the Supreme Concourse have attracted unto the exalted Word! For the birds of the realm of My kingdom and for the doves of the garden of My wisdom, there are tunes and melodies, of which none is informed save God, the King of the world of dominion and the empyrean realm. Were there to appear even less than a needle's eye thereof, the unjust will say that which was not said by the former communities and will commit that which was wrought by none, in all ages and centuries. They have

indeed denied the grace of God and His argument, the proof of God and His signs; they have, themselves, erred and have also led the people astray, while they perceive not! They have adopted for themselves imaginations as lords in spite of God, and they understand not! They have abandoned the most great sea, hastening to the pool, and they comprehend not! They follow their own desires, while turning away from God, the protector, the self-subsistent!

510. Say: In Truth, the clement One hath come with power and might and through Him the (people of all the) religions have trembled with fear, and the nightingale of utterance hath warbled on the highest branch of knowledge (to wit): He hath indeed appeared who has hidden in the (divine) knowledge and recorded in the Book! Say: This is the Day wherein the Speaker of the Mount is established upon the throne of manifestation, and the people have resurrected before God, the Lord of the creatures! This is the Day the earth hath revealed her news and uncovered her treasures, and the seas their pearls, the Sadrat its fruits, the sun its effulgence, the moons their lights, the heaven its stars, the "hour" its tokens, the resurrection its majesty, the pend their traces and the spirits their arcana. Blessed is whosoever knoweth Him, and woe unto those who denied and turned away from Him! I beg of God to enable His servants to return. Verily He is the lenient, the forgiver, the merciful!

511. O thou who art advancing toward the supreme horizon and drinking My sealed choice wine, from the hands of bestowal! Know thou, verily, there are numerous meanings and divers stations for "Infallibility." In one sense, the name "Infallibility" is true of one whom God hath guarded against sin, transgression and unbelief, infidelity, polytheism, and the like. But "The Most Great Infallibility" is applied only to One whose station is sanctified above commands and prohibitions and purified <p241> form sin and forgetfulness. Verily He is a light which is not followed by darkness and a rectitude which is proof against error. If He declares water to be wine, or heaven to be earth, or light to be fire, it is true and there is no doubt therein; and no one has the right to oppose Him, or to say "why" or "wherefore"; and he who disputes Him is, verily, of the opposers in the Book of God, the Lord of the creatures! "Verily no account shall be demanded of Him for what He shall do; but an account shall be demanded of all for all they shall do."

512. Verily He hath come from the heaven of the unseen, and with Him the standard of "He doeth whatsoever He willeth." and the hosts of power and authority. As to all else save Him: It is incumbent upon them to cling unto that which He hath commanded -- of laws and ordinances; and if one departs from them -- even to the extent of a single hair's breadth -- his deed will all go for nought.

513. Consider, then remember, when Muhammad, the Messenger of God, came, He said, and His saying is truth: "And (it is a duty) toward God (incumbent on people), to go to visit the House (of Mecca)." The same was the case with prayer, fasting and the ordinances which shone forth from the horizon of the Book of God, the master of the world and the educator of nations. It was incumbent upon all to follow Him in that which was commanded by God; and

whosoever denied Him disbelieved in God, in His verses, in His messengers and in His Books. Verily if He declareth a virtue to be an error, or infidelity to be faith, it is a truth from His presence. This (the Manifestation's) is a Station wherein no error or sin is found or spoken of.

514. Consider the blessed, revealed Verse by which the pilgrimage of the "House" was made obligatory for all. And it was incumbent upon those who arose after Him in the Cause, to practice that whereunto they were commanded in the Book. No one has a right to depart from the ordinances of God and His precepts, and whosoever departs therefrom is verily of the transgressors, in the Book of God, the Lord of the great throne.

515. O thou who art gazing toward the horizon of the Cause! Know thou verily the desire of God is never restricted to the limits of the servants; verily He doth not walk in accord with their ways; it is incumbent upon all to hold to His right path. Verily if He declares the right to be left, or the south to be the <p242> north, it is true and there is no doubt therein. Verily He is to be praised in His deeds and to be obeyed in His command. He hath no associate in His behest and no helper in His power; He doeth whatsoever He willeth, and commandeth whatsoever He desireth!

516. Then know thou! All else save Him are but created through a Word from His presence; they have no motion nor quiescence except through His command and permission.

517. O thou who art soaring in the atmosphere of love and affection and gazing toward the lights of the face of thy Lord, the King of Origination! Thank thou God, for He hath unfolded unto thee that which was hidden and concealed in the (divine) knowledge; so that all may know that, verily, in the station of "the Most Mighty Infallibility" He hath taken to Himself no associate nor counsellor. Verily, He is the dawningplace of commands and ordinances and the source of knowledge and wisdom. All else save Him are subjects and under the command, while He is the ruler, the commander, the knower, the omniscient!

518. As to thee: When thou art attracted by the fragrances of the verses of the manifestation and overcome by the pure (wine of the) Kawther from the hands of the bestowal of thy Lord, the King of the Day of Resurrection, say:

519. "O my God! O my God! Praise be unto Thee, for Thou hast directed me unto Thyself, guided me unto Thy horizon, made clear unto me Thy path, manifested unto me Thy proof, and caused me to advance toward Thee while most of Thy servants turned away from Thee such as divine and religious doctors and those who followed them without any evidence on Thy part or argument from Thy presence. Grace be unto Thee, O Thou God of Names, and praise be unto Thee, O Thou creator of heaven! for Thou hast caused me to drink Thy sealed choice wine in Thy Name, the self-subsistent, to draw nigh unto Thee, and to know the day-spring of Thy utterance, the dawningplace of Thy verses, the source of Thy commands and behests and the fount of Thy wisdom and favors.

"Blessed is the land which is honored by Thy footsteps, and upon which the

throne of Thy grandeur is established, and in which the fragrance of Thy garment is being diffused! By Thy might, by Thy power, by Thy potency and authority! I wish not <p243> the eye except to behold Thy beauty, and I desire not the ear except to hear Thy voice and verses.

"O my God!

O my God!

Deprive not the eyes from that for which Thou hast created them and the faces from turning unto Thy horizon, standing before the door of Thy grandeur, being present before Thy throne and humble before the effulgences of the lights of the sun of Thy grace!

O my Lord!

I am the one whose heart, innermost parts, limbs and whose outward and inward tongue have testified to Thy oneness and singleness; and that, verily, thou art God; there is no God but Thee!

Thou hast indeed created men to know Thee and to serve Thy Cause, whereby their stations may be exalted in Thy earth and their souls be uplifted through that which Thou hast revealed in Thy epistles, books and tablets.

But when Thou made Thyself manifest and revealed Thy verses, they turned away from Thee, denied Thee and disbelieved that which Thou hast shown forth by Thy power and Thy potency.

And they arose to persecute Thee, to quench Thy light and to extinguish the fire of Thy Sadrat; and they went so far in oppression as to desire to shed Thy blood and violate Thy honor.

Likewise, he whom Thou didst train by the hands of Thy providence and didst protect from the evil of the rebels among Thy creatures and the oppressors among Thy servants, he who was (employed) to write down Thy verses before Thy Throne -- alas! alas! for that which he wrought in Thy days; in such wise that he violated Thy Covenant and Testament, denied Thy verses, arose in opposition and committed that whereby the denizens of Thy Kingdom lamented!

And when he was disappointed in himself and discovered the odor of loss, he cried and said that whereat the favored among Thy chosen ones and the dwellers of the pavilions of Thy glory were astonished!

"Thou beholdest me, O my God, like unto a fish moving in anguish upon the earth! Deliver me; then have pity on me, O Thou Deliverer! O Thou in whose hand are the reins of all men and women among mankind!

"Whenever I reflect upon my great sins and immense transgressions, despair overtakes me from all sides; and whenever I reflect upon the sea of Thy bestowal, the heaven of Thy bounty and upon the sun of Thy grace, I find the fragrance of hope from the right and the left, from the north and the south, as if all <p244> things rejoice me with the rains of the clouds of the heaven of Thy mercy. O Thou support of the sincere ones and Thou Desire of the favored

ones! By Thy might! Thy gifts and Thy favors and the appearances of Thy grace and providence have emboldened me; otherwise, how could a non-existent one speak of Him upon whose presence through a word the whole existence has appeared! and how could a lost one describe Him of whom it is proved by argument that, 'Verily He cannot be described by description or spoken of by words; He has ever been sanctified beyond the comprehension of His creatures and purified above the knowledge of His servants!'

"O my God! Thou beholdest a dead one before Thy Face, deprive him not from the cup of life in Thy bounty and beneficence; and a sick one before Thy throne, withhold him not from the sea of Thy healing. I beg of Thee to strengthen me under all circumstances to commemorate and praise Thee and to serve Thy Cause; while I know that whatever appears from a servant is restricted to the limits of himself and is not worthy of Thy presence nor befitteth the court of Thy might and grandeur.

"By Thy might! Were it not for to praise Thee my tongue were of no benefit to me, and were it not for to serve Thee my being were of no use to me. And I wish not the eye but to behold the lights of Thy supreme horizon, and I desire not the ear except to hear Thy sweet voice.

"Alas! Alas! O my Lord, my support, my hope! I know not whether Thou hast ordained for me that whereby my eye may be consoled, my breast dilated and my heart rejoiced, or that Thine immutable decree hath prevented me from presenting myself before Thy throne, O Thou king of pre-existence and ruler of nations!

"By Thy might, Thy power, Thy grandeur, Thy dominion! The gloom of remoteness hath smitten me: Where is the light of Thy nearness? O Thou object of the knowing! And the awfulness of separation hath stunned me: Where is the radiance of Thy union? O Thou beloved of the sincere!

"Thou beholdest, O my God, that which hath befallen me in Thy path, on the part of those who have denied Thy truth, violated Thy Covenant, disputed Thy verses and rejected Thy benefit after its appearance and Thy Word after its revelation and Thy proof after its completion! <p245>

"O my Lord!

The tongue of my tongue, the heart of my heart, the soul of my soul, and my inward and outward being all testify to Thy oneness and singleness, to Thy power and authority, to Thy grandeur and dominion, and to Thy might and exaltation and sovereignty, and to that, verily, Thou art God.

There is no God but Thee.

Thou hast been everlastingly a treasury concealed from eyes and comprehension and wilt be never-endingly even as Thou hast been from all eternity.

Neither hath the power of the world weakened Thee, nor the potency of nations threatened Thee.

Thou art He who hath opened the door of knowledge before the face of Thy servants, so that they may know the day-spring of Thy revelation, the dawningplace of Thy verses, the heaven of Thy manifestation, the sun of Thy beauty; and (Thou art He) who hath promised all in the earth, in Thy Books, Epistles and Scriptures, concerning the Manifestation of Thyself and the removal of the veils of glory from Thy face.

This Thou didst reveal unto Thy Beloved One (Muhammad) by whom the orb of the command dawned from the horizon of Hijaz and the light of truth dawned among the servants, in Thy Words, 'The Day whereon mankind shall arise before the Lord of the creatures.' (Qur'an).

And before him (Muhammad) Thou didst announce this unto the Interlocutor (Moses) to 'lead forth Thy people from darkness into light and to remind them of the days of God' (Qur'an).

And, again, Thou didst speak of this (Day) unto the Spirit (Christ) and unto all Thy former and latter Prophets and Messengers.

Were there to proceed from the treasuries of Thy Supreme Pen all that Thou hast revealed in the mention of this most great remembrance and this Thy mighty message, all the denizens of the city of knowledge and wisdom would be stunned, except whomsoever Thou hast delivered through Thy potency and protected through Thy bounty and grace.

"I testify that verily thou hast fulfilled Thy Covenant and sent forth Him whose Manifestation was announced by Thy prophets, Thy chosen ones and Thy servants. Verily He hath come from the horizon of might and power with the banners of Thy signs, and with the standards of Thy evidences, and He hath arisen before the faces through Thy power and potency and summoned all men unto the exalted apex and supreme horizon in such wise that the injustice of the learned and the majesty of princes have not withheld Him. He hath arisen in the most mighty steadfastness <p246> and spoken in the loftiest voice (saying), 'The giver of gifts hath indeed come, riding on the cloud; advance, O ye people of the earth, with shining faces and illumined hearts!' Blessed is whosoever attains to Thy meeting, drinks the choice wine of union from the hands of Thy bestowal, discovers the fragrance of Thy verses, speaks in Thy praise, soars in Thy atmosphere, and is overcome by the attraction of Thy utterance, and whom Thou hast caused to enter Thy supreme paradise -- the station of revelation and vision -- before the throne of Thy grandeur!

"O my Lord! I beg of Thee, by the 'Most Great Infallibility' which Thou hast made to be a horizon for Thy Manifestation, and by Thy exalted Word by which the creation was created and the command was made manifest, and by this Name whereby the Names lamented and the nerves of the knowing ones trembled with fear, to make me so severed from all else save Thee that I may not move except by Thy desire, nor speak except by Thy will and hear naught but Thy commemoration and praise.

"Praise be unto Thee, O my God, and thanks be unto Thee, O my hope, for that

Thou hast made clear unto me Thy right path, revealed unto me Thy great message, and assisted me to advance toward the day-spring of Thy revelation and the source of Thy command after Thy servants and creatures have denied Him!

"I beg of Thee, O Thou king of the kingdom of immortality! by the sound of Thy supreme pen, and by the fire ablaze and in the service of Thy friends. Then assist Thy servants, O my God, in that by reason of which Thy Cause will be elevated, and to practice what Thou hast revealed in Thy Book. Verily, Thou art the powerful, and the protector of all that Thou willest and in Thy grasp are the reins of all things! There is no God but Thee, the potent, the knower, the wise!"

520. O thou Jabeel! We have indeed shown unto thee the sea and its waves, the sun and its effulgence, the heaven and its stars and the shells and their pearls. Thank thou God for this most great favor and for this beneficence which hath pervaded the whole world.

521. O thou who art turning toward the light of the Face! <p247>

Superstitions have indeed encompassed the denizens of the earth and have prevented them from turning unto the horizon of certainty and its effulgence, radiances and lights.

Through fanices they are withheld from the self-subsistent One; they speak after their desires and perceive not.

Some among them say: "Have the Verses been revealed?"

Say:

Yea, by the Lord of heavens! "Hath the 'Hour' arrived?"

Yea, -- nay:

It hath already gone by -- by the Manifestor of Evident Signs!

The "Infallible" hath indeed come, and the True One hath become manifest with proof and argument!

The "Sahirah" hath become manifest and people are in dread and agitation!

The "earthquakes" have indeed come and the multitudes have lamented in fear of God, the powerful, the mighty!

Say: "The stunning sound" (of the trumpet) is sounded and the Day belongs to God, the wise, the unconstrained!

And they say: "Hath the 'Catastrophe' been fulfilled?"

Say:

Aye, by the Lord of Lords! "Hath the Resurrection been set up?"

Yea -- nay, even the self-subsistent One (hath arisen) in the kingdom of signs! "Are the people found 'prostrated'?"

Yea, by my Lord, the supreme, the Abha! "Have the tree-trunks been 'uprooted'?"

Nay, even the mountains are pulled down -- by the King of attributes!

Then another says: "Where is the 'Paradise' and the 'Hell'?"

Say, the former is My Meeting and the latter is thyself, O thou doubting polytheist!

They say: "Verily, we do not see the 'Balance.'"

Say:

Aye, by my Lord, the clement, none shall see it except the possessors of insight!

They say: "Have the stars fallen?"

Say:

Aye (they did, when the pre-existent One was in the Land of Mystery (Adrianople)!

Be ye therefore admonished, O possessors of sight!

All the signs indeed become manifest when We stretched out the hand of power from the bosom of grandeur and omnipotence!

The Crier hath indeed called out, for the (Day of) "Promise" hath come, and the dwellers of the (Sinaitic) Mount are stunned in the desert of suspension (of sojourn) because of the Majesty of thy Lord, the king of origination!

Then they say: "Hath the trumpet been sounded?"

Say:

Yea, by the king of manifestation! (It did) when He was seated upon the throne of His Name, the clement!

The gloomy darkness hath been illuminated through the dawn of the mercy of thy Lord, the dawningplace of lights.

The breeze of the merciful one hath indeed been wafted, and the souls are refreshed in the graves of bodies.

Thus hath <p248> the matter been decreed on the part of God, the mighty, the bestower!

522. Those who disbelieved said: "When did the heaven cleave asunder?" Say: When ye were in the tombs of heedlessness and error. Some other one among the infidels wipes his eyes and gazes at the right and left. Say: Verily, thou hast become blind, and, in this Day, there is no refuge for thee. Still other say: "Have the souls been resurrected?" Say: Aye, by my Lord; when ye were (asleep) in the beds of superstitions! Others say: "Hath the Book been revealed through 'a creative power'?" Say, verily, even it (i. e. "creative power") is astonished thereat! Be ye warned, O ye spiritually minded! Again, some say:

"Have the blind been restored to sight?" Say; Yea, by the One who rides upon the cloud! Paradise is indeed adorned with the roses of significances, and hell is ablaze with the fire of the wicked! Say: The Light hath indeed risen from the horizon of manifestation, and the regions are illumined, since the king of the Day of the Covenant hath come. Those who have doubted are indeed in loss, but they have gained who advanced with the light of conviction toward the dawningplace of assurance!

523. Blessed art thou, O thou gazer! for that We have revealed unto thee this Tablet, by which souls fly (with joy)! Guard it; then read it. By My Life, it is the door of the mercy of thy Lord! Blessed is whosoever reads it at morn and eve!

THE LAW OF LOVE

524. Say: O friend! Sleep with your face turned to the Friend, and rest in bed in the thought of the loved One. From flowers inhale the fragrance of the beloved One, and in every fire see the light of the desired One. I swear by the life of the Friend, that if thou smellest the garment of Joseph and enterest the Egypt of the love of God, thou wilt become the mother of all the chosen ones! Then exert thyself in love with thy soul and enter the abode of the beloved One with thy heart. Abandon grief for the world to its people and give no heed to the limited days of this world; be seated on the immortal, everlasting throne, be clad in a divine raiment, drink the wine of love from the cup of the beloved One, become ablaze with the light of love, and sew <p249> the robe of love! This is that matter which shall never change! Know thou, therefore, that in every age and dispensation all Divine Ordinances are changed and transformed according to the requirements of the time, except the law of love, which, like unto a fountain, flows always and is never overtaken by change. This is of the wonderful mysteries which God has mentioned for His servants! Verily, He is the merciful, the compassionate!

THE TABLET OF THE VIRGIN

525. O My Namesake: Listen to My Call from around My Throne, so that it may summon thee to a Sea which has no boundary and to whose depths no diver has reached. Verily, thy Lord is knowing and generous. Verily, We desired to bestow Our Favor upon thee by mentioning that which We have seen, so that thou mayest realize that We have Worlds within this world, and offer thanks to thy Lord, the All-knowing.

Verily, if He wished He could make the rays of the sun manifest from an atom, and the waves of the sea from a drop. He hath power, as He hath set forth in detail: the knowledge of what was and what will be, out of a point.

Verily, We were seated on the Throne when a luminous Virgin clad in the finest white robe entered. She became like the full moon rising from the horizon of heaven. Exalted be God, her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

When she opened her mouth heaven and earth were illumined as though the Essence of Eternity reflected upon her its light. Exalted be God, her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

She smiled and bent like the stem of a reed in the presence of the Merciful One. Exalted be He who made her manifest. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

Then she walked and moved about without any intention or will upon her part as if the needle of love were attracted by the magnet of the Beauty that shone in front of her. Exalted be her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

She walked while Glory was in attendance upon her and the Kingdom of Beauty was heralded in front of her, praising her <p250> matchless beauty, her winning ways and symmetry of form. Exalted be her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

Then We beheld jet-black hair hanging over her white throat, as though day and night embraced each other in this most glorious Station and highest Existence. Exalted be her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

When We observed her face, We found a point hidden under a veil, belonging to unity, shining forth from the horizon of her brow, as though through it the Tablets of the Love of the Merciful in the contingent world, and the volumes of the Lovers in all horizons, were fully explained. Exalted be her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

There was another point upon her breast which spoke of that point. Exalted be the Lord of the Hidden and the Manifest who created her. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

The Temple of God arose and began to walk, and she walked behind, listening to, shaken and attracted by, the Verses of her Lord. Blessed is He who created her. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

Then her joy, her delight and her enthusiasm increased to such a degree that she was changed and swooned. When she recovered her senses she drew near and said: "May my soul be a sacrifice to Thy imprisonment, O Secret of the unseen in the kingdom of creation!" No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

She remained looking at the dawningplace of the Throne like one intoxicated and bewildered, until she place her hand about the neck of her Lord and drew Him to her. As she drew nearer We took from her what was revealed in the treasured Red Epistle by My most exalted Pen. Exalted be her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

Then she bowed her head and rested her face upon her two fingers, as though a new moon had come into conjunction with a full moon. Exalted be her creator. No eye hath ever seen any being like unto Her.

At this point she cried and said: "May the whole existence be a sacrifice to

Thy afflictions, O King of heaven and earth! How long wilt Thou entrust Thyself to these people in the city of Acca? Go to Thy other Kingdoms, to the stations of that to <p251> which the eyes of the people of names have never turned!" Whereupon We smiled.

Learn from this sweet narrative that which We intend to describe of the hidden Secret which is manifest and yet most concealed, O people of wisdom among the companions of My Red Ark. This narrative coincides with the day which is the anniversary of the birth of My Herald, who spoke eloquently of Me and of My Sovereignty, and informed the people of the heaven of My intention, the sea of My will, and the sun of My manifestation. We honored it with another day in which was manifested the Concealed Essence, the treasured Secret, and the preserved Mystery, the One through whom the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Names were shaken with bewilderment and those that are in heaven and earth are stunned, except those whom We secured with Our own authority and power. I am powerful in whatsoever I wish. There is no God but Me, the Knowing, the Wise.

Blessed is he who has inhaled from the fragrance of God in this day which is the dawningpoint of manifestation and the dayspring of My Name, the Forgiver, and in which the fragrance wafted, the spirit moved, the attraction raised up those who were in their graves, and Mount Sinai cried out: "The Kingdom belongeth to God, the Wise!" and in which ever seeker obtained his desire, every man, knowing God, attained blessings, and every traveler in the way of God found the divine Right Path.

THE HOLY MARINER

526. He is the Gracious, the Well-Beloved!

O Holy Mariner!
Bid thine Ark of Eternity appear before the Celestial Concourse,
Launch it upon the Ancient Sea in His Name, the most wondrous,
And let the angelic spirits enter, in the name of God, the Most High,
Unmoor it then that it may sail upon the Ocean of Glory,
Haply the dwellers therein may attain the Retreats of Nearness in the Everlasting Realm;
Having reached the Sacred Strand, the shore of the Crimson Seas,
Bid them issue forth and attain this ethereal, invisible Station, <p252>
A station wherein the Lord hath in the Flame of His Beauty appeared within the deathless Tree;
Wherein the embodiments of His Cause cleansed themselves of self and passion,
Around which the glory of Moses doth circle with the Everlasting Hosts;
Wherein the Hand of God was drawn forth from His Bosom of Grandeur;
Wherein the Ark of the Cause remaineth motionless, even though to its dwellers be declared all Divine Attributes.
O Mariner! Teach them that are within the Ark that which we have taught thee behind the mystic Veil,
Perchance they may not tarry in the Sacred and Snow-white Spot,
But may soar upon the Wings of the Spirit unto that station which the Lord hath

exalted above all mention in the worlds below;
May wing through space even as the Favored Birds in the Realm of Eternal Reunion;
May know the mysteries hidden in the Sea of Light.
They passed the grades of worldly limitations and reached that of the Divine Unity, the Centre of Heavenly Guidance;
They have desired to ascend unto that state which the Lord hath ordained to be above their stations
Whereupon the Burning Meteor cast them out from them that abide in the Kingdom of His Presence,
And they heard the Voice of Grandeur raised from behind the Unseen Pavilion upon the Height of Glory,
"O Guardian Angels! Return them to their abodes in the world below,
Inasmuch as they have purposed to rise to that sphere which the wings of the Celestial Dove have never attained,
Whereon the Ship of Fancy standeth still, Which the minds of them that comprehend cannot grasp!"
Thereupon the Maid of Heaven looked out from her exalted chamber,
And with her brow signed to the Celestial Concourse,
Flooding with the light of her countenance the heaven and the earth;
And as the Radiance of her Beauty shone upon the people of dust,
And all beings were shaken in their mortal graves, <p253>
She then raised the call which no ear through all eternity hath ever heard,
And thus proclaimed: "By the Lord! He whose heart hath not the fragrance of the love of the Exalted and glorious Arabian Youth,
Can in no-wise ascend unto the Glory of the Highest Heaven!"
Thereupon she summoned unto herself one maiden from her handmaidens
And commanded her: "Descend into space from the Mansions of Eternity
And turn thou unto that which they have concealed in the inmost of their hearts,
Shouldest thou inhale the Perfume of the Robe from the Youth that hath been hidden within the Tabernacle of Light by reason of that which the hands of the wicked have wrought,
Raise a cry within thyself that all the inmates of the chambers of Paradise that are the embodiments of the Eternal Wealth may understand and hearken;
That they may all come down from their everlasting chambers,
And kiss their hands and feet for having soared to the heights of faithfulness,
Perchance they may find from their Robes the fragrance of the Beloved One!"
Thereupon the countenance of the favored damsel beamed above the Celestial Chambers even as the light that shineth from the Face of the Youth above his mortal Temple;
She then descended with such an adorning as to illumine the heavens and all that is therein;
She bestirred herself and perfumed all things in the Land of Holiness and Grandeur.
When she reached that plane she rose to her full height in the mid-most heart of creation

and sought to inhale their fragrance at a time that knoweth neither beginning nor end.
She found not in them that which she did desire, and this, verily, is but one of His wondrous tales!
She then cried aloud, wailed and repaired to her own station within her most lofty Mansion.
And then gave utterance to one Mystic Word, whispered privily by her honeyed Tongue, <p254>
And raised the Call amidst the Celestial Concourse and the Immortal Maids of Heaven:
"By the Lord! I found not from these idle claimants the Breeze of Faithfulness! By the Lord! The Youth hath remained lone and forlorn in the land of exile in the hands of the ungodly!"
She then uttered within herself such a cry that the Celestial Concourse did shriek and tremble,
And she fell upon the dust and gave up the Spirit. It seemeth she was called and hearkened unto Him that summoned her into the Realm on High.
Glorified be He that created her out of the Essence of Love in the midmost heart of His exalted Paradise!

(Up to this point between each line is the refrain: "Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!")

Thereupon the Maids of Heaven hastened forth from their chambers, upon whose countenance the eye of no dweller in the Highest Paradise had ever gazed, Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!
They all gathered around her, and lo! they found her body fallen upon the dust. Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!
And as they beheld her state and comprehended a word of the Tale told by the Youth, they bared their heads, rent their garments asunder, beat upon their faces, forgot their joy, shed tears and smote with their hands upon their cheeks, and this is verily one of the mysterious, grievous afflictions!
Glorified be our Lord, the Most High! <p255>

CHAPTER SIX
THE COVENANT AND TESTAMENT OF BAHA'U'LLAH

527. In His Name who shines forth from the Horizon of Might! Verily, the Tongue of the Ancient gives glad tidings to those who are in the world concerning the appearance of the Greatest Name, and who takes His Covenant among the nations.

Verily, He[1] is Myself; the Shining-Place of My Identity; the East of My Cause; the Heaven of My Bounty; the Sea of My Will; the Lamp of My Guidance; the Path of My Justice; the Standard of My Love.
[1 Baha'u'llah.]

The one who hath turned to Him who turned to My Face and is illumined through the lights of My Beauty; hath acknowledge My Oneness and confessed My Singleness.

The one who hath denied Him hath been deprived of the Salsibil of My Love, of the Kawther of My Grace, the cup of My Mercy and the Wine by which the sincere ones have been attracted and the monotheists have taken flight in the air of My Compassion, which no one hath know except him whom I have taught the matter revealed in My Hidden Tablet.

TABLET OF THE BRANCH

528. He is Eternal in His Abha Horizon!

Verily, the Cause of God hath come upon the Clouds of Utterances and the polytheists are in this Day in great torment! Verily, the Hosts of Revelation have descended with Banner of Inspiration from the Heaven of the Tablet of the Name of God, the Powerful, the Mighty! At this time the monotheists all rejoice in the victory of God and His Dominion, and the deniers will then be in manifest perplexity.

O ye people! Do ye flee from the Mercy of God after It hath encompassed the existent things created between the heavens and <p256> earths? Beware lest ye prefer your own selves before the Mercy of God, and deprive not yourselves thereof! Verily, whosoever turneth away therefrom will be in great loss. Verily Mercy is like unto Verses which has descended from the one heaven, and from them the monotheists drink the choice Wine of Life, whilst the polytheists drink from the fiery water; and when the Verses of God are read unto them, the fire of hatred is enkindled within their breasts. Thus have they preferred their own selves before the Mercy of God, and are of those who are heedless.

Enter, O people, beneath the shelter of the Word! Then drink therefrom the choice wine of Inner Significances and Utterances; for therein is hidden the Kawther of the Glorious One -- and it hath appeared from the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the Merciful, with wonderful lights.

529. Say: Verily, the Branch[1] of Command hath sprung forth from this Root which God hath firmly planted in the ground of the Will, the Limb of which hath been elevated to a station which encompasses all existence. Therefore, exalted be He for this Creation, the Lofty, the Blessed, the Inaccessible, the Mighty!
[1 Abdul Baha.]

O ye people! Draw nigh unto It, and taste the fruits of Its Knowledge and Wisdom on the part of the Mighty, the Knowing One. Whosoever will not taste thereof shall be deprived of the Bounty, even though he hath partaken of all that is in the earth -- were ye of those who know.

Say: Verily, a Word hath gone forth in favor from the Most Great Tablet and God hath adorned It with the Mantle of Himself, and made It Sovereign over all in the earth and a Sign of His Grandeur and Omnipotence among the creatures; in order that, through It, the people shall praise their Lord, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Wise; and that, through It, they shall glorify their Creator and sanctify the Self of God which standeth within all things. Verily, this is naught but a Revelation on the part of the Wise, the Ancient One!

Say: O people, praise ye God, for the Manifestation of It (the Branch), for verily It is the Most Great Favor upon you and the Most Perfect Blessing for you; and through Him (Abdul Baha) every mouldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to Him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away <p257> from Him hath turned away from My Beauty, denied My Proof, and is of those who transgress. Verily, He is the Remembrance of God amongst you, and His Trust within you, and His Manifestation unto you and His Appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the Message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereto testifieth God, then His Angels, then His Messengers, and then His Holy Servants.

Inhale the fragrances of the Ridvan from His Roses and be not of those who are deprived. Appreciate the Bounty of God upon you and be not veiled therefrom -- and, verily, We have sent Him forth in the temple of man. Thus praise ye the Lord, the Originator of whatsoever He willeth through His wise and inviolable Command!

Verily, those who withhold themselves from the Shelter of the Branch are indeed lost in the wilderness of perplexity; and are consumed by the heat of self-desire, and are of those who perish.

530. Hasten, O people unto the Shelter of God, in order that He may protect you from the heat of the Day whereon none shall find for himself any refuge or shelter whatsoever except beneath the Shelter of His Name, the Clement, the Forgiving! Clothe yourselves, O people, with the garment of Assurance, in order that He may protect you from the dart of doubts and superstitions, and that ye may be of those who are assured in those days wherein none shall ever be assured and no one shall be firmly established in the Cause, except by severing himself from all that is possessed by the people and turning unto the Holy and Radiant Outlook.

O ye people! Do ye take unto yourselves the Jept (idol) as a helper other than God, and do ye seek the Taghoot (idol) as a Lord besides your Lord the Almighty, the Omnipotent? Forsake, O people, their mention, then hold the Chalice of Life in the Name of your Lord, the Merciful. Verily, by God, the existent world is quickened through a drop thereof, were ye of those who know.

Say: In that Day there is no refuge for any one save the Command of God, and no salvation for any soul but God. Verily, this is the truth and there is naught after truth but manifest error.

531. Verily, God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause according to his ability. Thus hath the Command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness. <p258>

Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one who quickeneth all the servants and the Lord shall bring him forth in the Day of Resurrection into the Ridvan of Oneness, adorned with the Mantle of Himself, the Protector, the Mighty, the Generous! Thus will ye assist your Lord, and naught else save this

shall ever be mentioned in this Day before God, your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers.

As to thee, O servant, hearken unto the admonition given unto thee in the Tablet; then seek the Grace of thy Lord at all times. Then spread the Tablet among those who believe in God and in His Verses; so that they may follow that which is contained therein, and be of those who are praiseworthy.

Say: O people, cause no corruption in the earth and dispute not with men; for, verily, this is not worthy of those who have chosen in the shelter of their Lord a station which shall indeed remain secure.

If ye find one athirst, give him to drink from the Chalice of Kawtha and Tasneed; and if ye find one endowed with an attentive ear, read unto him the Verses of God, the Mighty, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Unloose the tongue with excellent utterance, then admonish the people if ye find them advancing unto the sanctuary of God; otherwise abandon them unto themselves and forsake them in the abyss of hell. Beware lest ye scatter the pearls of Inner Significance before every barren, dumb one. Verily, the blind are deprived of witnessing the Lights and are unable to distinguish between the stone and the holy, precious pearl.

Verily, wert thou to read the most mighty, wonderful Verses to the stone for a thousand years, will it understand, or will they take any effect therein? No! by thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement! If thou readest all the Verses of God unto the deaf, will he hear a single letter? No! Verily, by the Beauty, the Mighty, the Ancient!

Thus have We delivered unto thee some of the jewels of Wisdom and Utterance, in order that thou mayest gaze unto the direction of thy Lord and be severed from all the creatures. May the Spirit and Glory rest upon thee, and upon those who dwell upon the plain of Holiness and who remain in the Cause of their Lord in manifest steadfastness! <p259>

KITAB-I-'AHD

The Book of the Covenant

532. Although the Supreme Horizon is devoid of the vanities of the world, yet in the Treasury of Trust and Resignation, We have placed a priceless and unequalled inheritance for the heirs. We have not placed (therein) a treasure, neither have we added to the pain.

533. By God! In wealth fear is concealed and peril is hidden. Behold and then reflect upon that which the Merciful One hath revealed in the Qur'an: "Woe unto every maligner and backbiter who heapeth up riches and counteth them over." There is no continuance in the riches of this world. That which is subject to mortality and undergoeth a change hath never been and is not worth regarding. But as is well-known, the purpose of this Oppressed One in enduring these adversities and calamities, the revelation of the Verses and the manifestation of the Proofs, hath been to quench the fire of hatred and animosity, so that

perchance the horizons of the minds of the people of this world may shine with the light of concord and attain the real tranquillity. The sun of this explanation is shining and arising from the horizon of the Divine Tablet; all must look toward it.

534. O people of the world! I enjoin you to that which is the means of the elevation of your station. Hold to the virtue of God and grasp the hem of that which is just. Verily, I say, the tongue is for mentioning that which is good; pollute it not with evil speech. God hath forgiven you that which is past; hereafter you must all speak that which is befitting. Avoid execration, reviling and that which is aggravating to man.

The station of man is high. A short while since, this exalted Word was revealed from the Repository of the Pen of Abha: "This is a great and blessed Day, but that which hath been hidden in man is and shall be disclosed." The station of man is great if he holds to Reality and Truth, and if he be firm and steadfast in the Commands. The true man appeareth before the Merciful One like unto the heavens; his sight and hearing are the sun and moon; his bright and shining qualities are the stars; his station is the highest one; his traces are the educators of existence. Every believer who hath found the Perfume of the Garment in <p260> this Day and turneth with a pure heart toward the Supreme Horizon, he is mentioned as one of the followers of Baha upon the Red Page.

Take the Chalice of My Favor in My Name; then drink from it to My Remembrance, the Beloved, the New!

535. O people of the world! The Creed of God is for love and union; make it not the cause of discord and disunion. In the sight of the men of discernment and those who are holding to the Manifestation, that which is the means of preservation and the cause of the ease and tranquillity of the servants is revealed from the Supreme Pen; but the ignorant of the earth who are fostered in ambition and lust are heedless of the matured Wisdom of the True Wise One and are speaking and working in imaginations and fancies.

536. O saints of God and His faithful ones! Kings are the appearances of power and the daysprings of the might and wealth of the True One. Pray in their behalf, for the government of the earth is ordained to those souls; but the hearts He hath appointed for Himself.

537. He hath forbidden dispute and strife with an absolute prohibition in the Book (Kitab-el-Aqdas). This is the command of God in this Greatest Manifestation, and He hath preserved it from any order of annulment and hath adorned it with the ornament of confirmation. Verily, He is the All-Knowing and the All-Wise!

538. It is incumbent upon all to aid those souls who are the day-spring of authority and the dawning-points of command, and who are adorned with the ornaments of equity and justice. Blessings be upon the princes and learned ones in Baha. These are My Trusted ones amongst My servants; these are the rising-points of My Commandments amongst My creatures. Upon them be My Glory,

My Mercy and My Grace which have surrounded all existence!

539. It is revealed in the Kitab-el-Aqdas concerning this, that which from the Horizons of its Words the Lights of the Divine Bounties gleam, rise and are resplendent.

540. O My Branches! In this Existent Being the greatest strength and the most perfect power is hidden and concealed; look towards It and gaze in the direction of Its union and not at Its seeming differences. This is the Testament of God that the <p261> Branches, Twigs, and Relations must each and every one look to the Greatest Branch.[1] Reflect upon that which is revealed in My Book, the Aqdas: "When the Ocean of My Presence hath disappeared and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn your faces towards Him whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Pre-Existent Root." The aim of this blessed verse hath been the Greatest Branch. We have likewise elucidated the Command as a favor from before Us; and I am the Generous, the All-Giving!
[1 Abdul Baha.]

541. Verily, God hath ordained the station of the Greater Branch after the station of the former. Verily, He is the Ordainer, the Wise. We have surely chosen the Greater after the Greatest as a Command from the All-Knowing, the Omniscient!

542. The love of the Branches is incumbent upon all, but God hath not ordained to them any right over the property of the people.

543. O My Branches, My Twigs and My Relations! We enjoin you to the virtue of God, to follow that which is just and benefiting, and that by which your station will be exalted. Truly, I say, piety is the greatest commander for the assistance of the Divine Religion, and the hosts that befit this Commander have been and are good, pure, and pleasing qualities and deeds.

544. Say: O servants, make not the course of order to be the cause of confusion, and make not the reason of union to be the occasion of discord! It is hoped that the people of Baha will look towards the blessed Word: "Say, all are from the Presence of God"; and this exalted Word resembles water for extinguishing the fire of hatred and animosity which is deposited in all minds and hearts. The different creeds will attain the light of real union through this simple Word. Verily, He sayeth the Truth and guideth in the Path, and He is the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Wonderful!

545. Respect and regard for the Branches is incumbent upon all for the honoring of the Religion and the exaltation of the Word; and this Command hath been both previously and afterwards recorded and mentioned in the Books of God. Blessed is he who attaineth to that which hath been commanded from the Presence of the Command, the Pre-Existent! <p262>

Respect is enjoined also for the ladies of the Household of God, and the Twigs and Relations. I enjoin you to the service of the nations and to the pacification of the world.

546. From the Kingdom of the Revelation of the Aim of the people of the world, is revealed that which is the Cause of the Life of the world and the Salvation of the nations. Hearken to the admonitions of the Supreme Pen with the true (inner) ear. To this beareth witness My Book, the Mighty, the Wonderful!

FROM KITAB-EL-Aqdas

547. When the Ocean of My Presence hath disappeared and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn your faces towards Him[1] whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Pre-Existent Root.
[1 Abdul Baha.]

O people of the world! If the Dove soareth from the Tree of Praise to the extreme Concealment turn for what ye do not understand in the Book to the Branch who is extended from this True Root.

548. He who claimeth a Cause (a Revelation) before the end of a full thousand years, he is lying and false apostle. We ask God that He, verily, may strengthen such a one to go back (to the Path); if he repenteth, verily, God is the Forgiver. <p263>

PART TWO

THE COVENANT OF GOD

549. Bring them together again, O Lord, by the Power of Thy Covenant, and gather their dispersion by the Might of Thy Promise, and unite their hearts by the dominion of Thy Love! Cause them to love one another so as to sacrifice their spirits, expend their money and give up their desires for each other's sake!

O Lord, make to descend upon them quietness and tranquillity! Shower upon them the clouds of Thy Mercy in full abundance, and make them to characterize themselves with the characteristics of the spiritual!

O Lord, hold us firm in Thy noble command, and bestow upon us Thy Gifts through Thy bounty, grace and beneficence!

Verily, Thou art the Generous, the Merciful, and the Benevolent. <p265>

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CAUSE OF GOD

PRAYER OF THE COVENANT

550. My God! My God! I ask Thee to forgive everything save my servitude to Thy Supreme Threshold, and I declare myself innocent of any proclamation or praise, save my adoration for Thy Merciful Presence. I deprive myself of every adornment, save that of humiliation and contrition and evanescence before Thy Oneness. I flee from every station save that of arrival in the court of Thy Divine Eternity. By Thy Power, verily, the sweetness of servitude is the food of my spirit; with the fragrance of servitude my breast will be dilated, my being refreshed, my heart delighted, my eyes brightened, my nostrils perfumed,

and in it is the healing of my disease, the allaying of my burning thirst, the soothing of my pain.

Immerse me, O my God, in this most bounteous, rolling Ocean; give me to drink of this sweet, abundant Water; cause me to enter this Gateway of Righteousness; ordain me for this praiseworthy Station; cause me to obtain this Cup which is overflowing with the living water; light in the crystal of my heart this Lamp which is giving forth its illuminating, brilliant radiance; and strengthen me for the service of Thy Cause, O my Lord, the Forgiver! Accept my servitude in the court of Thy Holy Oneness, O Thou, the Manifestor of Mount Sinai. Assist me to abide in its conditions, O Thou, the Authority of Manifestation. Aid me to assist Thy Cause in the eastern and western parts of the earth, O Thou the Possessor of the Day of Resurrection. I ask Thee, by Thy written Book, dispersed writings -- by Thy Hidden Mystery, and Thy firm proclamations -- to cause me to be steadfast in servitude to Thee, O my Lord, the Forgiver! Verily, Thou art the powerful over that which Thou wishest; and verily, Thou art the Merciful, the Compassionate. <p266>

O Thou, who art calling by the Testament, in the Pivot of the horizons! This servant, according to the clear statements in the Book of Aqdas, and the unambiguous texts of the Holy Book, is the Commentator and the Interpreter, of the Books of God. All the faithful ones, who are assured and firm in the Testament and Covenant of God, must neither overreach the clear explanation of this servant, nor the unambiguous interpretation of this slave. If any one overreaches, he follows his own suppositions. This servant gives the real meaning, and the meaning of the real also. The mystery of mysteries of these texts, words and lines, is servitude to the Holy Presence of the Beauty of Abha, and effacement, evanescence and perfect dispersion before the Blessed Threshold. This is my brilliant diadem, and my glorious crown. With this, I will be glorified in the Heavenly Kingdom, and the kingdom of this world. And with it, I will approach unto the Beauty among the nearest ones to God, and no one is allowed to interpret other than this, and this is the perspicuous truth.

O thou, who art proclaiming the mention of God! The indicated Commentator is the Interpreter of the Words, and this servant is aside from praise, qualities, names, characteristics, virtues, peculiarities, eulogies and honors; but my name, being, reality and personality is servitude to the Beauty of Abha, and I am not worthy to be considered as having the shadow of arising.

As the Manifestation said: "Plant this Branch in the earth of the hearts, and make it Holy from shadow and arising."

THE DAY OF GOD

551. Do you know in what Day you are living? Do you realize in what Dispensation you are alive? Have you not heard in the Holy Scriptures that at the consummation of the ages there shall appear a Day which is the Sun of all the past Days? This is the Day in which the Lord of Hosts has come down from heaven on the clouds of glory! This is the Day in which the inhabitants of all the world shall enter under the shelter of the Word of God.

This is the Day whose real sovereign is His Highness the Almighty. This is the Day when the East and the West shall embrace each other like unto two lovers. This is the Day in which <p267> war and contention shall be forgotten. This is the Day in which nations and governments will enter into an eternal bond of amity and conciliation. This Century is the fulfillment of the Promised Century.

This Day is the dawn of the appearances of the traces of the glorious vision of the past prophets and sages.

Now is the dawn; ere long the effulgent Sun shall rise and station itself in the meridian of its majesty. Then you shall observe the effects of the Sun. Then you shall behold what heavenly illumination has become manifest. Then you shall comprehend that these are the infinite bestowals of God! Then you shall see that this world has become another world. Then you shall perceive that the Teachings of God have universally spread.

Rest ye assured that this darkness shall be dispelled and these impenetrable clouds which have darkened the horizon shall be scattered, and the Sun of Reality shall appear in its full splendor. Its rays shall melt the icebergs of hatred and differences which have transformed the moving sea of humanity into hard frozen immensity. The vices of the world of nature shall be changed into praiseworthy attributes, and the lights of the excellences of the Divine realm shall appear.

The principles of His Holiness Baha'u'llah, like unto the spirit, shall penetrate the dead body of the world, and the Love of God, like unto an artery, shall beat through the heart of the five continents.

The East shall become illumined, the West perfumed, and the children of men shall enter beneath the all-embracing canopy of the oneness of the world of humanity.

In this Day the rest of the people are asleep. Praise be to God that you are awakened! They are all uninformed, but praise be to God you are informed of the mysteries of God! Thank ye God that in this arena you have preceded others. I hope that each one of you may become a pillar of the palace of the oneness of the world of humanity. May each one of you become a luminous star of this heaven, thus lighting the path of those who are seeking the goal of human perfection.

Paris, France

March 10, 1913. <p268>

BAHA'U'LLAH

552. In the divine Holy Books there are unmistakable prophecies giving the Glad Tidings of a certain Day in which the promised One of all the Books would appear, a radiant Dispensation be established, the banner of the Most Great Peace and reconciliation be hoisted, and the oneness of the world of humanity proclaimed. Among the various nations and peoples of the world no enmity or

hatred would remain. All heart were to be connected one with another. These things are recorded in the Taurat or Old Testament, in the Gospel, in the Qur'an, in the Zend Avesta, in the Books of Buddha and in the Book of Confucius. In brief, all the Holy Books contain these Glad Tidings. In all of them it is announced that after the world has been surrounded by darkness, then radiance shall appear. For just as the night, when it becomes excessively dark, precedes the dawn of a new day, so likewise when the darkness of religious apathy and heedlessness overtakes the world, when human souls become negligent of God, when materialistic ideas overshadow idealism and spirituality, when nations become submerged in the world of matter and forget God -- at such a time as this shall the Divine Sun shine forth and the Radiant Morn appear.

553. Consider to what a remarkable extent the spirituality of people has been overcome by materialism, so that spiritual susceptibility seems to have vanished, Divine civilization does not exist, and guidance and knowledge of God no longer remain. All are submerged in the sea of materialism. Although some attend churches and temples for worship and devotion, it is in accordance with the traditions and imitations of their fathers and not for the investigation of Reality. For it is evident that they have not found the Reality and are not engaged in adoration of It. They are holding to certain imitations which have descended to them from their fathers and ancestors. They have become accustomed to passing a certain length of time in temple worship and conforming to imitations and ceremonies. The proof of this is that the son of every Jewish father becomes a Jew and not a Christian; the son of every Muhammadan becomes a follower of Islam; the son of every Christian proves to be a Christian; the son of every Zoroastrian is a Zoroastrian, etc., etc. Therefore religious faith and belief is merely a remnant of blind imitations which have <p269> descended through fathers and ancestors. Because this man's father was a Jew, he considers himself a Jew; not that he has investigated the Reality and proved satisfactorily to himself that Judaism is right; nay, rather he is aware that his forefathers have followed this course, therefore he has held to it himself.

The purpose of this is to explain that the darkness of imitations encompasses the world. Every nation is holding to its traditional religious forms. The Light of Reality is obscured. Were these various nations to investigate the Reality, there is no doubt they would attain to It. As Reality is One, all nations would then become as one nation. But so long as they adhere to various imitations and are deprived of the Reality, strife and warfare still continue and rancor and sedition prevail. But if they investigate the Reality, neither enmity nor rancor will remain and they will attain to the utmost concord among themselves.

554. During the years when the darkness of heedlessness was most intense in the Orient and the people were so submerged in imitations that nations were thirsting for each other's blood, considering one another as contaminated and refusing mutual association -- at such a time as this His Holiness Baha'u'llah appeared. He arose in the Orient, uprooting the very foundations of superstition and brought the dawn of the Light of Reality. Various nations

became united, because all desired the Reality. Inasmuch as they investigated the Reality of religion they found that all men are the servants of God, all are the posterity of Adam, all are children of one household, and that the foundations of all the Prophets are one. For inasmuch as the teachings of the Prophets are Reality, their foundations are one. The enmity and strife of nations are therefore due to religious imitations and not to the Reality which underlies the teachings of the Prophets. Through Baha'u'llah the nations and peoples grew to understand and comprehend this. Therefore hearts became united and lives were cemented together. After centuries of hatred and bitterness the Christian, Jew, Zoroastrian, Muhammadan and Buddhist arose for amity; all of them in the utmost love and unity. They became welded and cemented because they had all arrived at Reality.

555.

The Divine Prophets are conjoined in the utmost state of love.

Each former one has given the glad tidings of His successor's coming, and each later one has sanctioned the one who preceded Him.

They were in the utmost unity, but their nations <p270> were in strife.

For instance, Moses gave the message of the glad tidings of Christ and Christ confirmed the Prophethood of Moses.

Therefore between Moses and Jesus there is no variation and conflict.

They are in the utmost unity.

But between the Jew and the Christian there is conflict.

Now therefore if the Christian and Jewish people investigate the Reality underlying their Prophets' teachings they will become kind in their attitude toward each other and associate in the utmost love, for Reality is one and not dual or multiple.

If this investigation of Reality becomes universal, all the divergent nations will ratify all the Divine Prophets and all will confirm all the Holy Books.

No strife or rancor will remain and all of us will become united.

Then will we associate together in the utmost love.

We will become as fathers and sons, as brothers and sisters living together in the utmost unity, love and happiness, for this century is the Century of Light.

It is not like former centuries.

Former centuries were epochs of oppression.

Now human intellects have developed and human intelligence has increased.

Each soul is investigating the Reality.

This is not a time when we shall wage war and be hostile toward each other.

We are living at a time when we should enjoy the utmost friendship.

556. Fifty years ago, His Holiness Baha'u'llah sent epistles to all the kings and nations of the world, at a time when there was no mention of Universal Peace. One of these epistles was sent by Him to the President of the American Democracy. In these communications He summoned all to International Peace and the oneness of the human world. He summoned all to the fundamentals of the teachings of all the Prophets. Some of the European kings were haughty. Among them was Napoleon Bonaparte III. Baha'u'llah wrote a second epistle to him, which was published thirty years ago. The context is this: "O Napoleon! thou hast indeed become haughty. Thou hast become proud. Thou hast forgotten God. Thou dost imagine that this majesty is permanent for thee -- this dominion is abiding for thee. A letter We have sent unto thee for acceptance with thy greatest love; but instead thou hast shown haughtiness. Therefore God shall uproot this edifice of thy sovereignty; thy country shall flee away from thee. Thou shalt find humiliation hastening after thee because thou didst not arise for that which was enjoined upon thee -- <p271> whereas that which was a duty incumbent upon thee was the cause of life to the world. The punishment of God shall soon be dealt out to thee."

This epistle was revealed in the year 1869, and after one year the foundations of the Napoleonic sovereignty were utterly destroyed.

557. Among these epistles (Tablets) was a very lengthy one to the Shah of Persia. It was printed and spread broadcast throughout all the countries of the world. This epistle was revealed in the year 1870. In it He admonished the Shah of Persia to be kind to all his subjects -- summoning him to justice -- counselling him to make no distinction among the religions -- with Jew, Christian, Muhammadan, Zoroastrian, was he to deal equally and the oppressions prevalent in his country were to be removed. The Jews were greatly oppressed in Persia.

Baha'u'llah especially recommended justice for them, saying that all people are the servants of God, and in the eye of the Government they should be of equal estimate, the Government should be just to all. ... "If justice is not dealt out, if these oppressions are not removed and if thou dost not obey God, the foundations of thy Government will be razed and thou shalt become evanescent -- become as nothing. Thou shouldst gather all the learned men, and then summon Me. I shall be present there. I will then advance proofs and evidences of My validity. I will manifest My proof, and anything that you may ask. I am ready. But if no attention is paid to this Book, thou, like unto the kings who became non-existent, shalt likewise become non-existent." The Shah did not answer this Tablet of the Blessed Perfection. Then God destroyed the foundations of his sovereignty.

558. Amongst those to whom He wrote was the Sultan of Turkey. In it He arraigned him, saying: "Verily, thou didst incarcerate and make Me a prisoner. Dost thou imagine that imprisonment is a loss to Me -- that imprisonment is a humiliation for Me? This imprisonment is a glory for Me because it is in the

pathway of God. I have not committed a crime. It is for the sake of God that I have received this ordeal. Therefore I am very happy. I am exceedingly joyous. But thou must wait: God will send thee a punishment -- thou shalt receive retribution. Ere long thou shalt observe how ordeals shall descend upon thee like rain, and thou shalt become non-existent." And even so it was. <p272>

559. Likewise He sent messages to the other kings and crowned heads of the earth, summoning all of them to love, equity, international peace and the oneness of mankind, in order that all mankind might become unified and agreed; that strife, warfare and sedition might pass away; that bitterness and enmity might cease, and all might become united and agreed and arise to serve the One God.

Now I have spoken. If you have anything to say, let it be heard. You have listened most attentively. ... I will add a little more.

560. In brief, two kings arose against Baha'u'llah -- the Shah of Persia and the Sultan of Turkey. They imprisoned His Holiness in the fortress of Akka in order to extinguish His Light and exterminate His Cause. But Baha'u'llah while in prison wrote them letters of severe arraignment. He declared that imprisonment was no obstacle to Him. He said: "This imprisonment will prove to be the means of the promotion of My Cause. This imprisonment will be the incentive for the spreading of My Teachings. No harm shall come to Me because I have sacrificed My life, sacrificed My blood, sacrificed My possessions -- all have I sacrificed, and for Me this imprisonment is no loss." And just as He declared, so it came to pass. In prison He hoisted His banner, and His Cause was spread throughout the world. It has reached America. Now in all parts of the world the Cause of Baha'u'llah is spread broadcast. You go to Asia and wherever you travel you will find Baha'is. You go to Africa, Europe, there you will find the Cause of Baha'u'llah. In America it is but just beginning to grow and spread.

These two kings could not do anything to withstand Baha'u'llah, but through Him God was able to destroy both sovereignties. I, too, was in prison. God removed the chains from my neck and placed them around the neck of Abdul Hamid. It was done suddenly -- not in a long time -- in a moment as it were. The same hour that the Young Turks declared liberty, the Committee of Union and Progress set me free. They lifted the chains from my neck and threw them around the neck of Abdul Hamid. That which he did to me was inflicted on him. Now the position is precisely reversed. His days are spent in prison just as I passed the days in prison at Akka, with this difference: that I was happy <p273> in imprisonment. I was in the utmost elation, because I was not a criminal. They had imprisoned me in the Path of God.

New York City

July 5, 1912.

THE LIGHT OF TRUTH

561. O noble friends, seekers after God! Praise be to God! Today the light of

Truth is shining upon the world in its abundance; the breezes of the heavenly garden are blowing throughout all regions; the call of the Kingdom is heard in all lands, and the breath of the Holy Spirit is felt in all hearts that are faithful. The Spirit of God is giving eternal life. In this wonderful age the East is enlightened, the West is fragrant, and everywhere the soul inhales the holy perfume. The sea of the unity of mankind is lifting up its waves with joy, for there is real communication between the hearts and minds of men. The banner of the Holy Spirit is uplifted, and men see it, and are assured with the knowledge that this is a new day.

This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons of the world are luminous, and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men and of the drawing together of all races and all classes. You are loosed from ancient superstitions which have kept men ignorant, destroying the foundations of true humanity.

The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers.

In the days of old an instinct for warfare was developed in the struggle with wild animals; this is no longer necessary; nay, rather, cooperation and mutual understanding are seen to produce the greatest welfare of mankind. Enmity is now the result of prejudice only.

In the "Hidden Words" Baha'u'llah says, "Justice is to be loved above all." Praise be to God, in this country the standard of justice has been raised; a great effort is being made to give all souls an equal and a true place. This is the desire of all noble <p274> natures; this is today the teaching for the East and for the West; therefore the East and the West will understand each other and reverence each other, and embrace like long-parted lovers who have found each other.

There is one God; mankind is one; the foundations of religion are one. Let us worship Him, and give praise for all His great Prophets and Messengers who have manifested His brightness and glory.

The blessing of the Eternal One be with you in all its richness, that each soul according to his measure may take freely of Him.

Amen.

City Temple, London
September 10, 1911.

THE PRINCIPLES OF BAHA'U'LLAH

562. Every age requires a central impetus or movement. In this age, the boundaries of terrestrial things have extended; minds have taken on a broader range of vision; realities have been unfolded and the secrets of being have

been brought into the realm of visibility. What is the spirit of this age, what is its focal point? It is the establishment of Universal Peace, the establishment of the knowledge that humanity is one family. Think on the conditions in this world of humanity. Nations have become like unto armed camps waiting to be ignited by the combustion of war.

563. Whereas in reality God has created man for love's sake. God has endowed man with creation so that he may illumine the world with the flame of brotherhood and express the utmost state of unity and accord. This state would express God's good pleasure; this would be the prosperity of the world of humanity. A thousand times, alas! this glorious century has been besmeared with war and strife, hatred and rancor. Bloodthirsty wolves are tearing the sheep of God. Destruction is more widespread than in all the ages of the past.

We hear on every side praises of the wonders of this cycle, its achievements, its refinements, its genius; calling the past the age of mediaeval horror. What mediaeval age held the horror of a Krupp gun, a Mauser rifle or a shrapnel shell that kills a whole camp? On the sea we have the submarine and the dreadnaught. <p275>

If you compare the past with this age, impartial judgment will call this the age of human fratricide.

564.

All the religions are revealed for the sake of good fellowship.

The fundamentals, the foundations, of all are fellowship, unity and love.

The heavenly books were revealed and divine love bestowed to bring about peace.

What has man made of religion?

He has made it the cause of bloodshed and strife; enmity and hatred.

Religion was destined to be a remedy for the sickness of humanity; an illumination for the darkness of uncertainty.

Have we then forgotten the divine teachings, cast aside the heavenly books, created imaginary thoughts and illusions and made them the basis of rancor and strife?

The Bible commands the practice of peace and justice.

God desires love.

In the Gospel we find the golden statement that man should be expressive of love even unto his enemy; he should be expressive of love to his ill-wishers; he should be expressive of love to all his fellowmen.

He must have an eye to pardon: he must have an eye to benevolence.

All the divine books invite men to these teachings.

All the divine prophets suffered that man might realize these teachings.

Consider what His Holiness Christ endured, how many vicissitudes he underwent, every day tasting a new poison, finally sacrificing his own life, so that the tent of love and concord might be raised over the world of humanity so that this dark world might be invested with divine light.

Alas! that all the travail of these holy souls and sanctified prophets should be wasted.

The world of humanity is in a stupor of sleep and it cannot grasp the realities.

The horizons of the minds are still beclouded and the hearts are occupied with phantasmal longings.

We seem never to think of the reason of creation; never to strive to proclaim those principles which enlighten humanity.

In the sea of materialism we are sinking and of the Kingdom of God we know nothing.

We are not living in accord with those precious teachings of God.

565. Nearly sixty years ago when the horizon of the Orient was in a state of the utmost gloom, warfare existed and there was enmity between the various creeds; darkness brooded over the children of men and foul clouds of ignorance hid the sky -- at such a time His Highness Baha'u'llah arose from the horizon of Persia like unto a shining sun. He boldly proclaimed peace, writing to the kings of the earth and calling upon them to arise and <p276> assist in the hoisting of this banner. In order to bring peace out of the chaos, he established certain precepts or principles:

Investigation of Truth

566. The first principle Baha'u'llah urged was the independent investigation of truth. "Each individual," he said, "is following the faith of his ancestors who themselves are lost in the maze of tradition. Reality is steeped in dogmas and doctrines. If each investigate for himself, he will find that Reality is one; does not admit of multiplicity; is not divisible. All will find the same foundation and all will be at peace."

The Oneness of Mankind

567. The second principles of Baha'u'llah proclaims the oneness of the human race. He states that humanity constitutes the sheep of God. God is the real shepherd. When this shepherd is compassionate and kind, why should the sheep quarrel amongst themselves? Addressing all humanity, Baha'u'llah says, "Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch. All the nations, peoples and tongues are the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruits of this great tree of humanity." God created all; protects all; provides for all and is kind to all; why should you be unkind? If God had not loved humanity he would not have created it. Creation presupposes love. God is the real father; all are his children. All the creatures are equal in this one family of God save whosoever

is more kind, more compassionate -- he is nearer to God.

International Peace

568. The third principles of the religion of Baha'u'llah is in regard to international peace. There must be peace between the fatherlands; peace between the religions. In this period of evolution the world of humanity is in danger. Every war is against the good pleasure of the Lord of mankind. Man is the edifice of God. War destroys the divine edifice. Peace is the stay of life; war the cause of death. If an active, actual peace is brought about the human world will attain to the utmost serenity and composure. Wolves will be transformed into lambs; devils into <p277> angels and terrors into divine splendors in less than the twinkling of an eye.

Religion must Conform to Science and Reason

569. The fourth principle declares that religion must be in conformity to science and reason. If a religion does not agree with the postulates of science nor accord with the regulations of reason it is a bundle of superstitions; a phantasm of the brain. Science and religion are realities, and if that religion to which we adhere be a reality it must needs conform to the fundamental reality of all things.

Prejudice must be Forever Banished

570. The fifth principle of Baha'u'llah is this: that religious, racial, political and patriotic prejudice are the destroyers of human society. As long as these prejudices last the world of humanity will not attain to poise and perfection. As long as these threatening clouds are in the sky of humanity, the sun of reality cannot dawn.

Equality of Sexes

571. The sixth principle of Baha'u'llah regards the equality of men and women. The male and female of the human kingdom are equal before God. God is no respecter of gender. Whosoever practices more faith, whosoever practices more humanitarianism is nearer to God; but between the male and female there is no innate difference because they share in common all the faculties. The world of humanity has two wings, one the male; the other the female. When both wings are reinforced with the same impulse the bird will be enabled to wing its flight heavenward to the summit of progress. Woman must be given the same opportunities as man for perfecting herself in the attainments of learning, science and arts. God has created the man and the woman equal, why should she be deprived of exercising the fullest opportunities afforded by life? Why should we ever raise the question of superiority and inferiority? In the animal kingdom the male and female enjoy suffrage and in the vegetable kingdom the plants all enjoy equal suffrage. In the human kingdom, which claims to <p278> be the realm of brotherhood and solidarity, why should we raise this question?

The Social Plan

572. The seventh teaching suggests a plan whereby all the individual members

may enjoy the utmost comfort and welfare. The degrees of society must be preserved. The farmer will continue to till the soil, the artist pursue his art, the banker to finance the nation. An army has need of its general, captain, and private soldiers. The degrees varying with the pursuits are essential. But in this Baha'i plan there is no class hatred. Each is to be protected and each individual member of the body politic is to live in the greatest comfort and happiness. Work is to be provided for all and there will be no needy ones seen in the streets.

The Parliament of Man

573. The eighth principle declares that there must needs be established the parliament of man or court of last appeals for international questions. The members of this arbitral court of justice will be representatives of all the nations. In each nation the members must be ratified by the government and the king or ruler, and this international parliament will be under the protection of the world of humanity. In it all international difficulties will be settled.

Universal Education

574. The ninth admonition is in regard to education. All the children must be educated so that there will not remain one single individual without an education. In cases of inability on the part of the parents through sickness, death, etc., the state must educate the child. In addition to this widespread education, each child must be taught a profession or trade so that each individual member of the body politic will be enabled to earn his own living and at the same time serve the community. Work done in the spirit of service is worship. From this universal system of education misunderstandings will be expelled from amongst the children of men. <p279>

Universal Language

575. The tenth principles is the establishment of a universal language so that we shall not have to acquire so many languages in the future. In the schools they will study two, the mother tongue and the international auxiliary language. The use of an international auxiliary language will become a great means of dispelling the differences between nations.

576. There are many other teachings. I have given you but a few. Praise be to God! that day by day we are advancing and every day we see some new blessing descending. Let all of us render thanksgiving to our generous Lord that He may bless our eyes with sight and give unto our hearts understanding. May we become resuscitated with the breath of the Holy Spirit. May we be enabled to leave behind the world of matter in beholding the bounties of God. The divine table is spread, the heavenly illumination is all-encircling; eternal life is provided for all; divine food is prepared for all! Therefore let us practice the divine essence of love and love each other from our very hearts and souls so that the East and West shall embrace each other and realize that all are the sheep of God. God is the good shepherd -- then shall we gather under the tabernacle of His mercy!

Clifton, England
January 16, 1913.

THE COVENANT

577. In the world of existence there are various bonds which unite the hearts, but none of these bonds is efficient. For instance, the first and foremost bond is the family bond, but this bond is not effective, for how often it happens that in some families divergence and difference obtains. A patriotic bond may be the means of amity and fellowship; but the oneness of nativity will not suffice, for if we examine history we shall find that the inhabitants of the same fatherland have often waged war against each other. In civil strife how often they have shed each others' blood; how often they have pillaged each others' property! Hence, it becomes evident that oneness of nativity is not sufficient. Another means of amity is the racial oneness. How often we have seen that men of the same race have engaged in the severest strife. They have spilled each other's blood; they have laid their country <p280> waste -- which proves that the oneness of race is not oneness in reality. Among the bonds of unity is the political bond. How often we find that certain governments have been politically bound together, amongst them obtaining a political intercourse and oneness which afterwards was subjected to change and these governments arose against each other on the field of battle. Thus the oneness of politics is not sufficient.

That which is the cause of perfect unity and amity in the world of existence is the oneness of Reality. If Reality enters the arena, the fundamental reality can conserve the states, and that Reality -- the oneness of humanity -- is a oneness which can only come into being through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, for the efficacy of the Holy Spirit is like unto the spirit in the body; it dispells all differences and ushers all beneath the same solidarity and unity. Regard how numerous are the parts and members of the human organism, but the oneness of the spirit animating it keeps its various parts and elements together in perfect co-ordination and solidarity. It brings such a unity into the organism that were each member to be subjected to any injury or were it to become diseased, all the other members would sympathetically suffer, due to the existence of their perfect unity. Hence, it becomes evident that the oneness of Reality -- perfect amity amongst mankind -- cannot be accomplished save through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the world of humanity is likened to the body and the Holy Spirit is likened to the animating power of the body; just as the human spirit is the cause of the cohesion of the various parts of the human organism, likewise the Holy Spirit is the cause of the unity and amity of all mankind.

Hence we must strive in order that the power of the Holy Spirit may become effective throughout all humanity, in order that it may confer a new life upon the body politic, that all of the body politic may be ushered beneath the shelter of the same Word.

Then the world of humanity shall become the angelic world, the ethereal

darkness shall pass away and celestial illumination shall take its place; the defects of the human world shall be erased and the Divine virtues shall become resplendent; and this is unobtainable save through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hence, the greatest need of the world of humanity today is to receive the efficacy of the Holy Spirit.

Until the Holy Spirit becomes effective, interpenetrating the hearts and spirits, and until perfect, <p281> reasonable faith shall obtain in the minds of men, it is impossible for the social body to be inspired with security and confidence.

Nay, on the contrary, day by day enmity and strife shall increase among men and the differences and divergences of the nations shall augment; day by day additions to armies and navies of the world shall be made, and great is the fear of the great pandemic war, the war unparalleled in history; for armaments which heretofore have been so limited are now becoming amplified on a grand scale.

It is becoming severe, drawing nigh unto the degree that men shall war upon the seas, war upon the plains, nay, rather, shall war in the very atmosphere; and such conditions of warfare never obtained in bygone days.

The dangers of war grow equally with the growth of armaments.

578. Therefore we must endeavor that the Holy Spirit shall peacefully influence the minds and hearts; that the bounties of God shall surround; that all the Divine effulgences shall become successive, in order that human souls may advance, minds expand in liberalism, souls become more holy and the world of humanity be rid of this great danger.

For this, His Holiness Baha'u'llah endured all the hardships, ordeals and vicissitudes of life, sacrificing His very being, sacrificing His comfort, forfeiting His possessions, forfeiting His estates, forfeiting His honor -- all that pertains to human existence -- not for one year, nay, rather for fifty years.

For fifty years He bore hardships, endured ordeals; was cast into prison; was banished from His home; was subjected to severities and four times exiled.

He was first exiled from Persia to Baghdad; then from Baghdad to Constantinople; thereafter from Constantinople to Roumelia, and from Roumelia was He exiled to the Great Prison, Acca, the great fortress of Acca, where He passed the remainder of His life.

Every day a new exposure to danger and every day a new ordeal, until in the dungeon He winged His way to the very Heaven: that is to say, returned unto His Lord.

The purpose of enduring all these ordeals and difficulties was no other than the illumination of the human world, that this earthly world might become

heavenly; that the realm of the Kingdom might become a reality; that the individual members of humanity might advance, minds progress, the efficacy of the Holy Spirit become greater in penetration and thereby the happiness of the human world be assured.

For all He desired composure and ease, and He exercised love and kindness <p282> towards all nations regardless of distinction.

And He addressed humanity, saying: "O ye humankind! verily ye are all the leaves of one tree; ye are all the fruits of one tree; ye are all one.

Hence associate with each other in amity; love one another; abandon the prejudices of race; forget forever this gloomy darkness of ignorance, for the Century of Light, the Sun of Reality, hath appeared.

Now is the time for affiliation and now is the period for unification.

For six thousand years ye have been contending and warring.

It is sufficient!

Now is the time for unity.

Ye should abandon selfish purposes, and know ye for a certainty that all mankind are the servants of one God and all are to be mutually bound."

579.

And inasmuch as in the past there have been caused great differences and divergences, and denominations have been created, every man with a new idea attributing it to God, therefore He desired that among Baha'is no difference should occur.

Wherefore with His pen He wrote the Book of His Covenant, addressing all Baha'is and all His relations, saying: "Verily, I have appointed a person who is the Center of My Covenant.

All must obey Him; all must turn to him; he is the expounder of My Book and he is informed of My purposes.

All must turn to him.

Whatsoever he says is true, for verily, he knoweth the texts of My Book.

Other than he, none knoweth the Book."

And this He said because among the Baha'is there is not to take place any difference; all are to be unified and agreed.

Also He said in His prayer: "O God, whosoever violateth My Covenant, humiliate him.

Verily, whosoever violateth My Covenant, him, O God, efface and destroy."

In all His Tablets, among which is the Tablet of the Branch, He has elucidated the various qualities or characteristics of that (appointed) person; He has

expounded the potency and power of that person, so that no one with a new desire shall say, "I understand this from the writings of Baha'u'llah," for He appointed the Center or Expounder of the Book.

He said: "Verily, he is the appointed one; other than he, none is," so that no sects or prejudices might be formed, and lest every man with a new thought arise and create a party.

It is as though a king should appoint a governor general.

Whosoever obeys that governor general has obeyed the king.

Whosoever has denied the governor general has denied the king.

Thus whosoever obeys the Center of the Covenant appointed by Baha'u'llah, has obeyed Baha'u'llah; and whosoever disobeys him has disobeyed Baha'u'llah. <p283>

The matter does not concern the personality of the Center of the Covenant, precisely as in the case of the governor general of a king: it is the king who is obeyed in obeying the governor general; it is the king who is disobeyed in disobeying the governor general.

580. Therefore, you must read the Tablets of Baha'u'llah. You must read the Tablet of the Branch. You must regard that which He has clearly stated. Beware! beware! lest any one declare his own ideas or create a party round about himself. Beware! beware! you should not heed such a person, according to the explicit Covenant of Baha'u'llah. His Holiness Baha'u'llah shuns such souls, and for the conservation of the Teachings of Baha'u'llah I have expounded the matter for you, so that you may be informed lest any souls shall deceive you, lest any souls shall cause suspicion among you. You must love all people, though if any soul casts you into doubt, you must know that Baha'u'llah is quit of him. Any one who works for unity, who works for amity, is a servant of Baha'u'llah and Baha'u'llah is his Help and his Assistance. ...

5338 Kenmore Avenue, Chicago
September 16, 1912.

ABDUL BAHA

581. The Holy, Divine Manifestations are unique and peerless. They are the archetypes of celestial and spiritual virtues in their own age and cycle. They stand on the summit of the Mount of Vision and they foreshadow the perfections of evolving humanity.

For example: during the dispensation of His Holiness Moses -- peace be upon Him! -- there was not a single human soul similar or like unto Him. He surpassed all the Holy Souls who came after Him, even the hosts of the prophets of Israel. In a similar manner all the people who lived during the cycle of His Holiness Christ -- may my life be a sacrifice to Him! -- were under His spiritual authority. They had no will of their own. He was the Sun and others were the lamps. He was unique and peerless, the center and the focal point of

the mighty forces. Every one else was under His shadow. He was the Orb and the others were the stars. Every one caught the rays of Light from Him, and was <p284> enkindled through his Fire. In a like manner was the epoch of His Holiness the Bab -- may the life of aught else be a ransom to Him! -- and He was matchless and without peer. All the rivers received their strength from that great sea.

582. Finally during the cycle of the Blessed Perfection -- may my life be a sacrifice to His believers! -- all are beneath His shadow. He is the unique and peerless One until the next Manifestation. It is not definite, however, that this will be 1000 years; it may be 2000 or 10,000 or 20,000 years; but it is definite that for the coming 1000 years that shall appear no Manifestation -- for 1000 years there shall arise no Sun. All the appearances will be beneath the shadow of the Most Great Appearance: they will be as stars of guidance. All of them shall gather around this Fountain of Life; all of them will become illumined with the rays of this Sun; all of them will receive a share and a portion from this great Sea; all of them will become vivified with this soul-imparting breeze; all will be under the downpour of this rain. The aim is this: His Holiness the Bab gave the glad tidings concerning the appearance of the Manifestation of God, and His Holiness, the Blessed Perfection, was the Promised One of all the nations and religions. The Bab was the Morning Star heralding the glorious Dawn of the Sun of Reality. Now all of us are under Its shadow and receive the refulgent bestowals from It.

583. I am Abdul Baha, and no more. I am not pleased with whosoever praises me with any other title. I am the Servant at the Threshold of the Blessed Perfection, and I hope that this Servitude of mine will become acceptable. Whosoever mentions any other name save this will not please me at all. Abdul Baha, and no more. No person must praise me except by this name: "Abdul Baha."

584. The Blessed Perfection and the Bab are unique and peerless in this Dispensation and until the next Manifestation. The belief, the opinion and the thoughts of all believers must revolve around this common Center. This oneness of belief must become fully realized so that in the future they may arise no differences. His Holiness the Bab was the Morn of Guidance. The Blessed Perfection was the Desired One of all the religions and nations, and all of us are under the Blessed Shadow, non-existent and evanescent. All of us are the servants of this Holy Threshold. <p285>

All of us are the thralls, humble and lowly. All of us receive the Light from that Sun of Reality. There is no other mention, no other quality, no other appellation for us save this. I am Abdul Baha. The believers must be satisfied with this explanation so that I may be pleased with them. All of the friends must be united on this matter. Praise be to God! that up to this time, through the favor and providence of the Blessed Perfection, no other title or word save Abdul Baha has appeared either from my tongue or pen. I hope that all the believers will walk in my footsteps so that I may become satisfied with all of them. Our highest aspiration must be this: that we may become confirmed to render some slight service in the Path of God. There is no greater station than

this.

585. After the Departure of the Blessed Perfection and until the Appearance of the next Manifestation there is no other station save the Station of Servitude, pure and absolute. Not a servitude liable to interpretation; but an unconditional and unqualified servitude. This is the real fact. Whosoever expresses any other interpretation, I will not be pleased with you. This is my advice to you. This is my counsel to you. This is my desire. This is my good pleasure. This is my last request from all the believers of God! The balsam of my wound is servitude at the Holy Threshold. My Sadrat-el-Montaha is servitude at the Holy Threshold! My highest destination is servitude at the Holy Threshold! My supreme Paradise is servitude at the Holy Threshold! The most shining Crown is servitude at the Holy Threshold!

What diadem is more glorious than servitude at the Holy Threshold?

I hope that all of us will become assisted in this servitude. I hope each one of us will become confirmed in absolute humility and meekness at the Holy Threshold. This is the Delectable Paradise of the righteous ones! This is the zenith of the hope of the favored ones!

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB, Diary Notes
January 17, 1914.

HISTORY OF THE CAUSE

586. Tonight I wish to tell you something of the history of the Baha'i Revelation. <p286>

The Blessed Perfection Baha'u'llah belonged to the royal family of Persia. From earliest childhood he was distinguished among his relatives and friends. They said, "This child has extraordinary power." In wisdom, intelligence and as a source of new knowledge he was advanced beyond his age and superior to his surroundings. All who knew him were astonished at his precocity. It was usual for them to say, "Such a child will not live" for it is commonly believed that precocious children do not reach maturity. During the period of youth the Blessed Perfection did not enter school. He was not willing to be taught. This fact is well established among the Persians of Tihran. Nevertheless he was capable of solving difficult problems of all who came to him. In whatever meeting, scientific assembly or theological discussion he was found, he became the authority of explanation upon intricate and abstruse questions presented.

Until his father passed away Baha'u'llah did not seek position or political station notwithstanding his connection with the government. This occasioned surprise and comment. It was frequently said "How is it that a young man of such keen intelligence and subtle perception does not seek lucrative appointments? As a matter of fact every position is open to him." This is an historical statement fully attested by the people of Persia.

He was most generous, giving abundantly to the poor. None who came to him were turned away. The doors of his house were open to all. He always had many

guests. This unbounded generosity was conducive to greater astonishment from the fact that he sought neither position nor prominence. In commenting upon this his friends said he would become impoverished, for his expenses were many and his wealth becoming more and more limited. "Why is he not thinking of his own affairs?" they inquired of each other; but some who were wise declared "This personage is connected with another world; he has something sublime within him that is not evident now; the day is coming when it will be manifested." In truth the Blessed perfection was a refuge for every weak one, a shelter for every fearing one, kind to every indigent one, lenient and loving to all creatures.

587.

He became well-known in regard to these qualities before His Holiness the Bab appeared.

Then Baha'u'llah declared the Bab's mission to be true and promulgated his teachings.

The Bab announced that the greater manifestation would take place after <p287> him and called the promise one "Him whom God would manifest," saying that nine years later the reality of his own mission would become apparent.

In his writing he stated that in the ninth year his expected one would be known; in the ninth year they would attain to all glory and felicity; in the ninth year they would advance rapidly.

Between Baha'u'llah and the Bab there was communication privately.

The Bab wrote a letter containing three hundred and sixty derivatives of the root "Baha."

The Bab was martyred in Tabriz, and Baha'u'llah, exiled into Iraq-Arabi in 1852, announced himself in Baghdad.

For the Persian government had decided that as long as he remained in Persia the peace of the country would be disturbed; therefore he was exiled in the expectation that Persia would become quiet.

His banishment, however, produced the opposite effect.

New tumult arose and the mention of his greatness and influence spread everywhere throughout the country.

The proclamation of his manifestation and mission was made in Baghdad.

He called his friends together there and spoke to them of God.

Afterward he left the city and went alone into the mountains of Kurdistan where he made his abode in caves and grottoes.

A part of this time he lived in the city of Sulimaniyye.

Two years passed during which neither his friends nor family knew just where he was.

588. Although solitary, secluded and unknown in his retirement, the report spread throughout Kurdistan that this was a most remarkable and learned personage gifted with a wonderful power of attraction. In a short time Kurdistan was magnetized with his love. During this period Baha'u'llah lived in poverty. His garments were those of the poor and needy. His food was that of the indigent and lowly. An atmosphere of majesty haloed him as the sun at midday. Everywhere he was greatly revered and beloved.

After two year he returned to Baghdad. Friends he had known in Sulimaniyye came to visit him. They found him in his accustomed environment of ease and affluence and were astonished at the appointments of one who had lived in seclusion under such frugal conditions in Kurdistan.

589. The Persian government believed the banishment of the Blessed Perfection from Persia would be the extermination of his cause in that country. These rulers now realized that it spread more rapidly. His prestige increased, his teachings became more <p288> widely circulated. The chiefs of Persia then used their influence to have Baha'u'llah exiled from Baghdad. He was summoned to Constantinople by the Turkish authorities. While in Constantinople he ignored every restriction, especially the hostility of ministers of state and clergy. The official representatives of Persia again brought their influence to bear upon the Turkish authorities and succeeded in having Baha'u'llah banished from Constantinople to Adrianople, the object being to keep him as far away as possible from Persia and render his communication with that country more difficult. Nevertheless the cause still spread and strengthened.

590. Finally they consulted together and said, "We have banished Baha'u'llah from place to place but each time he is exiled his cause is more widely extended, his proclamation increases in power and day by day his lamp is becoming brighter. This is due to the fact that we have exiled him to large cities and populous centers. Therefore we will send him to a penal colony as a prisoner so that all may know he is the associate of murderers, robbers and criminals; in a short time he and his followers will perish." The Sultan of Turkey than banished him to the prison of Akka in Syria.

591. When Baha'u'llah arrived at Akka, through the power of God he was able to hoist his banner. His light at first had been a star; now it became a mighty sun and the illumination of his cause expanded from the east to the west. Inside prison walls he wrote epistles to all the kings and rulers of nations summoning them to arbitration and Universal Peace. Some of the kings received his words with disdain and contempt. One of these was the Sultan of the Ottoman kingdom. Napoleon III of France did not reply. A second epistle was addressed to him. It stated "I have written you an epistle before this, summoning you to the cause of God but you are of the heedless. You have proclaimed that you were the defender of the oppressed; now it hath become evident that you are not. Nor are you kind to your own suffering and oppressed people. Your actions are contrary to your own interests and your kingly pride must fall. Because of your arrogance God shortly will destroy your sovereignty. France will flee away from you and you will be overwhelmed by a great conquest. There will lamentation and

mourning, women bemoaning the loss of their sons." This arraignment of Napoleon III was published and spread. <p289>

Read it and consider: One prisoner, single and solitary, without assistant or defender, a foreigner and stranger imprisoned in the fortress of Akka writing such letters to the Emperor of France and Sultan of Turkey. Reflect upon this, how Baha'u'llah upraised the standard of his cause in prison. Refer to history. It is without parallel. No such thing has happened before that time nor since; a prisoner and an exile advancing his cause and spreading his teachings broadcast so that eventually he became powerful enough to conquer the very King who banished him.

592. His cause spread more and more. The Blessed Perfection was a prisoner twenty-five years. During all this time he was subjected to the indignities and revilement of the people. He was persecuted, mocked and put in chains. In Persia his properties were pillaged and his possessions confiscated. First, banishment from Persia to Baghdad; then to Constantinople; then to Adrianople; finally from Roumelia to the prison fortress of Akka.

During his lifetime he was intensely active. His energy was unlimited. Scarcely one night passed in restful sleep. He bore these ordeals, suffered these calamities and difficulties in order that a manifestation of selflessness and service might become apparent in the world of humanity; that the "Most Great Peace" should become a reality; that human souls might appear as the angels of heaven; that heavenly miracles would be wrought among men; that human faith should be strengthened and perfected; that the precious, priceless bestowal of God -- the human mind -- might be developed to its fullest capacity in the temple of the body; and man become the reflection and likeness of God, even as it hath been revealed in the Bible: "We shall create man in our own image."

593. Briefly; the Blessed Perfection bore all these ordeals and calamities in order that our hearts might become enkindled and radiant, our spirits be glorified, our faults become virtues, our ignorance transformed into knowledge; in order that we might attain the real fruits of humanity and acquire heavenly graces; although pilgrims upon earth we might travel the road of the heavenly kingdom; although needy and poor we might receive the treasures of life eternal. For this has he borne these difficulties and sorrows.

Trust all to God. The lights of God are resplendent. The blessed Epistles are spreading. The blessed teachings are promulgated throughout the East and the West. Soon you will see that the <p290> heavenly Words have established the oneness of the world of humanity. The banner of the "Most Great Peace" has been unfurled and the "great community" is appearing.

273 West 90th Street,
New York City
April 18, 1912.

SCIENTIFIC PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

594. Today someone asked a question regarding the existence of God. What are the proofs through which one can establish the existence of God?

People are divided into two sections, one which is satisfied with the knowledge of the attributes of divinity, and the other which strives to establish the existence of divinity, and be informed of the fundamental principles of divine philosophy.

Therefore today I will speak to you of the proofs which establish scientifically the existence of God.

595. I will not quote to you the scriptural proofs from the Old and the New Testament or the Qur'an, for you are more or less familiar with those ideas. Consequently I will deal with this subject from an intellectual standpoint. As it is an abstruse subject I request you to give your utmost attention.

596. When we look upon all forms of phenomena we observe that they are the results of composition. For example, certain single atoms are brought together through the inherent law of elective affinity existing between these various particles, the result of which is the human being. A number of primordial atoms have gone into the make-up of a plant, the result of which is the flower.

Again looking into the mineral kingdom we observe that this law of cohesion is working in the same manner in that kingdom, for we see that many atoms go into the composition of a piece of stone which through purification may reach to the state of a mirror.

In short, the existence of life depends upon the composition and decomposition of phenomena. When the particles of a given composition are disintegrated this may be called non-existence, but the original simple atoms will go back to their primary elements and are ever existent.

For instance, the body of man being the resultant factor of the composition of these atoms, when this body becomes the subject <p291> of decomposition we call that death, but those atoms of which the body of man was composed, being simple and primordial, are indestructible. Consequently it is proved that the existence of phenomena depends upon composition and their mortality upon decomposition.

This is a scientific principle; science approves of it, because it is not a matter of belief. There is a great difference between theories upheld by belief, and facts which are substantiated by science.

Beliefs are the susceptibilities of conscience, but scientific facts are the deductions of reason and inexorable logic.

Therefore it is logically proven that the existence of phenomena depends upon composition, and their destruction upon disintegration.

Now going back to our subject and the facts upheld by materialists. They state that inasmuch as it is proven and upheld by science that the life of phenomena depends upon composition and their destruction upon disintegration, then where

comes in the need or necessity of a Creator -- the self-subsistent Lord?

For if we see with our own eyes that these infinite beings go through myriads of compositions and in every composition appearing under a certain form showing certain characteristics virtues, then we are independent of any divine maker.

597. This is the argument of the materialists. On the other hand those who are informed of divine philosophy answer in the following terms:

Composition is of three kinds.

1. Accidental composition.

2. Involuntary composition.

3. Voluntary composition.

There is no fourth kind of composition. Composition is restricted to these three categories.

If we say that composition is accidental, this is philosophically a false theory, because then we have to believe in an effect without a cause, and philosophically no effect is conceivable without a cause. We cannot think of an effect without some primal cause, and composition being an effect, there must naturally be a cause behind it.

As to the second composition i.e., the voluntary composition. Involuntary composition means that each element has within it as <p292> an inherent function this power of composition. For example, certain elements have flowed towards each other, and as an inherent necessity of their being they are composed. That is, it is the imminent need of these elements to enter into composition.

For example, the inherent quality of fire is burning or heat. Heat is an original property of fire.

Humidity is the inherent nature of water. You cannot conceive of H2O, which is the chemical form of water, without having humidity connected, for that is its inherent quality, inseparable and indivisible.

Now as long as it is the inherent necessity of these elements to be composed, there should not be any decomposition. While we observe that after each composite organism, there is a process of decomposition we learn that the composition of the organisms of life is neither accidental nor involuntary. Then what have we as a form of composition? It is the third, that is the voluntary composition. And that means that the infinite forms of organisms are composed through a superior will, the eternal will, the will of the living and self-subsistent Lord.

This is a rational proof, that the Will of the Creator is effected through the process of composition.

Ponder over this carefully. When you comprehend the significance of this subject you will then be able to convey it to others. The more you think over

this the greater will be your comprehension.

Thank God that He has given you such a power through which you can comprehend these divine mysteries. Reflect deeply, ponder carefully, think minutely, and then the doors of knowledge shall be opened unto you.

Paris, France
February 9, 1913.

THE NEED OF THE PERFECT MASTER

598. Those who are uninformed of the world of reality, who do not comprehend the existent beings, who do not perceive the realities of things, who do not discover the real mysteries of the existent objects, and who have but a superficial grasp of things -- such persons are but embodiments of pure ignorance. They believe only in that which they have learned from their fathers and <p293> ancestors. They of themselves have no hearing, no sight, no reason, no intellect; they rely upon tradition. They follow after the thoughts of their father and forebears. Such persons imagine that the dominion of God is an accidental dominion or kingdom.

For instance, they imagine that this world of existence was created but six or seven thousand years ago -- as though God did not reign before this period of seven thousand years, had no creation before this, had no world before this. They think that Divinity is accidental, for to them Divinity is dependent upon existent things, while, as a matter of fact, as long as there has been a God, He has had a creation. As long as there has been light, there have been recipients of that light, for the light does not have a manifestation unless there are those who perceive and appreciate it. The world of divinity presupposes creation, presupposes recipients of bounty, presupposes the existence of worlds.

No Divinity can be conceived as separate from creation, for otherwise it would be like imagining an empire without a people. A king must needs have a kingdom, must needs have an army, must needs have subjects. Is it possible to be a king and have no country, no army, no subjects? This is an absurdity. Were we to say that there was a time when there was no country, no army, and no subjects, how then could there be a king, a ruler? For a king must needs have a country, an army and subjects.

Consequently, just as the reality of Divinity has no beginning, -- that is, God has ever been the Creator, God has ever been the Provider, God has ever been a Quickener, God has been a Bestower -- so there never has been a time when the attributes of God have not had expression.

The sun is the sun because of its rays, because of its heat.

Were we to conceive of there ever having been a time when there was a sun and yet it had no heat, no light -- that would imply and prove that there had been no sun at all, and that it became the sun afterward.

So, likewise, were we to say that there was a time when God had no creation, had no created beings, had no recipients of His bounties, that His names and attributes had not been manifest -- this would mean a thorough denial of the Divinity, for it would mean that Divinity is accidental.

To put it still more clearly, if we think that fifty thousand years ago -- or one hundred thousand years ago -- there was no creation, that there were no worlds, no human beings, no animals -- this thought of ours would mean that previous to fifty thousand <p294> years ago there was no Divinity.

For were we to say that there was a time when there was a king but there were no subjects, no army, no country for him to rule over, it would be assuming that there was a time when there was no king, and that the king is accidental.

So just as the reality of Divinity is without a beginning, so is creation without a beginning.

This is as clear as the sun.

When we contemplate this machinery of power and perceive this infinite space and its numerous worlds, then it will easily become clear to us that the lifetime of this great creation is more than six thousand years -- nay, it is very ancient.

599. But we read in Genesis, in the Old Testament, that the lifetime of creation is but six thousand years. Now this has a meaning. This is not to be taken literally. For instance, it is said in the Old Testament, in the first day such and such a thing was created, -- in the first day! Then the narrative shows that the sun was not year created! How could we conceive a day if there were no sun created? For the day depends upon the existence of the sun. While no creation of the sun was yet made, how then was the first day realized? Therefore, these things have significances other than literal.

600. To be brief: my purpose is to say that the kingdom of God, the divine sovereignty, is an ancient sovereignty. It is not an accidental sovereignty, and that sovereignty presupposes the presence of subjects, of an army, of a country; for otherwise, the state of dominion, authority and kingdom cannot be conceived of. So, were one to imagine that the Creator is accidental, while the divine bounty is ever flowing, and the rays of the Sun of Truth are continuously shining. No cessation is possible to the Divine Bounty, just as no cessation is possible to the rays of the sun. This is clear and obvious.

Thus there have been many holy Manifestations of God. One thousand years ago, two hundred thousand years ago, one million years ago, the bounty of God was flowing, the radiance of God was shining, the dominion of God was reigning.

601. Why do these holy Manifestations of God become manifest? What is the wisdom of their coming? What is the result obtained through them? It is clear that human personality is endowed with two aspects. One is the aspect of its being the image of God, and the other is the satanic aspect; and the human <p295> reality stands between these two aspects -- the divine and the satanic.

It is manifest that beyond this body man is endowed with another reality, which reality is in the world of exemplars, and which is the heavenly body of man. At the time of speech man says: "I said," "I saw." Who is this "I"? It is obvious that this "I" is different from this body. It is clear that when man is thinking, it is as though he were consulting with some other person. Whom is he consulting with? It is evident that it is another reality or one aside from this body with whom he enters into consultation, when he thinks of himself, saying, "Shall I do this work or not?" "What shall be the fruit of my doing this?" Or when he asks the other reality, "What is the harm of this work if I do it?" And then that reality is man communicates to him its opinion concerning the point at issue. Therefore that reality in man is obviously and clearly other than this body, with which man enters into consultation and whose opinion man seeks.

Many a time man makes his mind up positively about a thing; for instance, he makes up his mind and determines to undertake a journey. Then, he begins to think, that is, he consults his inner reality, and finally concludes that he will give up his journey. Why is it? How is it he gave up his original purpose? Thus it is evident that there is a reality in him and he consults that reality, and that reality expresses to him the harm which such a journey would cause. Therefore the man minds that reality and gives up the plan of the journey.

602. Furthermore, in the world of dreams man sees things. He travels in the East, he travels in the West, although his body is stationary. His body is here, yet it is that reality in him which makes the journey to the West while the body sleeps. There is no doubt that a reality is there other than the outward, physical reality. For instance, a person is dead, is buried in the ground. We see him in the world of dreams, we speak with him. While that person's body is interred in the ground, who then is the person whom you see in your dreams, talk to, and who also speaks to you? Therefore, this again proves that there is another reality, different from this physical one which dies and is buried. Thus it is evident that in man there is a reality other than this physical one which is not his body. For instance, the body becomes weak, but that reality is in its normal state of existence. This body becomes strengthened, but that reality in man <p296> is in its normal state, unchangeable. For instance, the body of man may lose one arm, but the reality of man, which is not visible, loses nothing and is in its own normal state. This body goes to sleep, becomes as one dead, but that reality in that body which is asleep is moving about, is comprehending things, is expressing them, is discovering the realities of things.

Consequently, it is known that in man there is a reality other than this material one which is called body, and that reality which is other than this physical one is called the heavenly body of man; and we call that body the ethereal form which corresponds to this body. It is that reality which discovers the inner meaning of things; otherwise, this body of man does not discover anything. That reality grasps the mysteries of existence. It discovers scientific facts. It discovers technical points. It discovers electricity,

telegraphy, the telephone, and so on, discovering all the arts -- and yet the reality which makes all these discoveries is other than this body, for, were it this body, then the animal would likewise be able to make these scientific and wonderful discoveries, for the animal shares with man all physical limitation and physical powers. What then is that power which discovers the realities of things which is not to be found in the animal? There is no doubt that it is the inner reality of man; and that reality comprehends all things, throws light upon the inner mysteries of existence, discovers the Kingdom, grasps the mysteries of God, and distinguishes man from the brute. That reality penetrates the inner core of beings; and it is evident that man is endowed with that reality and there is no doubt therein.

603. This human reality stands between two grades, between the world of the animal and the world of Divinity. Were the animal in man to become predominant, man would become even lower than the brute. Were the heavenly powers in man to become predominant, man would become the most superior being in the world of existence. For instance, consider in man there is rancor, in man there is struggle for existence; in the nature of man there is propensity for warfare; innate in man there is love of self; in him there is jealousy, and so on with all the other imperfections and thus, in a word, all the imperfections found in the animal are to be found in man. For instance, in the animal there is ferocity; there is also ferocity in man. In the animal there is what is called hypocrisy or slyness, like unto that in the fox; and in the <p297> animal there is greed -- and there is ignorance. So there are all these in man. In the animal there are injustice and tyranny; so likewise are they in man. The reality of man, therefore, is clad, you might say, in its outer form in the garment of the animal, in the garment of the world of nature, of the world of darkness; that is the world of imperfection, that is the world of infinite baseness.

604. On the other hand, we find that there is justice in man,

there is sincerity in man, faithfulness, knowledge, wisdom, light, and that there is mercy and pity in man; that there is in him intellect, comprehension, the power to grasp the reality of things, the ability to discover the reality of existence. All these great perfections are to be found in man. Consequently, we say that man is a reality which stands between light and darkness, that he has three aspects, three phases; one is the human aspect, one is the divine, heavenly aspect, and one is the natural, or animal aspect. The animal or natural aspect is darkness. The heavenly aspect is light in light.

605.

Now to return to the point:

The holy Manifestations of God come into the world in order to effect the disappearance of the physical, the animal, dark aspect of man, so that the darkness in him may be dispelled, his imperfections be eradicated, his spiritual, heavenly phase may become manifest, his God-like aspect may become paramount and his perfections may become visible; his innate great power may

become known, and that all the virtues of the world of humanity potential within him may come to life.

Thus these holy Manifestations of God are the educators and trainers of the world of existence and they are the teachers of the world of humanity.

These holy Manifestations of God liberate men from the world of darkness and nature.

They deliver him from gloom, from error, from hideousness, from ignorance, from imperfections, and likewise from all the evil qualities.

Then they cause him to be clad in the garment of perfection and high virtues.

Men are ignorant; the Manifestations of God make them wise.

They are animalistic; the Manifestations make them human.

They are ferocious; the Manifestations cause them to become kingdoms of light.

They are unjust; the Manifestations cause them to be just.

Man is selfish; they cause him to be severed from self and desire.

Men are haughty; the Manifestations cause them to become meek and amiable.

They are earthly; the Manifestations <p298> cause them to become heavenly.

They are material; they cause them to become divine.

They are immature children; the Manifestations cause them to become mature.

Men are poor; they cause them to become wealthy.

They are base; they cause them to become noble.

Men are mean; and they cause them to become lofty.

To be brief: these holy Manifestations liberate the world of humanity from the imperfections which beset it and cause men to appear in the garment of heavenly perfections. Were it not for the coming of these holy Manifestations of God, all men would be found on the plane of the animal. They would be similar to ignorant individuals who have never seen a school, who have never had a trainer. For such individuals will undoubtedly remain ignorant.

606. Leave these mountains, these hills, to the world of nature and they will remain a jungle, and you will not fine any fruitful tree among them. But a true gardener changes this forest and jungle into a garden, training its trees into fruitful ones, and causing numerous kinds of flowers and myrtles to grow therein. In the same way these holy Manifestations of God are the ideal gardeners. The world of existence is but a jungle of confusion. The state of nature is confusion such as that of a jungle, producing fruitless, useless trees. As the holy Manifestations of God are the ideal gardeners, they, therefore, train these human trees and cause them to become fruitful and bestow upon them freshness and verdancy in order that they may grow day by day and produce every kind of pure fruit, and thus become the cause of adorning the

world of being and continue flourishing and in the utmost purity.

Consequently, we cannot say that the divine bounty has ceased, that the glory of the Divinity is exhausted, or the Sun of Truth has sunk down into eternal sunset -- in that sunset which is not followed by a dawn, into that darkness which is not followed by light, into that death which is not followed by life, into that error which is not followed by truth! Is it conceivable that the Sun of Truth should sink into an eternal sunset? No, the sun was created in order that it may shed light upon the world, and train all existing things. How then can the Sun set forever? For this would mean the cessation of the divine bounty, and the divine bounty is ceaseless; it is continuous. Its Sun is ever shining; its cloud is ever producing rain; its breezes are ever blowing; its bounties are all-comprehending; its gift is ever perfect. Consequently, <p299> we must always anticipate and always be hopeful and pray to God to send unto us his holy Manifestation in the most perfect might, with divine, penetrative power, with the Divine Word, so that these diving Manifestations may be distinguished above all other beings in every respect, in every phase; in the same way as the sun is distinguished above the stars.

607.

Although the stars are scintillating, yet the sun is superior to them in luminosity.

Likewise these holy, divine Manifestations are and must always be distinguished above all other beings in every attribute of glory and perfection, in order that it may be proven that the Manifestation is the true teacher, that he is the real trainer, that he is the Sun of Truth, that he is endowed with a great light, and in order that it may be proven that he is endowed with a heavenly aspect.

For, otherwise, it is not possible for us to train any one human individual, and after training him to believe that he is the holy, divine Manifestation.

The holy, divine Manifestation must be endowed with divine knowledge and not be one instructed in school learning.

He must be the educator and not the educated.

The holy Manifestations of God must be perfect and not imperfect.

They must be great and not weak and impotent.

They must be wealthy and not indigent.

In a word, the holy Manifestation of God must be in every great aspect distinguished above all else in order that he may be able to train the human body politic, in order that he may have power to eliminate the darkness, cause the advancing of the world of humanity from one plane to a higher one, be able through the penetrative power of his word to promote and spread broadcast the Universal Peace among men, bring about the unification of men and religions through a divine power, harmonize all sects and branches and convert all

nativities and regions into one nativity and fatherland.

Thus it is our hope that the bounties of God will encompass us all and the gifts of the divine will become manifest, the lights of the Sun of Truth will illumine our eyes and inspire our hearts and convey to our souls cheerful glad-tidings of God and cause our thoughts to become lofty, and our efforts to become productive of glorious results. In a word, it is my hope that we may attain to that which is the summit of human aspirations and wishes.

Theosophical Society
New York City
December 4, 1912. <p300>

THE GREAT MASTER

608. As to the coming of the Great Master. His appearance is dependent upon the realization of certain conditions. Investigate the reality, and in whomsoever those conditions are fulfilled, know ye of a certainty that He is the Great Master.

First. The Great Master will be the educator of the world of humanity.

Second. His teachings must be universal and confer illumination upon mankind.

Third. His knowledge must be innate and spontaneous, and not acquired knowledge.

Fourth. He must answer the questions of all the sages, solve all the difficult problems of humanity, and be able to withstand all the persecutions and sufferings heaped upon Him.

Fifth. He must be a joy-bringer and the herald of the Kingdom of happiness.

Sixth. His knowledge must be infinite and His wisdom all-comprehensive.

Eighth. Sorrows and tribulations must no vex Him. His courage and conviction must be godlike. Day by day He must become firmer and more zealous.

Ninth. He must be the establisher of universal civilization, the unifier of religions, the standard-bearer of universal peace and the embodiment of all the highest and noblest virtues of the world of humanity.

Wherever you find these conditions realized in a human temple, turn to Him for guidance and illumination.

Theosophical Society
Budha Pesth
April 12, 1913.

GOD AND THE UNIVERSE

609. God is Love and Peace. God it Truth. God is Omniscience. God is without beginning and without end. God is uncreated and uncreating, yet the Source, the Causeless Cause. God is pure Essence, and cannot be said to be anywhere or in

any place.

God is infinite; and as terms are finite, the nature of God cannot <p301> be expressed in terms, but as man desires to express God in some way, he calls God "Love" and "Truth," because these are the highest things he knows. Life is eternal; so man, in order to express God's infinity, calls God "Life." But these things in themselves are not God. God is the Source of all, and all things that are, are mirrors reflecting His Glory.

But while God does not create, the first principle of God, Love, is the creative principle. Love is an outpour from God, and is pure spirit. It is one aspect of the Logos, the Holy Spirit. It is the immediate cause of the laws which govern nature, the endless verities of nature which science has uncovered. In brief, it is Divine Law and a Manifestation of God. This Manifestation of God is active, creative, spiritual. It reflects the positive aspect of God.

There is another Manifestation of God which is characterized by passivity, quiescence, inactivity. In itself it is without creative power. It reflects the negative aspect of God. This Manifestation is matter.

Matter, reflecting the negative aspect of God, is self-existent, eternal, and fills all space. Spirit, flowing out from God, permeates all matter. This spirit, Love, reflecting the positive and active aspect of God, impresses its nature upon the atoms and elements. By its power they are attracted to each other under certain ordered relations, and thus, uniting and continuing to unite, give birth to worlds and systems of worlds. The same laws working under developed conditions bring into existence living beings. Spirit is the life of the form, and the form is shaped by the spirit. The evolution of life and form proceeds hand in hand. The powers of spirit are evolved by the experiences of the form, and the plasticity of the matter of the form is developed by the activity of the spirit. Working up through the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, sense-perception is reached in the animal, and the perfection of form is attained in man.

610. The forms or bodies of component parts, infinite in variety, which in the course of evolution spirit builds as the vehicles of its expression, are, because of the instability of matter, subject to dissolution. As they disappear, others are built following the same patterns, carrying on the characteristics of each.

611. Sense-perception gives rise to desire, desire to will, will to action, and action again to sense-perception. This chain ever repeats <p302> itself, and so the powers of thought, memory, reason, and the emotional capacities are evolved in spirit. These power and capacities of spirit, expressed in individual human beings, constitute human characters.

Through these successive evolutionary steps, spirit develops characters having Divine attributes. The positive, creative aspect of God is reflect in the them. Individuality is derived from expression in individual form. Self-consciousness

accompanies individualised character, and the being thus endowed has the potentiality of rising to the knowledge of God.

Characters inspired by the universal human spirit continue in lines of specific developing types, as did species in the vegetable and animal kingdoms.

612. Similar types recur again and again, but without a continuing individual life from one human being to another. This recurrence may be likened to that of the seasons. Spring, summer, autumn and winter return in succession, each season the counterpart of the like season in the previous year -- the same yet not the same. So flower and fruits come this year from like seed or from the same bush or tree as those of last year, each in the line of succession of its kind, the same in essence, but differing in substance.

613. In the latter case the power which causes the seed to rot in the ground and a new growth to spring from it, or in the bush or tree to put forth again leaves and fruit, is the power of the Spirit, the active aspect of God as Life.

614. So in the case of man. Life is eternal, but the individual human consciousness is not inherently so. It can only gain immortality by uniting with the pure Divine Essence. This union man may reach by a pure life and love for God and his fellow men.

615. When in the course of evolution the stage of thought and reason has been reached, the human mind acts as a mirror reflecting the glory of God.

The face of nature is illumined, the grass, the stones, the hills and valleys shine; but they shine not of themselves, but because they reflect the rays of the sun. It is the sun which shines. In the same way, our minds reflect God. Those who live thinking good thoughts, doing good deeds, and with love in their hearts -- the minds of these become ever clearer, reflecting more and more perfectly the love of God, while the minds of those who live in ignorance <p303> and desire are clouded and obscured, and give forth His light but meagrely.

A stone reflects but slightly the rays of the sun; but if a mirror be held up, though it be small, the whole of the sun will be reflected in it, because the mirror is clear and bright. Just so it is with the minds of men and the Sun of Reality. The great Masters and Teachers so purified their minds by the love of God and of men that they became like polished mirrors, reflecting faithfully the Glory of God.

Abbias Effendi, His Life and Teachings, by Myron H. Phelps, pp. 153-157.

TABLET TO INDIA

616. His Highness the Merciful One hath cause the appearance of the splendors of love and affinity in the world of humanity, so that the individuals of mankind might be perfectly united and the rays of unity be revealed amongst the children of men. Hence He sent forth the holy Manifestations, inspired their hearts with the contexts of the heavenly books and instituted divine religions,

in order that these sanctified personages, these revealed books, these religions of God might become the means of unity and accord, love and good fellowship in the human world.

Should be study the divine religions with the perception of truth, we would then conclude that their underlying principle is the One Reality. All the religions of God are the reality. Reality does not admit multiplicity and division. But alas! that the fundamental reality is laid aside and forgotten, and a catalogue of creeds, dogmas and rites have taken its place which are the basis of differences, the cause of hatred and prejudice, and the establishment of the religion of God is totally forgotten and neglected.

617. When this impenetrable gloom -- that is, the gloom of the traditions of ancestors -- surrounded the world, and the pristine light of the divine religions was changed into the darkness of the ideas of men, then the true morn dawned and the Sun of Reality (Baha'u'llah) arose from the horizon of Persia, reflecting in the mirror of the world of humanity the effulgence of the heavenly unity. Thus he destroyed the foundations of the structure of blind <p304> dogmas and man-made creeds and rituals which are the result of ignorant prejudices. It is owing to this fact that this light is spreading with the greatest rapidity in all the countries of the world. The influence of these divine teachings in the heart of the world is like the influence of the spirit over the bodies.

618. Consequently, through the breaths of this divine spirit, the followers of the different religions in Persia have rent asunder the veil of superstitions, are freed from the effect of unenlightened doctrines, and have attained to the Beloved of Reality. These antagonistic faiths are united with the bond of perfect love and amity. For this reason great meetings are organized, in which are represented Muhammadans, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Turks, Arabs, Parsees, Persians, Kurds, English, French and Americans, who associate and mingle with each other as brothers. Like the sheep of God they are grazing in the pastures of truth under the protecting staff of the heavenly Shepherd.

619. Should you reflect with the insight of reality, you will observe that these antiquated and superannuated dogmas have ever been the cause of massacre and carnage among the nations and peoples.

620. As this is the cycle of sciences, there must needs be new teachings, a new revelation is required and a new life wanted. The minds and hearts refute the veracity of ancient opinions. New ideas are called for and new principles are urgently demanded which may fill the requirements of this age, be as the spirit of this century and as the life of this period.

621. Search, labor, investigate, work and show extraordinary effort, so that the center of the light of Reality, like unto the witness of love, may become revealed in the assemblages of mankind.

622. There is a power in this Cause, a mysterious power, far, far, far away from the ken of men and angels. That invisible power is the source of all these

outward activities. It moves the hearts. It rends the mountains. It administers the complicated affairs of the Cause. It inspires the friends. It dashes into a thousand pieces all the forces of opposition. It creates new spiritual worlds. This is a mystery of the Kingdom of Abha.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Diary Notes, July 7, 1914. <p305>

GENERAL TABLET

623. O ye spiritual friends of Abdul Baha! "Perfume Thou the East! Illumine Thou the West! Bestow Thou light to the North! Grant Thou life to the South!"

This verse hath been revealed from the lips of the Center of the Covenant one year after the ascension of Baha'u'llah. But the violators (not understanding its spiritual purport) wondered and derided. Praise be to God! that now its signs have become manifest, its power evident, and its proofs plain. Thanks be unto Him! that the East and the West are stirred into cheerfulness, and through the Holy Fragrances all directions are perfumed.

624. The Blessed Perfection, in a clear text, hath promised us in the Book: "Verily I behold you from the Horizon of Abha, and will make victorious whosoever will arise in the service of My Cause with the hosts of the Supreme Concourse and the cohorts of the favored angels!" Praise be to God! that this victory and confirmation became visible and manifest and hath shone forth from the horizon of the world like unto the sun.

625.

Therefore, O ye friends of God!

Show ye forth an earnest endeavor and display ye a resolute effort, so that ye may become assisted in the adoration of the Ancient Beauty and the Manifest Light; to be the cause of spreading the light of the Sun of Truth; to infuse into the dead, antiquated body of the world a new spirit; to cast in the fields of hearts pure seeds; to arise in the service of the Cause; to speak with eloquent tongues; to become candles of guidance in the assemblage of the world; to become shining stars in the horizon of the existent being; to become merciful birds in the rose-garden of oneness; to sing the melodies of reality and significances; to spend every breath of your lives in the most great Cause; and to devote the period of your existence to the service of this conspicuous Light; so that in the end ye may be freed from loss and failure and attain to the inexhaustible treasury of the Kingdom.

For the life of man is wholly subject to danger and impermanency.

A person cannot put his assurance even in one moment's continuity.

Notwithstanding this, the nations of the world, deceived by the mirage of superstition, imagine themselves secure in the heavenly path.

Alas!

Alas!

Former communities, in bygone ages, entertained the same perishing thoughts; but by <p306> one of those periodical fluctuations they were all hidden under the ground and affiliated with deprivation and loss, except those souls who had become pure evanescence and had arisen with great self-abnegation in the path of God.

Such souls shine forth as brilliant stars from the Horizon on Ancient Glory, and the results which emanated from their lives in succeeding ages and cycles are the proofs that this statement is true.

Therefore, do ye not rest, neither day nor night; seek ye not for composure; talk ye of the mystery of servitude, and seek ye the path of thralldom; so that through the promised confirmations ye may become assisted from the Kingdom of Oneness.

826. O ye friends! Dense and gloomy clouds have covered the horizon of the world, and the darkness of hatred, malignity, persecution, tyranny, and the greatest cruelty is spreading. All the people are drunk with the wine of heedlessness; and blood-thirstiness and rapaciousness are considered the noblest excellencies of the world of men.

627. His Highness the Almighty hath chosen the friends from among the concourse of men and hath specialized them with the most eminent guidance and the highest gift; so that we may with souls and heart exert ourselves, sacrifice our lives, be engaged in the guidance of the people and the training of souls; so that the wild beasts may become the gazelles of the meadows of unity; the wolves may become the lambs of God; the bloodthirsty ones the heavenly angels; the fire of malice be extinguished and the flame of safety in the Blessed Tabernacle bestow illumination; the odor of the nether realm of infidelity be dispelled and the fragrances of the rose-garden of faithfulness be diffused into all parts; the weak draw light from the Universal Reason and evil souls seek to be purified with the holy and divine Breath. There are needed manifestors for this gift; farmers for this field; gardeners for this rose-garden; fishers for this sea; luminous stars for this heaven; spiritual physicians for these sick ones, and loving guides for these wanderers; so that they may bestow a share to those who are deprived, grant a portion to those who are portionless, give unmeasured treasure to the indigent ones, and show forth the power of proof to those who seek.

628. Glory be unto Thee, O my God! I supplicate unto Thee, O Thou my Helper! I invoke Thee, O Thou my Refuge! My agonies <p307> I declare unto Thee, O Thou my Physician, and entreat Thee with all my heart, my soul and my spirit, saying:

O my God! O my God! Verily, the gloomy night hath fallen upon all religions and the clouds of ignorance have extended over all parts; the people are immersed in the darkness of surmise and the tyrants are sunk in the depths of brutality and lawlessness; the red glare of the burning fire is flashing forth from the nether world; roaring, ominous voices are rising from the cruel, destructive and terrible armaments; every region is crying out with its dumb secret tongue: "Nothing that I possess hath benefited me, and power and strength are taken

away from me!" Verily, O my God, the lamps of guidance are extinguished; the fire of animosity is enkindled; wrath and antipathy are spread abroad, and provocation and maliciousness are disseminated upon the face of the earth.

Yet I see only Thy wronged followers who are crying at the tops of their voices, summoning the people:

"Hasten ye toward affinity!
"Hasten ye toward faithfulness!
"Hasten ye toward generosity!
"Hasten ye toward guidance!
"Hasten ye toward union!
"Hasten ye to behold the Light of the World!
"Hasten ye toward love and prosperity!
"Hasten ye toward the law of disarmament!
"Hasten ye toward harmony and stability!
"Hasten ye toward cooperation and mutual help in the path of guidance!"

Verily, these wronged ones do sacrifice themselves with infinite joy and happiness for the sake of the people, with all their soul and spirit, in every region. Verily, Thou beholdest them weeping at the misfortunes of every one of Thy creatures and grieved at the distress of Thy children; they are kind to all people and pained at the sight of the calamities of the inhabitants of the world. O my Lord! make the wings of prosperity to grow upon their shoulders, so that they may ever soar toward the apex of their aspirations; strengthen their loins in the service of Thy people, and confirm them in the servitude and adoration of the threshold of Thy Holiness. <p308>

Verily, Thou art the Merciful! Thou art the Clement, and there is no God but Thee, the Powerful, the Compassionate and the Ancient

Volume 2, Tablets of Abdul Baha

THE STATION OF WOMAN

629.

The function of the sun as a luminary is to reveal the realities of objects.

All that which is potential within the earth, is revealed or unfolded by the heat and light of the sun.

That which is hidden within the tree, through that luminary is brought forth and exposed to view.

Therefore we can say that a function of the sun is the revelation of things mysterious, and things hidden within the substance of the earth.

Inasmuch as this is the century of light, the Sun of Reality has gloriously revealed itself to all humanity.

One of the great things which was hidden in the realm of existence was the potential capability or capacity of womankind.

Through the light of the Sun of Reality in this age of illumination, the might and capacity of womankind has become manifest to the extent that the equality of man and woman is now an established fact.

In past ages, woman was wronged and oppressed.

Alas! most especially was this the case in Asia and in Africa and in Australia.

In these three continents women were most greatly oppressed; so much so that in certain parts of Asia women were not considered as members or parts of humankind.

They considered woman as an inferior people, or race, or kind.

There is a certain people, known as the Nosyrians, who held to this belief for a long period, namely, that woman was the manifestation of the evil spirit or Satan, and that man alone was the manifestation of the Merciful One, or the Lord.

At last this century of light arrived.

In this age the realities of things have been exposed.

Many mysterious things became revealed, and among them was this very subject. So that outside of Europe and America, even in the Orient today it is a well-known fact, if not well practised, that woman is equal to man. There have appeared women who have been verily the signs of guidance, might and power! Some have been notable poets. Some philosophic minds. Some brave and courageous. Among the brave were those who exhibited their valor and courage on the battlefield. And the poetesses have left their poetical works, which are masterpieces of poetry. To the <p309> latter class belongs Qurratu'l-Ayn, who was a Baha'i. She was the one who discomfited all the learned men of Persia. In whatsoever meeting she entered, the learned were silent. She was so well versed in the philosophy and science of the times that the learned men always considered her first. And her courage was unparalleled, to the extent that she withstood her enemies until she was killed. She withstood a king and monarch, the Shah of Persia, who was a most despotic man, a despot who through his decree could kill a thousand men each day. There was not a day during which he did not kill many people. This woman, singly and alone, was capable of withstanding such a monarch until her last breath, and then she offered her life -- sacrificed it.

Consider what mysteries have been revealed!

All this has been due to the effulgence of the Sun of Reality, which in this century and this age has become gloriously manifested.

Man must impartially investigate reality.

He must not be prejudiced.

What is the difference between man and woman?

Both are human.

In all functions and powers they are co-partners.

At most it has been this: that woman has not had the opportunities which man has so long enjoyed, especially education.

She has not had military tactics.

If she cannot go on the battlefield and kill, is that a shortcoming?

Suppose she has not used a gun, nor worked the cannon, if we present a cannon to a woman and ask her to fire it and she should fail, is that an imperfection?

At most we can say such is a compliment or praise to her, that in hardness of heart she is inferior to man!

If we say to womankind: come along and kill people, they will say:

I cannot do it.

Now that is not a shortcoming!

But be it known that if women had been trained according to military tactics, I believe that they could kill as many, too.

But God forbid that women learn military tactics!

May they never make up their minds to use the gun.

Because that is not a glory.

Home-making and joy-creating and comfort-bringing are truly glories of mankind.

Man should not glory in this, that he can kill.

Man should glory in this, that he can love.

When we study the realm of existence and consider the various kingdoms other than the human kingdom, we discover that male and female are not the distinction of gender peculiar to man.

Nay, rather in all created beings there is this distinction of kind.

Among the animals there is the male and the female, but is there any distinction of superiority made between them?

In plant life or <p310> the vegetable kingdom we find likewise the masculine and feminine, but there is no distinction whatsoever between the male and the female.

And if we should impartially investigate the matter, perchance we may find that the female is preferable or superior to the male, because in the vegetable kingdom there are some trees the female order of which is fruitful, whereas the male is fruitless.

For example, the male fig tree is fruitless, whereas the female fig tree is fruitful.

The male palm tree is valueless, whereas the female date tree is fruitful.

Now, when we find that in the other kingdoms, among the existing things in the animal and the vegetable, there is no distinction between the male and the female, is it becoming of man to make such a distinction?

The male type of the animals does not glory in its being male and at all superior to the female.

In fact, an equality is manifested.

Is it meet that man, so superior as a creature, should deprive himself of this equality which the animals enjoy?

The male animals do not exercise this attitude.

They declare that they are equal with the female.

In all rights they consider themselves equal.

How is it possible that man, the most reasonable and the most noble, should consider himself superior?

Whereas, in fact, they are all the servants of one God and all are considered in His estimation as human; and when we find that the word, "man" is used as a generic name it applies to all creatures, especially humankind; for example, in the Bible the statement is made that "man is created after our own image and likeness" -- that does not mean that the female was not created.

You may be interested to know that in Persian and Arabic there are two distinct words which in English are translated as "man."

In Persian and Arabic there is this distinction, and when the word "man" is used in one sense it means both man and woman, and the pronoun is referable to both, whereas there is also a word which distinguishes the male and female.

We use the word "man" as applicable to the male alone, whereas it does not at all.

We use the word "man" in English as applicable to both.

In the Hebrew it is the same.

That which God has not created, that distinction which He has not made, we must not observe. It is a superstition. The thing to be considered, however, is this: that woman must be more highly educated. They must have equal opportunities with men. There <p311> must be no distinction whatever between their education. And until this reality, namely the equality between the male and the female of the human kingdom, is fully established, is fully realized, the highest attainment for society is not rendered possible. Suppose woman is inferior to man in a certain degree -- even if that be the case, it ought not to be considered, because this very distinction is going to create discord and trouble. They will say: well, if woman is inferior, then she is not to be qualified with all the qualities man has.

In brief, man thinks himself superior, and the ambition of women may wax cold,

saying that we will not attempt to attain because it is impossible from the very nature of creation. Their love of progress would decrease. They would become helpless. On the contrary, we must declare that the capacity of woman is greater. When one attempts to educate a person, one should inspire him with hope and ambition so his capacity for progress may increase. He should not be told that he is inferior or weaker in qualities. If you tell a pupil in school that his intelligence is less than that of the other pupils, it is a very great obstacle to his advancement. On the contrary, he must be encouraged to advance, saying: you are most capable, and if you endeavor you will reach the highest pitch -- and that is the way it should be.

In short, my hope is that in the five continents, where this is not fully established, it may be established and the banner of equality raised. And let it be known once more that until woman and man realize this equality, progress is impossible. The world of humanity consists of two division, of two parts. One part or member is woman, the other is man. Until the two are equal in strength, the oneness of humanity cannot be realized. And the happiness of mankind will not be a reality. God willing, this is to be so.

Federation of Women's Clubs La Salle Hotel, Chicago May 2, 1912.

THE "MOST GREAT PEACE"

630. When we glance at history, we find that from the beginning up to the present day strife and warfare have prevailed among men. It has either been religious warfare, a warfare of races, or a <p312> war among the nations. All these wars have arisen from the ignorance of humanity, because of misunderstandings, and through the lack of the education of human kind.

631. Let us first touch upon religious warfare. It is self-evident that the Divine Prophets have appeared for no other purpose than to establish love and amity among humanity, for they were the shepherds and not the wolves. The shepherd comes forth to gather together his flock. He has not come to scatter his flock and to create strife among them. Every Divine Shepherd has gathered together a certain flock which formerly had been scattered. Among the Shepherds was His Holiness Moses. He assembled the various tribes of Israel and united them; afterward He took them over to the Holy Land. At a time when the Tribes of Israel were scattered and dispersed He was able to unite them, to assemble them together, and cause their development along degrees of human progress. By Him their degradation was transformed into glory, their poverty changed into wealth. Their vices were replaced by virtues until they reached such a zenith that the Solomonic Sovereignty was made possible, and the fame of their glory reached the East and the West. Hence it is evident that His Holiness Moses was a Divine Shepherd for He united the scattered tribes of Israel and gathered them together.

When the Messianic Star dawned, He declared, "I shall gather together the scattered tribes or flocks of Moses." He not only united the flock of Israel, nay rather, He was confirmed in bringing together the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Syrians, Ancient Assyrians and Phoenicians. These people were in a state of the

utmost rancor; they were thirsty for the blood of each other; attacking one another with the ferocity of animals. But His Holiness Jesus Christ united them, assembled and cemented them together, established a bond of love among them so that strife, rancor and warfare were banished. Therefore it is evident that the Divine religions are meant to create a bond of love among humanity, and to bind the people together for no other purpose than amity. Divine religion is not a cause for discord and disagreement. If religion be the cause of discord and difference, then no religion is preferable, for religion is meant to be life to the body politic. If it be the cause of death to humanity, then its non-existence is preferable. Therefore, in this day religion is to be sought, for religious teachings may well be likened to remedies. If a remedy <p313> be productive of worse symptoms, the lack or absence of the remedy is preferable.

632. At a time when the Arabian tribes and nomadic people were in the utmost state of division, thirsty for the blood of each other, living in the deserts under lawless conditions, strife rampant among them, not a single soul enjoying composure, no tribe at ease; -- at such a critical time Muhammad appeared. He gathered them together and reconciled them toward each other, united and cause them to agree, so that no strife and warfare remained. The Arabian nation immediately advanced until their sovereignty progressed and extended as far west as Sprain and Andalusia. >From these premises we may conclude that the foundation of the divine religions is for peace and not for strife, warfare and shedding of blood. Inasmuch as the foundation of the religions of God is one reality, which is love and amity, these warfares and dissensions are caused by imitations which creep in afterwards. Religion is a reality, and reality is one. The fundamentals of the religions of God are one in Reality. There is no difference in the fundamentals. The difference is caused by the imitations which arise later, and inasmuch as imitations differ, strife, discord and quarreling take place. If the religions of this time should forsake imitations and seek the fundamentals, all of them would agree and strife and discord would pass away -- for Reality is one and not multiple.

633. As to racial wars, these are caused by purely imaginary racial differences. For humanity is one in kind, it is one race, it is one progeny, inhabiting the same globe, and in the original genesis no difference obtains. God has created all humanity. God has not originally created Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, Germans, Italians or Spaniards. There is no difference as regards creation and kind; all belong to one household; all are the leaves of one tree; all are the fruits of one branch; all are the flowers of the same garden; all are the waves of the same sea.

634. Let us glance at the animal kingdom. We find the animals do not observe any distinction. If you gather together the sheep of the East and those of the West, they would mix quite harmoniously. The Oriental sheep would not look surprised and strange, saying: "You belong to the Occident; whereas I belong to the Orient." They would live together in the utmost accord. They would gather together and enjoy the same pasture. There is no <p314> racial difference among

them. If the birds of the East and the birds of the West were together, they would be found in a state of the utmost unity and amity. There would not be any distinctions observed. We find virtues in the animal. Is it becoming of man to be deprived of those virtues? The animal does not observe those imaginary distinctions. Is it becoming for man to observe them? Man is reasonable, has the manifestation of the Divine bestowals, the perceptive faculty, adoration, memory; and with all these Divine bestowals, shall he allow these racial ideas to change him; -- one saying, "I am a German"; another, "I am a Frenchman"; a third, "I am an Englishman"? Through these superstitions shall he wage war? Is this becoming? God forbid! It is not necessary at all. If the animal does not condescend to observe such lowering thoughts, shall man be willing to stoop to this level? Why should he fetter himself with such groundless imaginations and superstitions? They are purely imaginary.

635. As to war which has been caused by nativity; -- the idea that this is an Eastern nativity, the other is a Western, this is Northern and that is Southern; this is likewise purely imaginary. The globe of this earth is one globe, and it is the nativity of all humanity; therefore, the human race should not observe any of these distinctions which are conducive to war. We have come from the East. Praise be to God! we find the American continent prosperous, its climate most delightful, its weather salubrious, the inhabitants possessed of courteous manners and the United States government a fair government. Is it becoming for us to entertain anything but love for them, saying, "This land does not belong to us, this is not our nativity and because it is not our nativity it shall not be acceptable?" This would be utter ignorance to which man must not condescend. Man must investigate realities and the reality is this: that all humanity is one in kind, that this earth is one globe and therefore one home. Hence it is proved that the factors and causes of warfare are entirely false. Grant this.

Consider what is taking place in Tripoli.

How many of the poor are being killed, how much blood of the oppressed is shed upon both sides!

How many children become fatherless; how many fathers lose their sons; how many mothers bemoan the loss of their dear ones!

And what is the result after all? -- nothing.

Is it just, is it becoming for man to be so blood-thirsty?

Consider <p315> how domestic animals never cause animosity; that is an attribute of the ferocious animals.

For example, if you gather together a flock of one thousand sheep they do not cause the shedding of blood.

If you bring together many flocks of birds, no war takes place.

But when wolves, dogs and lions meet, they fight.

Even these ferocious animals are ferocious because of their necessary bereft of food.

But man does not need to exercise that sort of ferocity; his livelihood is made possible otherwise.

Out of greed, enmity and self-glory, the blood of the oppressed is spilt.

The great ones among the nations rest and enjoy luxuries in their palaces, but send the poor common people to the battlefield.

They offer them as targets before the cannons.

Every day they invent new instruments of destruction to destroy more fully the foundations of the human race.

They are absolutely merciless toward their kind -- toward these mothers who have so tenderly cared for their sons.

How many nights have these mothers spent sleepless?

How many days have they labored from morning until evening nurturing their children until they reached maturity!

How many of their kith and kin do these warring ones allow to be torn asunder in one day!

What savagery!

What ignorance!

What greed!

What enmity!

What degradation, which even the ferocious animals do not understand!

For the ferocious animal may tear to pieces one in a single day; the wolf, for instance, may carry away one sheep, but some unjust man kills one hundred thousand of his kind a day, and glories in it, saying: "I am a great general; I am a great commander-in-chief, for in one day I have done away with one hundred thousand of my kind!"

Consider how ignorant the human race is.

If a man kills another man, -- one single soul, -- no matter what the cause may be, -- he is at once pronounced a murderer, meets with capital punishment, or is put in prison for life.

But the man who kills one hundred thousand of his kind is called a "Conqueror," a "Hero," a "Great General."

If a man should commit the theft of one dollar he is called a thief and sent to the penitentiary; but if a general should pillage a whole country, they all him a great "Conqueror" of the highest heroism. "This is a hero!" "This is a conqueror of the world!"

How ignorant man is!

How low!

636.

In Persia, among the various nations and peoples, religions and denominations there existed the greatest animosity, envy and <p316> hatred.

At that time all the other nations of Asia were in the same condition.

The religions were hostile toward one another; the sects were at enmity; the races were filled with hatred; the tribes were constantly at war; at all times strife, warfare and bloodshed prevailed.

Men shunned each other and were thirsty for each other's lives.

They considered the glory for man was to be able to kill man of his kind.

Each religionist considered the killing of one belonging to another religion or denomination a great and praiseworthy deed.

At such a time as this His Holiness Baha'u'llah appeared in Persia.

He founded the oneness of the world of humanity.

He declared that all humanity is the servant of God, and that God is kind to all, that He created all and provides for all; that He nurtures all; therefore why should we be unkind?

Inasmuch as God is kind and merciful to all His creatures and manifests His care and goodwill to them in every way, why should we show forth that which is contrary?

Inasmuch as God loves all, why should we entertain animosity or envy?

For if God did not love all, He would not have provided for all; He would not have created man; He would not have trained him.

Now that He has created, provided for all and preserved man, it is therefore evident that God is kind to all.

Why then should man be unkind to man?

The is the Divine policy.

Shall we consider human policy to be better than the Divine policy?

Is that conceivable?

Is not that impossible?

Therefore, we must emulate the policy of God.

Just as God deals with all humanity -- so kindly, so lovingly -- we must deal with each other.

Baha'u'llah declared the "Most Great Peace" and International Arbitration.

He voiced His sentiments with regard to peace in numerous epistles upon that subject, which were scattered broadcast throughout the East.

He wrote to all the kings and crowned heads, encouraging all and admonishing them in regard to peace.

He made it evident with conclusive proofs that the happiness and glory of humanity can only be insured through peace.

He made it evident with conclusive proofs that the happiness and glory of humanity can only be insured through peace.

This took place about fifty years ago.

Because He promulgated International Peace and gave numerous instructions about it, the kings of the Orient arose against Him, for they did not find their personal benefits advanced thereby.

They arose to persecute and molest Him; inflicted upon Him every torment, imprisoned Him, bastinadoed Him, banished Him, eventually confined Him to a fortress.

Then they rose against those who followed Him.

For the establishment of International Peace <p317> the blood of twenty-thousand Baha'is was spilt.

How many homes were destroyed!

How many of the young were made captives!

How many of the houses were pillaged!

Yet none of them waxed cold.

Even unto this day they still persecute them, for the Baha'is put forth the greatest efforts.

They not only promulgate principle; they are people of action.

Now you see the same people who were formerly at enmity and strife in far off Persia -- people of various religions and denominations -- through the great teachings of Baha'u'llah living in the utmost peace.

Enmity has passed away and they exercise the utmost love toward all mankind.

For they know that all are the servants of God.

At most it is simply this: that some are still ignorant, they must be educated; some are sick, they must be treated; some are as children, they must be helped to reach the age of maturity.

We must not molest any one because he is an infant or child; we must not be inimical to any one because he is still ignorant, we must not reject any one because he is sick; but we must treat the sick, educate the children until they reach the age of maturity; and help those who are ignorant in order that they

may reach knowledge.

Therefore the essentials of the foundations of the religions of God are love and amity among all humanity.

If a Divine religion should be productive of discord among society, it is a destroyer and not Divine; for religion means unity and binding together.

Mere knowledge of anything is not sufficient.

We all know that justice is good, but there is need for volition and executive force to carry it out.

For example, should we think it good to build a church, simply thinking of it as being a good thing will not help its erection.

We must will to build it.

Then wealth is needed for its erection; simply thinking will not be sufficient.

All of us know that International Peace is good; that it is conducive to the general welfare of humanity and the glory of man; but we are in need of will, volition and action.

We must act.

Inasmuch as this century is a century of light, it has capacity for action.

Surely this is so, for the time is ripe for it.

The human race knows, verily, that war is a destroyer of the human foundation, and in all the countries of the world there are those who favor this issue.

637.

When I came to America, I found this to be an exceedingly progressive country, the people in a state of readiness, the government a just one, and equality established to an extraordinary degree.

Now, inasmuch as the standard of International Peace must <p318> needs be hoisted, I hope that it may be hoisted upon this continent, for the American continent is more deserving, has greater capacity therefor, and is not like other countries.

If other nations should take such a step, everybody will misinterpret the motive.

For example, if Great Britain should take the step, it will be said that it is done in order to insure the safety of her colonies.

If France should hoist the standard, they will say she has some interest therein.

If Russia should raise the ensign, the whole Russian nation would say it is an effort to preserve the homogeneity of Russia.

But the American government has no selfish interest in this.

You have, strictly speaking, no colonies to preserve.

You are not endeavoring to extend your domains; nor have you any need for territorial aggressiveness.

Therefore if America takes the first step toward this direction, it is certain to be ascribed to altruism.

It will be said by humanity, "There was no other purpose than altruism and service to humankind."

Therefore it is my hope that you may be the cause, and that you may hoist this banner -- for this banner will be hoisted.

Raise it aloft, for you are deserving above all other nations.

In the other countries there are many who are waiting for this summons, anxiously anticipating this call from some nation bidding all to the "Most Great Peace," for the people are distressed because of the excessive and irreparable damage of war.

Thousands of the farmers are taxed and expenses collected for war.

Every year the tax increases and the people have come to their end.

Just now you can say Europe is a battlefield; like ammunition ready for a spark, and one spark can set aflame the whole world.

Before these complications and colossal events happen, take a step and prevent it.

The foundations of all the Divine religions are peace and amity; but misunderstandings have crept into them.

If these misunderstandings disappear, you will see that all the religious agencies will work for peace, and promulgate the oneness of human kind.

For the foundation of all is One Reality and Reality is not multiple or divisible.

For example, His Holiness Moses founded this Reality; His Holiness Jesus hoisted the tent of Reality, and the light of this Reality shone forth in all the religions.

His Holiness Baha'u'llah proclaimed this Reality and promulgated the "Most Great Peace."

In the prison He rested not until He lighted this lamp in the East.

638. Praise be to God! all the people who have accepted the <p319> teachings of Baha'u'llah are peace lovers and ready to sacrifice their lives and forfeit their fortunes for it. Now let this standard be hoisted in the West and many shall respond to the call. Just as America has become renowned because of her discoveries, inventions and skill; famous for the equity of her government and colossal undertakings, -- may she also become noted for the "Most Great Peace."

Let this be her undertaking, and let it spread from her to other countries. And I pray for all of you that you may render this service to the world of humanity.

Grace Methodist Episcopal Church
New York City
May 12, 1912.

THE NEW AGE

639. Everything in life, in its inception, is not know to the full extent of its potentiality. Development and progress is gradual. For example, spiritual advancement may be likened to the light in the early morning. This light of dawn is rather dim in its effulgence, but a wise man who looks at the early morn and sees the march of the sunrise at the beginning can verily foretell the ascendency of the sun with all its glory and effulgence. He knows for a certainty that it is the beginning of manifestation, and that later it will assume great power and potency. Again for example, if he takes a grain, and observes that it is growing, he can rest assured that the growing seed shall ere long become a tree. Now is the beginning of the manifestation of the spiritual power, and surely day by day its potency will assume greater and greater proportions. Therefore this twentieth century is the beginning or dawn of the spiritual illumination, and it is evident that day by day it will advance. It will reach such a degree that spiritual effulgences shall overcome the material; so that Divine susceptibilities shall overpower material intelligence and the heavenly light shall dispel and banish earthly darkness; Divine healing shall cure all ills and the cloud of mercy shall pour down its rain. The Sun of Reality shall shine and all the earth shall put on its beautiful green carpet.

640. Among the results of the manifestation of the spiritual forces will be: that the human world shall take on a new social form; the justice of God will become manifest; human equality <p320> will be established. For the poor there will be a great bestowal and for the rich eternal happiness. For although just now the rich enjoy the greatest luxury and all comfort, yet they are deprived of eternal happiness, for eternal happiness is contingent upon giving, and the poor are in the state of abject poverty. Through the manifestation of God's great equity, the poor of the world will be fully rewarded, so that in the future there will not be the abnormally rich nor the abject poor. The poor will enjoy comfort as well as the rich, for in the future, owing to certain restrictions, the rich will not accumulate so much as to be beyond management, and the poor will not retain this state of absolute want and misery. The rich shall enjoy his palace, and the poor shall have his comfortable cottage.

The purpose is this: that Divine justice shall be manifest and all human kind shall find comfort. I do not mean that all will be equal, for inequality in degree is a principle of nature. There will be of necessity rich people and those who will be in want of their livelihood, but there will be an equalization and readjustment. In the future there will be no very rich people,

nor extremely poor people. There will be an equilibrium, and a condition will be established which will make both the rich and the poor comfortable.

This shall be an eternal and blessed outcome of this glorious century, which in the future will become realized. The purpose is this: that all the promises of the Prophets, all the glad tidings given in the Holy Books, will be fulfilled. Await ye for that manifestation!

Brotherhood Church
Jersey City, New Jersey
May 19, 1912.

THE ORB OF THE COVENANT

641. He is God! O thou whom my heart addresses! Know thou, verily, the Covenant is an Orb which shines and gleams forth unto the universe. Verily, its light will dispel darkness, its sea will cast out the thick foam of suspicions upon the shore of perdition. Verily, naught in the world can ever resist the power of the Kingdom. Should all mankind assemble, could they prevent the sun from its light, the winds from their blowing, the clouds from their showers, the mountains from their firmness <p321> or the stars from their beaming? No! By thy Lord, the Clement! Everything is subject to corruption; but the Covenant of thy Lord shall continue to pervade all regions.

Assist thou the waverers and say: "Have ye forgotten that which transpired in the time of Christ? Are ye not informed of the events which took place in His blessed Day? Did not the Pharisees rise against Him? Did they not give verdict to the shedding of His blood, to the murder of His friends and to the oppression of His chosen ones? Have ye not heard concerning the heretics, the violators of His Covenant after Him? Are ye not informed of those kings, princes, learned and prominent men who persecuted Him? Did ye not see what has been the end of the persecutors?

And do thou advise them and illumine their innermost part, and say unto them: "By God, the True One! Verily, Abdul Baha is assisted by the Beauty of El-Abha who helps him with a power whereunto all heads are made humble. Ye shall surely find the banner of hypocrisy reversed, the foundations of discord demolished and the standards of peace and harmony waving throughout all regions!"

O my friend! Verily, Baha hath commanded me to be forbearing and patient, to conceal, to forgive and pardon. Otherwise I would have rent their covering, disclosed their sins, divulged their deeds, depicted their character and unveiled their manners. Verily, thou art already informed of some of their deeds, and it is sufficient for you.

Consequently, turn thy face unto the Kingdom of the Covenant, thy heart beating with the Love of God, thy soul attracted to the fragrances of God, thy tongue speaking of the appearances of the Kingdom of God, thy insight rending veils asunder and disclosing the realities of things -- and with a power which may move the heart of all in the world.

This is a confirmation from the Lord of the Effulgence, while all else save this shall never profit thee! This is that by reason of which thy face shall gleam, thy heart shall be dilated with joy, thy soul become pure, thy back strengthened, thy spirit rejoiced and thy identity quickened. Leave the people of suspicion behind thy back and adhere to the manifest Signs.

Star of the West, Vol. 4, No. 10. <p322>

THE ILLUMINATI

642. About one thousand years ago a Society was formed in Persia called the Society of the Friends, who gathered together for silent communion with the Almighty.

They divided Divine Philosophy into two parts: one part the knowledge of which can be acquired through lectures and study in schools, and the second part that sought by the Illuminati, or followers of the Inner Light. The schools of this Philosophy were held in silence. Meditating, and turning their faces to the Source of Light, the mysteries of the Kingdom were reflected from that central Light into their hearts. All the divine problems were solved by this power of illumination.

This Society of Friends increased greatly in Persia, and their meetings take place even at the present time. Many books and epistles were written by their leaders. When the Friends assemble in their Meeting House, they sit in silence and contemplate. Their leader proposes a certain problem, saying to the assembly, "This is the problem on which to meditate." Then, freeing their minds from everything else, they sit quietly and reflect, and before long the answer is revealed to them. Many abstruse divine questions are solved by means of this illumination.

Some of the great questions unfolding from the rays of the Sun of Reality upon the minds of men are: the problem of the reality of the spirit of man; of the origin of the spirit; of its birth from this world into the world of God; the question of the inner life of the spirit and its fate after ascension from the body.

They also meditate upon the scientific questions of the day, and these are likewise solved.

These people, who are called "Followers of the Inner Light," attain to a superlative degree of power, and are entirely freed from blind dogmas and imitations. Men rely on the statements of these people; by themselves, within themselves, they solve all mysteries.

If they find a solution through the assistance of the Inner Light, they accept it, and afterwards declare it; otherwise they would consider it a matter of blind imitation. They go so far as to reflect upon the essential nature of the Divinity, of the divine Revelation, of the Manifestation of the Deity, in this world. All <p323> the divine and scientific questions are solved by them through the power of the spirit.

643. Baha'u'llah says there is a sign from God in every phenomenon. The sign of the intellect is contemplation, and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at once -- he cannot both speak and meditate.

It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit and the spirit answers: the light breaks forth and reality is revealed.

You cannot apply the name "man" to any being devoid of this faculty of meditation; without it man is a mere animal, lower than the beasts.

Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit -- the bestowals of the Spirit are given during reflection and meditation.

The spirit of man is itself informed and strengthened during meditation; through it affairs of which man knew nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it he receives divine inspiration, and through it he partakes of heavenly food.

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself; in that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects; in that subjective condition he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things in themselves. To illustrate this, think of man as endowed with two kinds of sight: when the power of insight is being used the power of outward vision does not function.

644. This faculty of meditation frees man from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, puts man in touch with God.

This faculty brings forth the sciences and arts from the invisible plane. Through the meditate faculty inventions are made possible, colossal undertakings are carried out. Through it governments can run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.

Nevertheless some thoughts are useless to man: they are like waves moving in the sea without result. But if the faculty of meditation is bathed in the Inner Light and characterized with divine attributes, the results will be confirmed.

The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror: if you put it before <p324> earthly objects, it will reflect the earthly objects. Therefore if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly objects he will become informed of these.

But if you turn the mirror of your spirit heavenwards, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in your hearts, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be obtained.

Therefore let us keep this faculty rightly directed -- turning it to the divine Sun and not to earthly objects -- so that we may comprehend the allegories of the Bibles, the mysteries of the Spirit, and discover the hidden secrets of the Kingdom.

May we indeed become mirrors reflecting the divine realities and may we become so pure as to reflect the stars of heaven!

Friends' Meeting House St. Martin's Lane, London January 12, 1913.

EVOLUTION

645. Man in the world of existence has traversed certain degrees until he has arrived at the world of manhood. In every degree he has attained the capacity for advancement to the next degree. While in the mineral kingdom he was attaining the capacity for promotion into the vegetable kingdom. In the vegetable kingdom he has received preparation and capacity for the animal kingdom. He has come from the vegetable kingdom to the animal and then on to the human kingdom.

In the beginning of his life man was in the matrix world. In the world of the matrix he obtained capacity and preparation for this world. The forces and powers necessary for this world he attained there. In this world he needed eyes; he received them potentially, in the other. He needed ears; therefore he obtained them in the world of the matrix. All the powers he needed in this world he attained potentially in the world of the matrix. In the world of the matrix therefore he was prepared for this world; so that when he came to this world he found that all the necessary forces were ready -- all his needs for material sustenance were provided.

Therefore in this world also he must prepare himself and get ready for the life hereafter. That of which he is in need in the world of the Kingdom he must obtain here. Just as he prepared <p325> himself by acquiring the forces necessary in this world in the world of the matrix, so likewise it is necessary that all needful in the Kingdom, all the forces of the Kingdom -- must be acquired in this world.

646. What is he in need of in the Kingdom after he is transferred from this world to the other world? That world is a world of sanctity, therefore it is necessary that he acquire sanctity in this world. In that world there is need of radiance, therefore radiance must be acquired in this world. In that world there is need of spirituality. In this world he must acquire spirituality. In that world faith and assurance, the knowledge of God, the love of God, are needed. These he must acquire in this world so that after he ascends from this mortal to that immortal world he shall find all that is needful in that life eternal ready for him.

It is self-evident that that world is a world of Lights; therefore there is need for illumination. That world is a world of Love! hence love of God is needed. That world is a world of perfections; virtues or perfections must be acquired. That world is a world of the Breaths of the Holy Spirit and in this world must they be acquired. That world is a world of the Life Eternal. In this world must he acquire it. But how can he? By what means can he acquire these things? How is he to obtain these merciful powers?

647. First, -- through the knowledge of God. Second, -- through the love of God. Third, -- through faith. Fourth, -- through philanthropic deeds. Fifth, -- through self-sacrifice. Sixth, -- through severance from this world. Seventh, -- through sanctity and holiness. Unless he obtain these forces, unless he attain to these requirements, surely he will be deprived of the Life Eternal. But if he attain the knowledge of God, becomes ignited through the fire of the love of God, witnesses the great and mighty signs, becomes the cause of love among mankind and lives in the utmost state of sanctity and holiness, surely he shall attain to second birth, will be baptized through the Holy Spirit and witness the Life Eternal.

648.

It is astonishing!

It is a most amazing thing! -- that God has created all humanity for the knowledge of Himself, for the love of Himself, for the virtues of the human world, for the Life Eternal; -- for perfect spirituality, for heavenly illumination has He created man; -- nevertheless, man is utterly negligent of all <p326> this!

He is seeking the knowledge of everything except the knowledge of God.

He seeks, for example, to know the lowest stratum of the earth.

His utmost desire is this.

Day and night he strives to know what he can find ten metres below the surface; what he can discover within the stone; what he can learn archaeologically through the dust!

He puts forth arduous labors to penetrate a mystery of terrestrial mysteries; but he is not at all thoughtful of knowing the mysteries of the Kingdom, traversing the fields of the Kingdom, becoming aware of the verities of the Kingdom, discovering the secrets of God, arriving at the knowledge of God, witnessing the lights of Reality and becoming informed of the verities of the Kingdom.

He is not at all thoughtful of these.

How much he is attracted to the mysteries of matter, and how utterly unaware he is of the mysteries of Divinity!

Nay, he is even utterly careless of the mysteries of Divinity!

How stupid this is! how ignorant this is! how conducive to degradation this is!

It is like this -- that a son should have a very kind Father, who has provided for him great Books, in order that he may become aware of the mysteries of creation, and supplied also many means of adornment, comfort and enjoyment.

But the son, because of immaturity and lack of intelligence, loses sight of all these and lays them aside, attaching himself to pebbles, passing his time day and night with playthings, neglectful of all the gifts which his Father has

provided for him.

How ignorant such a child is! how heedless!

The Father has wished for him glory eternal, and he is content with the greatest deprivation.

The Father has built for him a royal palace, but he is playing with dust.

The Father has prepared for him garments of silk, but he is content with his nakedness.

The Father has prepared for him the most delicious foods and most luscious fruits, while he seeks the grasses of the fields.

Such is the analogy.

Praise be to God! you have heard the call of the Kingdom! You have opened your eyes; you have turned to God. Your object is the good pleasure of God. Your purpose is the understanding of the mysteries of the heart and your intention is to discover the realities. Day and night must you think, strive and investigate, that you may attain to the mysteries of the Kingdom; that you may attain certainty in knowledge; that you may know this world has a Creator, has a Maker, has a Resuscitator, has a Provider, has an Architect -- but know this through proofs and evidences, not <p327> through susceptibilities; nay rather through decisive proofs, evident arguments and real vision -- that is to say, visualizing it just as you visualize the sun. May you with complete certainty behold the signs of God and attain to the knowledge of the holy divine Manifestations.

649. You must come into the knowledge of the divine Manifestations through proofs and evidences. You must know the teachings of the holy divine Manifestations. You must learn the mysteries of the divine Kingdom. You must become capable of discovering the realities of things. Thus may you become the manifestations of the mercy of God and real believers, -- firm and steadfast in the Cause of God.

Praise be to God! the door of the knowledge of God has been opened by Baha'u'llah. For He has laid the foundation whereby man may become acquainted with the verities of heaven and earth, and has bestowed the utmost confirmation. He is our teacher; He is our adviser; He is our seer. He is the one clement towards us. He has prepared all His gifts. He has vouchsafed His Providence. Every admonition has He given unto us. Every behest has He uttered for us. He has prepared for us the means of eternal majesty. He has breathed for us the breaths of the Holy Spirit. He has opened before our faces the doors of the Paradise of Abha. The lights of the Sun of Reality has He caused to shine upon us. The clouds of mercy have poured down upon us. The sea of favor is surging towards us. The spiritual springtime has come. The infinite bounties and favors have appeared. What therefore is greater than this? What bestowal is greater than this? We must appreciate this and act in accordance with the teachings of Baha'u'llah, so that all good may be stored up for us and in both

worlds we shall become precious, attain to the blessing everlasting, taste the delicacy of the love of God, find the sweetness of the knowledge of God, see the bestowal of Heaven and witness the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is my advice and this is my admonition.

309 West 78th Street, New York City, July 6, 1912.

THE TEMPLE

650. Among the institutes of the Holy Books is that of the foundation of the Divine Temple. That is to say, an edifice is to <p328> be constructed in order that humanity may find therein a place of meeting; and this is to be conducive to unity and fellowship amongst them. The real Temple is the very Law of God, for to that all humanity must resort, and that is the Point of Unity for all mankind. That is the collective center. That is the cause of accord and unity of the hearts. That is the cause of the solidarity of the human race. There is the source of eternal life. Temples are the symbols of that uniting force, in order that when people gather there in a given edifice of God, in the House and Temple of God, they may recall the fact that the law has been revealed for them and that that law is to unite them. That just as this edifice was founded for the unification of mankind, the law preceding and creating this Temple was issued therefor. ... In brief, the purpose of places of worship and edifices for adoration is simply that of unity, in order that various nations, divergent races, varying souls, may gather there and among them amity, love and accord may be realized. The original purpose is this.

That is why His Holiness Baha'u'llah has commanded that a place be built for all the religionists of the world; that all religions and races and sects may gather together; that the oneness of the human world may be proclaimed; that all the human race are the servants of God, and all are submerged in the ocean of God's mercy.

The world of existence may be likened to this.

It is the Mashrekol-Azkar.

Just as the external world is a place where various peoples of different hues and colors, of various faiths and denominations, meet; just as they are submerged in the same Sea of Favors; likewise all may meet under the dome of the Mashrekol-Azkar and adore the One God in the same spirit of truth, for the ages of darkness have passed away and the century of light has come.

The prejudices of imagination are in the process of dispersion and the Light of Unity is shining.

The difference which exists among the nations and the peoples is soon to pass away, and the fundamentals of the Divine Religions, which are no other than the solidarity and the oneness of the human race, are to be established.

For six thousand years the human race has been at war.

It is enough!

Now let them, for a time at least, consort in unity.

Formerly they entertained enmity.

Let them for a period exercise love.

For six thousand years have they negated each other, each nation considering the other as infidel.

It is sufficient!

We must know that we are the servants of One God; that we are <p329> turning to One God; that we have one kind Father; that we have one divine Law; that we have one reality; that we have one desire.

Thus may we live together in the utmost of amity and love, and for this love, for this amity, the favors of God shall surround us; the world of humanity will be reformed; human kind will find a new life; eternal light shall shine; merciful and heavenly morals shall become manifested.

The Divine policies shall rule, for the Divine policy is the oneness of the human world.

God is kind to all.

He considers all as His servants.

He does not exclude anybody, and the policy of God is the correct and just policy.

No matter how complete human policy and foresight be, it is imperfect.

If we do not emulate the policy of God, or if we refuse to follow His dictates, that will be a presumptive evidence of our saying, as it were, that we know better than God; that we are knowing and wise, whereas God is ignorant; that we are sagacious, while God is not. God forbid! We seek shelter in God's mercy therefor! No matter how far the human intelligence shall advance, it is still as a drop, whereas the Divine Omniscience is the very ocean. Is it just for us to say that a drop is imbued or endowed with qualities whereof the ocean itself is minus or not endowed? To say that the policy of the atom or the drop is greater and superior to that of the ocean? There is no greater ignorance than this! At most it is this: that there are some people like unto children. They are ignorant, and with the utmost love are we to educate them in order that they may become wise. They are sick; they are ill. We must tenderly care for them and treat them until they become well. Their morals are unpraiseworthy. We must train them in order that they may become imbued with morals that are commendable. Otherwise we are all the servants of One God, and we are beneath the protection and institutes of One God.

These are the institutes of God and the foundations of the Mashrekol-Azkar, or His Temple. The outer edifice is a symbol of the inner. May the people be admonished thereby! I pray in your behalf, that your hearts may be enlightened

with the light of the love of God; that your minds may develop daily; that your spirits may be set aglow with the fire of His Glad Tidings; until the divine foundations in the human world may become promulgated. And the first of these institutions is the oneness of the human world and love among all mankind, and secondly is the Most Great Peace. <p330>

Praise be to God, this American Democracy presents capacity, showing forth its readiness to become the flag bearer of the Most Great Peace. May they be the hosts of the oneness of humanity. May its people serve the threshold of God and promulgate that which is the good pleasure of God!

Baha'i Temple Unity Convention Masonic Temple, Chicago April 30, 1912.

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

651. This is a goodly temple and congregation, for -- Praise be to God! -- this is a house of worship wherein conscientious opinion has free sway. Every religion and every religious aspiration may be freely voiced and expressed here. Just as in the world of politics there is a need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled; whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail, that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs, development and growth are inevitable. Therefore this is a blessed church because its pulpit is open to every religion, the ideals of which may be set forth with openness and freedom. For this reason I am most grateful to the reverend doctor; I find him indeed a servant of the oneness of humanity.

652.

The holy manifestations who have been the sources or founders of the various religious systems were united and agreed in purpose and teaching.

His Holiness Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Bab and Baha'u'llah are one in spirit and reality.

Moreover each prophet fulfilled the promise of the one who came before him and likewise each announced the one who would follow.

Consider how His Holiness Abraham foretold the coming of Moses and Moses embodied the Abrahamic statement.

His Holiness Moses prophesied the Messianic cycle and His Holiness Christ fulfilled the law of Moses.

It is evident therefore that the holy manifestations who founded the religious systems <p331> are united and agreed; there is no differentiation possible in their mission and teachings; all are reflectors of reality and all are

promulgators of the religion of God.

The divine religion is reality and reality is not multiple; it is one.

Therefore the foundations of the religious systems are one because all proceed from the indivisible reality; but the followers of these systems have disagreed; discord, strife and warfare have arisen among them, for they have forsaken the foundation and held to that which is but imitation and semblance.

Inasmuch as imitations differ, enmity and dissension have resulted.

For example, His Holiness Jesus Christ -- may my spirit be a sacrifice unto Him! -- laid the foundation of eternal reality, but after His departure many sects and divisions appeared in Christianity.

What was the cause of this?

There is no doubt that they originated in dogmatic imitations, for the foundations of Christ were reality itself in which no divergence exists.

When imitations appeared, sects and denominations were formed.

653.

If Christians of all denominations and divisions should investigate reality, the foundations of His Holiness Christ would unite them.

No enmity or hatred will remain for they will all be under the one guidance of reality itself.

Likewise in the wider field, if all the existing religious systems will turn away from ancestral imitations and investigate the reality, seeking the real meanings of the Holy Books, they will unite and agree upon the same foundation, the reality itself.

As long as they follow counterfeit doctrines or imitations instead of reality, animosity and discord will exist and increase.

Let me illustrate this.

His Holiness Moses and the prophets of Israel announced the advent of the Messiah but expressed it in the language of symbols.

When His Holiness Christ appeared, the Jews rejected Him although they were expecting His manifestation, and in their temples and synagogues were crying and lamenting, saying "O God, hasten the coming of the Messiah!"

Why did thy deny Him when He announced Himself?

Because they had followed ancestral forms and interpretations and were blind to the reality of Christ.

They had not perceived the inner significances of the Holy Bible.

They voiced their objections, saying, "We are expecting His Holiness Christ, but His coming is conditioned upon certain fulfillments and prophetic

announcements.

Among the signs of His appearance is one that He shall come from an unknown place, whereas <p332> now this claimant of Messiahship has come from Nazareth.

We home and we are acquainted with his mother.

"Second: One of the signs or messianic conditions is that his scepter would be an iron rod, and this Christ has not even a wooden staff.

"Third: He was to be seated upon the throne of David whereas this messianic king is in the utmost state of poverty and has not even a mat.

"Fourth: He was to conquer the East and the West. This person has not even conquered a village. How can he be Messiah?

"Fifth: He was to promulgate the laws of the Bible. This one has not only failed to promulgate the laws of the Bible but he has broken the law of the Sabbath.

"Sixth: Messiah was to gather together all the Jews who were scattered in Palestine and restore them to honor and prestige but this one has degraded the Jews instead of lifting them up.

"Seventh: During his sovereignty even the animals were to enjoy blessings and comforts, for according to the prophetic texts he should establish peace to such a universal extent that the eagle and quail would live together, the lion and deer would feed in the same meadow, the wolf and lamb would lie down in the same pasture. In the human kingdom warfare was to cease entirely, spears would be turned into pruning hooks and swords into ploughshares. Now we see in the day of this would-be Messiah such injustice prevails that even he himself is sacrificed. How could he be the promised Christ?"

And so they spoke infamous words regarding Him.

Now inasmuch as the Jews were submerged in the sea of ancestral imitations, they could not comprehend the meaning of these prophecies. All the words of the prophets were fulfilled but because the Jews held tenaciously to hereditary interpretations, they did not understand the inner meanings of the Holy Bible; therefore they denied His Holiness Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The purpose of the prophetic words was not the outward or literal meaning but the inner symbolical significance. For example, it was announced that Messiah was to come from an unknown place. This did not refer to the birthplace of the physical body of Jesus. It has reference to the reality of the Christ; that is to say, the <p333> Christ reality was to appear from the invisible realm, for the divine reality of Christ is holy and sanctified above place.

654. His sword was to be a sword of iron. This signified His tongue which should separate the true from the false and by which great sword of attack He would conquer the kingdoms of hearts. He did not conquer by the physical power of an iron rod; He conquered the East and the West by the sword of His utterance.

655. He was seated upon the throne of David but His sovereignty was not a Napoleonic sovereignty nor the vanishing dominion of a Pharaoh. The Christ kingdom was everlasting, eternal in the heaven of the divine Will.

656. By His promulgating the laws of the Bible, the reality of the law of Moses was meant. The Sinaitic law is the foundation of the reality of Christianity. Christ promulgated it and gave it higher, spiritual expression.

657. He conquered and subdued the East and the West. His conquests were effected through the breaths of the Holy Spirit which eliminated all boundaries and shone from all horizons.

658. In His day, according to prophecy, the wolf and the lamb were to drink from the same fountain. This was realized in Christ. The fountain referred to was the Gospel from which the Water of Life gushes forth. The wolf and lamb are opposed and divergent races symbolized by these animals. Their meeting and association were impossible, but having become believers in Jesus Christ those who were formerly as wolves and lambs became united through the words of the Gospel.

659. The purport is that all the meanings of the prophecies were fulfilled but because the Jews were captives of ancestral imitations and did not perceive the reality of the meanings of these words, they denied His Holiness Christ; nay, they even went so far as to crucify Him. Consider how harmful is imitation. These were interpretations handed down from fathers and ancestors, and because the Jews held fast to them, they were deprived.

660. It is evident then that we must forsake all such imitations and beliefs so that we may not commit this error. We must investigate reality, lay aside selfish notions and banish heresay from our minds. The Jews considered His Holiness Christ the enemy of Moses whereas on the contrary His Holiness Christ promoted the Word of Moses. He spread the name of Moses throughout <p334> the Orient and Occident. He promulgated the teachings of Moses. Had it not been for His Holiness Christ you would not have heard the name of Moses; and unless the manifestation of Messiahship had appeared in Christ he would not have received the Old Testament.

The truth is that His Holiness fulfilled the Mosaic law and in every way upheld Moses; but the Jews, blinded by imitations and prejudices, considered His Holiness the enemy of Moses.

661. Among the great religious systems of the world is Muhammadanism. About three hundred millions of people acknowledge it. For more than a thousand years there has been enmity and strife between Muhammadans and Christians owing to misunderstanding and spiritual blindness. If prejudices and imitations were abandoned there would be no enmity whatever between them, and these hundreds of millions of antagonistic religionists would adorn the world of humanity by their unity.

662.

I wish now to call your attention to a most important point.

All Islam considers the Qur'an the Word of God.

In this sacred Book there are explicit texts which are not traditional, stating that His Holiness Christ was the Word of God, that He was the spirit of God, that Jesus Christ came into this world through the quickening breaths of the Holy Spirit, and that Her Grace Mary, His mother, was holy and sanctified.

In the Qur'an a whole chapter is devoted to the story of Jesus.

It records that in the time of His youth He worshipped God at the temple at Jerusalem; that manna descended from heaven for His sustenance and that He uttered words immediately after His birth.

In brief, in the Qur'an there is eulogy and commendation of Christ such as you do not find in the Gospel.

The Gospel does not record that the child Jesus spoke at birth or that God caused sustenance to descend from heaven for Him; but in the Qur'an it is repeatedly stated that God sent down manna day by day as food for Him.

Furthermore, it is significant and convincing that when His Holiness Muhammad proclaimed his work and mission, His first objection to His own followers was: "Why have you not believed on Jesus Christ?

Why have you not accepted the Gospel?

Why have you not believed in Moses?

Why have you not followed the precepts of the Old Testament?

Why have you not understood the prophets of Israel?

Why have you not believed in the disciples of Christ?

The first duty incumbent upon you; O Arabians! is to accept and believe in these.

You <p335> must consider Moses as a prophet.

You must accept Jesus Christ as the Word of God.

You must believe in Jesus Christ as the product of the Holy Spirit."

His people answered: "O Muhammad! we will become believers although our fathers and ancestors were not believers and we are proud of them.

Tell us what is going to become of them?"

Muhammad replied: "I declare unto you that they occupy the lowest stratum of hell because they did not believe in Moses and Christ and because they did not accept the Bible; and although they are my own ancestors, yet they are in despair in hell."

This is an explicit text of the Qur'an; it is not a story or tradition but from the Qur'an itself which is in the hands of the people.

Therefore it is evident that ignorance and misunderstanding have caused so much warfare and strife between Christians and Muhammadans.

If both should investigate the underlying truth of their religious beliefs, the outcome would be unity and agreement; strife and bitterness would pass away forever and the world of humanity find peace and composure.

Consider that there are two hundred and fifty million Christians and three hundred million Muhammadans.

How much blood has flowed in their wars; how many nations have been destroyed; how many children have been made fatherless; how many fathers and mothers have mourned the loss of dear ones!

All this has been due to prejudice, misunderstanding and imitations of ancestral beliefs without investigation of the reality.

If the Holy Books were rightly understood none of this discord and distress would have existed, but love and fellowship would have prevailed instead.

This is true with all the other religions as well.

The essential purpose of the religion of God is to establish unity among mankind.

The divine Manifestations were founders of the means of fellowship and love.

They did not come to create discord, strife and hatred in the world.

The religion of God is the cause of love, but if it is made to be the source of enmity and bloodshed, surely its absence is preferable to its existence; for then it becomes satanic, detrimental and an obstacle to the human world.

663.

In the Orient the various peoples and nations were in a state of antagonism and strife, manifesting the utmost enmity and hatred toward one another.

Darkness encompassed the world of mankind.

At such a time as this, Baha'u'llah appeared.

He removed all the imitations and prejudices which had cause separation <p336> and misunderstanding, and laid the foundation of the one religion of God.

When this was accomplished, Muhammadans, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Buddhists all were united in actual fellowship and love.

The souls who followed Baha'u'llah from every nation have become as one family living in agreement and accord, willing to sacrifice life for each other.

The Muhammadan will give his life for the Christian, the Christian for the Jew, and all of them for the Zoroastrian.

They live together in love, fellowship and unity.

They have attained to the condition of rebirth in the spirit of God.

They have become revivified and regenerated through the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Praise be to God! this light has come forth from the East and eventually there shall be no discord or enmity in the Orient.

Through the power of Baha'u'llah all will be united.

His Holiness upraised this standard of the oneness of humanity, in prison.

When subjected to banishment by two kings, while a refugee from enemies of all nations and during the days of His long imprisonment He wrote to the kings and rulers of the world in words of wonderful eloquence arraigning them severely and summoning them to the divine standard of unity and justice.

He exhorted them to peace and international agreement, making it incumbent upon them to establish a board of international arbitration; that from all nations and governments of the world there should be delegates selected for a congress of nations which should constitute a universal arbitral court of justice to settle international disputes.

He wrote to Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, Napoleon III of France, and others, inviting them to world unity and peace.

Through a heavenly power he was enabled to promulgate these ideals in the Orient.

Kings could not withstand Him.

They endeavored to extinguish His light but served only to increase its intensity and illumination.

While in prison He stood against the Shah of Persia and Sultan of Turkey and promulgated His teachings until He firmly established the banner of truth and the oneness of humankind.

I was a prisoner with him for forty years until the Young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress overthrew the despotism of Abdul Hamid, dethroned him and proclaimed liberty.

This committee set me free from tyranny and oppression; otherwise I should have been in prison until the days of my life were ended.

The purport is this, that Baha'u'llah in prison was able to proclaim and establish the <p337> foundations of peace, although two despotic kings were His enemies and oppressors.

The King of Persia, Nasr-el-Din-Shah had killed twenty thousand Baha'is, martyrs who in absolute severance and complete willingness offered their lives joyfully for their faith.

These two powerful and tyrannical kings could not withstand a prisoner; this prisoner upheld the standard of humanity and brought the people of the Orient

into agreement and unity.

Today in the East, only those who have not followed Baha'u'llah are in opposition and enmity.

The people of the nations who have accepted Him as the standard of divine guidance enjoy a condition of actual fellowship and love.

If you should attend a meeting in the East you could not distinguish between Christian and Mussulman; you would not know which was Jew, Zoroastrian or Buddhist, so completely have they become fraternized and their religious differences been leveled.

They associate in the utmost love and spiritual fragrance as if they belonged to one family, as if they were one people.

Central Congregational Church, Brooklyn, New York. June 16, 1912.

UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

664. Every movement which promotes unity and harmony in the world is good, and everything which creates discord and discontent is bad. This is a century of illumination, surpassing all others in its many discoveries, its great inventions, and its vast and varied undertakings. But the greatest achievement of the age in conferring profit and pleasure on mankind is the creation of an auxiliary language for all. Oneness of language engenders peace and harmony. Oneness of language creates oneness of heart. It sweeps away all misunderstandings among peoples. It establishes harmony among the children of men. It gives to the human intellect a broader conception, a more commanding point of view.

Today the greatest need of humanity is to understand and to be understood. With the help of the International Language, every individual member of a community can learn of world happenings and become in touch with the ethical and scientific discoveries of the age. The auxiliary international language gives to us the key <p338> -- the key of keys -- which unlocks the secret of the past. By its aid every nation henceforth will be able easily and without difficulty to work out its own scientific discoveries.

It is a well-known fact that the Oriental student coming to the West, in his efforts to acquaint himself with the discoveries and achievements of Western civilization, must spend precious years of his life in acquiring the language of the land to which he comes before he can turn to the study of the special science in which he is interested. For example, let us suppose that a youth from India, Persia, Turkestan or Arabia comes to this country to study medicine. He must first struggle with the English language for four years, to the exclusion of all else, before he can even begin the study of medicine. Whereas, if the auxiliary international language were taught in all the schools during his childhood, he would learn the language in his own country, and afterwards, wherever he wished to go, he could easily pursue his specialty without loss of some of the best years of his life.

Today if one wishes to travel abroad, even though possessed of several languages, he is likely to be seriously handicapped because he does not know the particular language of some one people. I have studied Oriental languages profoundly and know the Arabic better than the Arabians themselves. I have studied Turkish and Persian in my native land, besides other languages of the East; nevertheless, when I visited the West I had to take an interpreter with me quite as if I knew no language. Now if the International Language were generally spoken, that and the Persian language would be sufficient for me in every country of the world.

Only think how the International Language will facilitate intercommunication among all the nations of the earth. Half of our lives are consumed in acquiring a knowledge of languages, for in this enlightened age every man who hopes to travel in Asia and Africa and Europe must learn several languages, in order that he may converse with their peoples. But no sooner does he acquire one language than another is needed. Thus one's whole life may be passed in acquiring those languages which are a hindrance to international communication. The International Language frees humanity from all these problems.

In a word, to understand and be understood, there must be an international medium. The teacher and the pupil must know each other's language, in order that the teacher must impart his <p339> knowledge and the pupil receive it. In all the world there is nothing more important than to be understood by your fellowmen, for upon this depends the progress of civilization itself. To acquire a knowledge of the arts and sciences one must know how to speak, to understand and at the same time to make himself understood, and this matter of understanding and being understood depends on language. Once establish this auxiliary language and all will be enabled to understand each other.

I recall an incident which occurred in Baghdad. There were two friends who knew not each other's language. One fell ill, the other visited him, but not being able to express his sympathy in words, resorted to gesture, as if to say, "How do you feel?" with another sign the sick replied, "I shall soon be dead," and his visitor, believing the gesture to indicate that he was getting better, said, "God be praised!"

From such illustrations you will admit that the greatest thing in the world is to be able to make yourself understood by your friends and to understand them, and that there is no greater handicap in the world than not to be able to communicate your thoughts to others. But with the auxiliary language all these difficulties disappear.

665. Now, praise be to God, that language has been created -- Esperanto. This is one of the special gifts of this luminous century, one of the most remarkable achievements of this great age.

His Holiness Baha'u'llah many years ago wrote a book called "The Most Holy Book," one of the fundamental principles of which is the necessity of creating an International Language, and He explains the great good and advantage that will result from its use.

Now let us thank the Lord because the Esperanto language has been created. We have commanded all the Baha'is in the Orient to study this language very carefully, and ere long it will spread all over the East. I pray you, Esperantists and non-Esperantists, to work with zeal for the spread of this language, for it will hasten the coming of that Day, that Millennial Day, foretold by prophets and seers, that Day when, it is said, the wolf and the lamb shall drink from the same fountain, the lion and the deer shall feed in the same pasture. The meaning of this holy word is that hostile races, warring nations, differing religions, shall become united in the spirit of love. <p340>

I repeat, the most important thing in the world is the realization of an auxiliary international language. Oneness of language will transform mankind into one world, remove religious misunderstandings, and unite East and West in the spirit of brotherhood and love. Oneness of language will change this world from many families into one family. This auxiliary international language will gather the nations under one standard, as if the five continents of the world had become one, for then mutual interchange of thought will be possible for all. It will remove ignorance and superstition, since each child of whatever race or nation can pursue his studies in science and art, needing but two languages -- his own and the International. The world of matter will become the expression of the world of mind. Then discoveries will be revealed, inventions will multiply, the sciences advance by leaps and bounds, the scientific culture of the earth will develop along broader lines. Then the nations will be enabled to utilize the latest and best thought, because expressed in the International Language.

If the International Language becomes a factor of the future, all the Eastern peoples will be enabled to acquaint themselves with the sciences of the West, and in turn the Western nations will become familiar with the thoughts and ideas of the East, thereby improving the condition of both. In short, with the establishment of this International Language the world of mankind will become another world and extraordinary will be the progress. It is our hope then, that the language Esperanto will soon spread throughout the whole world, in order that all people may be able to live together in the spirit of friendship and love.

Esperanto Society Edinburgh January 7, 1913.

SOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM

666.

The solution of this problem is one of the fundamental principles of His Holiness Baha'u'llah.

But it must be solved with justice and not with force.

If this problem is not solved lovingly it will result in war.

Perfect communism and equality are an impossibility because they would upset the affairs and the order of the world.

But there is a fair method which will not <p341> leave the poor in such need, nor the rich in such wealth.

The poor and the rich, according to their degrees, can live happily, with ease and tranquillity.

The first person in the world who had this idea was the king of Sparta.

He sacrificed his kingdom for this work.

He lived before Alexander the Great was born.

This thought came to his mind, that he could render a service which would be higher than all services and become the cause of happiness to many.

Thus he divided the people of Sparta in to three divisions.

One division consisted of the ancient inhabitants, and they were the farmers.

Another division consisted of the industrial people; another were the Greeks, who were originally from Phoenicia.

The name of this king was Lycurgus.

He desired real equality among these three divisions, and in this manner established a just government.

He said that the ancient people, who were the farmers, were free from any obligation except that they had to pay one-tenth of their products and no more.

The people of industry and commerce had to pay yearly taxes and nothing else.

The third class, who were the noble and descendants of the rulers, whose occupations were in politics, war and the defense of the country, had all the land of Sparta.

He measured the whole land and divided it equally among them.

For example, there were nine thousand of them.

He divided all the land in nine thousand equal parts and gave one part to each one of them.

He gave one-tenth of the product of each piece of land to the one who owned it.

He also made other laws and ordinances for the citizens.

When he found that he had accomplished what he wanted, he said: "I am going to Syria, but I am afraid that after I go away you will change my laws.

Therefore take an oath that you will not make any change before my return."

They took an oath in the temple and assured him that they would never make any change and that they would maintain these laws always until the return of the king.

But the king left the temple, travelled and never returned.

He gave up his kingdom in order that these laws might be preserved.

This equality of distribution, in a short time, became the cause of discord, because one of the men had five children, another three children, and another two children.

Differences accrued and the whole thing was upset.

Therefore the matter of equality is an impossibility.

667. But here is the real solution. The rich should be merciful to the poor, but with their free-will, not with force. Should it <p342> be with force it would be useless. It should be according to law and not by violence, so that through a general law every one might know his duty. For example, a rich person has a large income and a poor person a small income. To put it in a more explicit way: a rich person in this case must be exempt from taxes. If the poor person gives one-tenth of his income and the rich person one-tenth of his income, it will be unjust. Thus in this way a law should be made that the poor person who has only ten kilos and needs them all for his necessary food, be exempt from paying taxes. But if the rich person, who has ten thousand kilos, pays one-tenth or two-tenths taxes on his products, it will not be a hardship to him. For example, if he gives two thousand kilos, he will still have eight thousand kilos. If a person has fifty thousand kilos, even though he gives ten thousand kilos he will still have forty thousand kilos. Therefore, laws must be made in this way. These laws must do away with the present system of wages and earnings. If today the owners of factories increase the wages of their employees, after a month or a year, they will again cry and strike and ask for more increase. This work has no end.

668. Now I want to tell you about the law of God. According to the divine law no wages should be given to the employee. Nay, rather, indeed they are partners in every work. For example, the farmers plant near a village. They get products from their cultivation. They take one-tenth from the rich and the poor according to their income. A general store may be built in that village for all the incomes and products to be brought therein. Then it will be considered who is rich and who is poor. The farmers whose incomes are sufficient only for their food and expenses must be free from paying taxes. All products and incomes gathered and collected must be put in the general store. If there is a helpless one in that village his daily needs must be given to him. On the other hand a rich person who needs only fifty kilos of products and still have five hundred thousand kilos, after all his expenses are paid, should be taxed two-tenths and at the end of the year whatever remains in the store should be distributed for the general expenses.

669. The question of socialization is very important. It will <p343> not be solved by strikes for wages. All the governments of the world must be united and organize an assembly, the members of which should be elected from the parliaments and the nobles of the nations. These must plan, with the utmost wisdom and power, so that neither the capitalists suffer from enormous losses, nor the laborers become needy. In the utmost moderation they should make the

law, then announce to the public that the rights of the working people are to be strongly preserved. Also the rights of the capitalists are to be protected. When such a general plan is adopted by the will of both sides, should a strike occur, all the governments of the world collectively should resist it. Otherwise, the work will lead to much destruction, especially in Europe. Terrible things will take place. One of the several causes of a universal European war will be this question. For instance, the owners of properties, mines and factories should share their incomes with their employees, and give a certain fair percentage of their products to their workingmen, in order that the employees may receive, besides their wages, some of the general income of the factory, so that the employee may strive with his soul in the work.

No more trusts will remain in the future. The question of the trusts will be wiped away entirely. Also, every factory that has ten thousand shares, will give two thousand shares of these ten thousand to its employees, and will write them in their names so that they may have them, and the rest will belong to the capitalists. Then at the end of the month, or year, whatever they may earn, after the expenses and wages are paid, according to the number of share, should be divided among both. In reality, so far, great injustice has befallen the common people. Laws must be made because it is impossible for the laborers to be satisfied with the present system. They will strike every month and every year. Finally the capitalists will lose. In the ancient times a strike occurred among the Turkish soldiers. They said to the government: "Our wages are very small and they should be increased." The government was forced to give them their demands. Shortly afterwards they struck again. Finally all the incomes went to the pockets of the soldiers, to the extent that they killed the king, saying: "Why didst thou not increase the income so that we might have received more?"

670. It is impossible for a country to live easily without laws. <p344> To solve this problem strong laws must be made, so that all the governments of the world may be the protectors thereof. The essence of this matter is that strikes are conducive to destruction, but laws are the cause of life. Laws must be framed. Demands should be according to the laws, and not with strikes, force and harshness. Tonight you have spoken of politics, but we are not accustomed to talk on politics. We speak about the world of spirit. We speak of the wealth of the kingdom, not of the wealth of the nether world.

Star of the West, Vol. 7, No. 9.

LAMENTATION

671. Look thou with seeing eyes at the world about thee, and at the inhabitants thereof. Upon the stage of this immense theatre most spectacular plays are being enacted. On one side thou wilt see the victorious and the vanquished legions of profit and loss. On the other side thou wilt observe the waves of the sea of folly rising and falling. Cries are being raised on every side and the agonies of revolution, revolt and unrest reach unto the ears of progressive men. There is a tremendous strike and clash between capital and labor, and the

war between the aristocrats and democrats is carried on relentlessly with bow and arrow, sword and javelin. The phalanxes of a great army are drawn in battle array, each division taking its position. Armed troops and artillery are to be found in every part of the field. The flash of the swords of enmity blind the eyes from even the most remote distance, the lightning effect of breastplate and lance and the sparkle of the bucklers of hatred light up the night and bewilder the sight. In short: strife, battle, slaughter and war are prepared in organized perfection.

On the other hand thou wilt hear from every house strains of music are raised, and confusing melodies of harp, lyre, cymbal and flute are heard, and mad revellers are dancing to the tunes while inebriated with the wine of vanishing pleasures. In one place thou wilt behold the wanton and soiled decorations, and in another the flimsy shows of the gilded class of creatures. On the one hand is to be seen the embellishment and luxury made possible <p345> through illicit wealth, and on the other hand, the ravishing from this mortal world of its beautiful appearance.

From different parts are to be heard sighs of anguish, lamentations of poverty, cries of agony and misery -- and the calls for succor have reached to the gate of heaven. One hears the weeping of the hopeless, the appeals of the oppressed, the trembling murmurs of the helpless, the harrowing wails of the shipwrecked in the sea of persecution. The heat of the conflagration of opposition spreads on all sides, the fire of longing is raging with great intensity and the tongues of the flames of calamity leap forth in every direction. Here one sees the oppression of kings and the thoughtlessness of cabinet ministers; there one sees conflict on the battlefield of thoughts and ideals between ambitious generals, statesmen and administrators of the nations and countries. They consult, scheme, plot and exchange views; they organize fallacious and superfluous companies and falsify the established values; and thus they do lay and destroy the foundation of their political careers.

In short: when thou observest these things with the eye of reality, thou wilt see that the outcome, result and fruit of all these theatrical performances are mirages, and their sweetness is bitter poison. A few days the earth shall roll on its axis, and these fleeting visions will be completely forgotten.

When thou shuttest thine eyes to this dark world and lookest upward and heavenward, thou wilt see light upon light stretching from eternity to eternity. The reality of the mysteries will be revealed. Happy is the pure soul who does not attach himself to transient conditions and comforts, but rather seeks to attach himself to the purity, nobility and splendor of the world which endures.

Ramleh, Egypt September, 1913.

THE ONENESS OF HUMANITY

672. Today I wish to speak to you upon the subject of the "Oneness of Humanity," for in this great century the most important of all subjects is the

oneness of the world of humankind. Although in past centuries and bygone ages this great subject received some measure of mention and consideration, it was little <p346> compared to its attainment and importance in this day. In past ages and centuries history shows that the various peoples, tribes, nations and sects fought and warred against each other in enmity and hatred. But -- Praise be to God! -- in this century of illumination hearts are inclined toward amity and fellowship and minds are thoughtful upon the question of the unification of mankind. There is an emanation of the Universal Consciousness today which clearly indicates the dawn of a great unity.

In investigation of a subject the right method of approach is to carefully examine its premises. Therefore in the examination of this subject of human solidarity let us go back to the foundation upon which it rests, namely: that all mankind belong to one family, -- that all are one progeny of Adam, -- all are servants of the one God -- all have been created by one God, -- God is the provider for all -- God nurtures all, -- all are submerged in the sea of the mercy and grace of God, -- and God is kind to all.

All humankind share in common the intellectual and spiritual faculties of a created endowment. All are equally subject to the various exigencies of human life, and are similarly employed in acquiring the means of earthly livelihood. In every respect from the viewpoint of creation all stand upon the same footing -- all have the same requirements, -- all are seeking the happiness and comfort of earthly conditions; that is to say, the things they share in common are numerous and manifest. This very sharing or partnership in matters intellectual and spiritual is a valid basis for the unification of mankind.

Consider how for six thousand years discord and dissension have prevailed in this great human family. Its members have ever been engaged in war and bloodshed. Heretofore the world of humanity has not attained nor enjoyed any measure of peace on account of these conditions of war and strife. Consult history, -- you will find a continuous record of war brought about by religious, sectarian, patriotic, racial and political causes. The world of humanity has found no rest. Men have always been in conflict, engaged in destroying the foundations of each other, pillaging the properties and possessions of each other and shedding blood, especially in the earlier period of savagery when they carried away as captives the wives and children of each other. Consider the tremendous losses of human life which have been the fruit of this strife. What powers and forces have been employed in the means <p347> of war and applied to inhuman purposes of conflict and bloodshed! Now it has become necessary to divert these energies and utilize them in other directions; to try the new path of fellowship and unity in this most radiant century. We have observed after long trial and experience the harmfulness of war and dissension. Now we must seek after the means of procuring the benefits of unity and peace. When such means are found, we must give them a trial.

673. Consider the harm which comes to a family through discord and dissension. Consider, too, what favors and blessings descend upon that family when unity exists among its various members. Likewise reflect what would descend upon the

great human family, -- upon humanity in general -- if unity were established. Although the benefits and good results of unity are clearly manifest and the harm and ill effects of discord apparent, yet in this century means are witnessed for assisting man in the attainment of fellowship and unity. His Holiness Baha'u'llah has provided the means by which discord may be removed from the human world. He has left no possibility or means for dissension.

First, He has proclaimed the Oneness of Mankind and specialized religious teachings for humanity. The first form of dissension among mankind arises from religious differences. His Holiness Baha'u'llah has given full teachings to the world which are conducive to fellowship and unity in religion. In past years each religious system has boasted of its own superiority and excellence, abasing and scorning the validity of all others. Each has accounted its own belief as light and all others as darkness. The various followers have considered the world of humanity to be as two trees, -- one a merciful tree and the other satanic. They have considered some of mankind the branches, twigs and leaves of the merciful tree and others belonging to the tree which is satanic. This sedition and warfare among the people of the religions was continuous, causing ceaseless bloodshed and strife. The greatest cause of human alienation has been religion because each considered the belief of the other as anathema and deprived of the mercy of God.

The Teachings of Baha'u'llah which are specialized to Him are as follows: He has founded the premises by addressing all humanity, saying, "Ye are all the leaves of one tree," -- not of two trees, one merciful and the other satanic. He has said all <p348> humanity belongs to one tree -- the merciful. Each individual member of the human family is a leaf, twig or branch upon this tree. All belong to the Adamic tree, -- all are sheltered beneath the protecting mercy and providence of God. All are the children of God; all are fruit upon the one tree of His love. God is clement and kind to all the branches, leaves and fruit of this tree and there is no existence or interference of a satanic tree whatever, -- Satan being a creation of human proclivities. God alone is the Creator and all are creatures of His might. Therefore we must love all mankind as His creatures and realize that all are growing upon the Tree of His mercy -- that all are servants of His almighty Will and manifestations of His good pleasure.

Even supposing we find a branch or leaf of this tree defective or a blossom imperfect, it nevertheless belongs to this tree and not another.

Therefore it is our duty to try and protect that tree, -- guard and cultivate it until the fruit reaches perfection.

If we test its fruit and find it imperfect we must strive to make it perfect.

No doubt we will find in the human world souls who are ignorant; we must make them knowing.

Some souls growing upon the tree are weak and ailing; we must put them in the way of attaining health and recovery.

If they be as infants in development we must minister to them until they attain maturity.

Never should we detest and shun them, or consider them as bad.

We must honor, respect and be kind to them all, for God has created them and not Satan.

They are not manifestations of the wrath of God but of His divine favor.

God the Creator has endowed them with eyes, ears, hearts, physical, mental and spiritual faculties; that is to say they are creatures of His Will, not of His wrath.

Therefore souls are manifestations of the favor of God -- that is to say, all humanity must be shown the utmost love, kindness and respect because what we behold in them are no less than the signs and traces of God Himself.

All are evidences of God, therefore how shall we be justified in debasing them, uttering anathema and seeking to deprive them of drawing near unto His mercy?

This is sheer ignorance, complete injustice and God is not pleased with it because in the sight of God all are His servants.

674. Another cause of dissension and discord is the fact that religion has been pronounced at variance with science. Between <p349> religionists and scientists there has always been warfare for the reason that the former have proclaimed religion superior to science and considered science opposed to religion. For this reason strife and enmity have existed between them. His Holiness Baha'u'llah declared this to be a mistake, for religion is in harmony with science and reason. If it be at variance, it proceeds from the mind of man only and not from God and is therefore unworthy of belief and not deserving of attention. The heart finds no rest in it and confidence is not established. How can man believe that which he knows to be at variance with reason? Is this possible? Is it possible for the heart to accept that which reason refuses? Reason is the first faculty of man and the religion of God is in harmony with it. Baha'u'llah has removed this form of dissension and discord from among mankind and reconciled science with religion. This is His unique accomplishment in this Day.

675.

Still another cause of disagreement and dissension has been the formation of religious sects and denominations.

Baha'u'llah said that God has sent religion for fellowship among humankind and not for strife and discord, for all religion is founded upon the love of humanity.

His Holiness Abraham promulgated the principles of love among mankind.

His Holiness Christ established the love of mankind.

His Holiness Muhammad directed all to the love of mankind.

This is the reality of religion.

If you investigate the reality and inner significance of their teachings you will find it so.

You must not listen to hearsay but investigate the reality.

The purpose is that religion is the cause of amity, love and fellowship, not of discord, enmity and estrangement.

But man forsaking the foundation of Divine Religion, has adhered to certain blind imitations.

Each nation has clung to its own imitations and because these imitations are at variance, they have caused warfare, bloodshed and the destruction of the foundations of humanity.

But the religion of God is based upon amity and agreement.

His Holiness Baha'u'llah has said that "if religion and faith are the causes of enmity and sedition it is far better to be non-religions; that lack of such religion is better than religion; for we desire religion to be the cause of amity and fellowship.

If enmity and hatred exist, irreligion is preferable."

Therefore the removal of this dissension has been specialized in <p350> Baha'u'llah, for religion is a remedy for human antagonism.

If a remedy is the cause of disease it would be better to do without the remedy.

676. Other causes of human dissension are political, patriotic and racial prejudices. These have been removed by Baha'u'llah. He has said and has guarded His statement by rational proofs from the Holy Books that the world of humanity is one race, the surface of the earth one place of residence and these suppositions of racial and political boundaries are baseless and without foundation. It is not becoming of man to be the captive of these illusions and suppositions. Consider, -- the surface of the earth is one, and one atmosphere encompasses all humanity. No difference or preference is made by God. But man, following illusions and superstitions, has come to consider nationalities various and races separate in rights and importance, thereby laying the foundation of prejudice, hatred and discord.

677. Diversity of languages has been a fruitful cause of discord. The function of language is to convey the thought and purpose of one to another. Therefore it matters not what language man speaks or employs. Nevertheless, Baha'u'llah sixty years ago advocated one language as the greatest means of unity and the basis of international conference. Sixty years ago He wrote to the kings of the earth recommending the unification of languages; that one language should be adopted and sanctioned by all governments and promulgated by all nations. By this means, every nation might have its own natal tongue and acquire the universal language. All nations would then be able to communicate and consult

with perfect facility and the dissension due to diversity of language would not remain.

678. Another teaching of Baha'u'llah is in relation to the Most Great Peace; that all mankind must be awakened to and become conscious of the harm of war; that they should become informed of the benefit of peace and know that peace is from God, while warfare is from Satan. War among nations is a trait and manifestation of Satan. Man must emulate the Merciful and not Satan, in order that public opinion shall incline toward peace, love and unity, and the discord of war vanish.

679.

I will mention another cause of dissension: the lack of equality between man and woman.

Baha'u'llah has named this as a great cause of discord and division among humanity, for so <p351> long as humanity remains unequally divided as male and female in right and importance, no amity or unity can be established.

In a perfect human body it could not be possible for one organ to be perfect and another defective.

In the great body of humanity how could it be possible to bring about unity, love and fellowship if one factor is considered perfect and the other imperfect?

When both are perfect in function, perfect fellowship and harmony will be witnessed.

Therefore it is the greatest mistake to assume one member of the family of humanity is perfect and the other defective or not deserving.

God has created man and woman equal as to faculties; He has made no distinction between them.

Woman has not reached the level of man in human accomplishment because of lack of education.

The education of man has been of one kind and of woman another.

If education were equal and similar, these two factors would be equal in attainment.

God has made no difference between them which should produce discord.

He has endowed all with human faculties and all are manifestations of His mercy.

If we say mankind is different creationally in endowment that is contrary to Divine justice.

Both are human.

If God has created one perfect and the other defective He is unjust.

But God is just.

None are created imperfect or defective; all are perfect in creative endowment.

To assume imperfection in the creature is to presuppose imperfection in the Almighty Creator.

In brief: woman must receive equal education with man. The soul which is most excellent in the estimate of God is acceptable before God.

680. We have for our subject and consideration the reconciliation of the religious systems of the world. His Holiness Baha'u'llah has said that if from each of the varying religious systems one intelligent member be selected and these representatives come together seeking to investigate the reality of religion, they would establish an interreligious body before which all disputes and difference of religious belief could be presented for investigation and discussion. These questions could then be weighed and settled from the standpoint of reality and all imitations discarded. In this way all religious sects and systems would become one.

Do not question the practicability of this and be not astonished.

It has been effected and accomplished in Persia.

In that country the various religionists have gathered together to investigate the reality and have united in the utmost fellowship and love.

No <p352> trace of discord of differences remain; the utmost love, kindness and unity are apparent.

They are unified and live together like a single family in harmony and accord.

Discord and strife have passed away.

Love and fellowship now prevail instead.

Furthermore those souls who have obeyed Baha'u'llah and attained this condition of accord, fellowship and affiliation are Muhammadans, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Nestorians, Shiites, Sunnites, and others.

No discord exists among them.

This is a proof of the possibility of universal unification among the religionists of the world through practical means.

Imitations which have held men apart have been discarded and the reality of religion envelops them in its perfect unity.

When reality envelops the soul of man, love is possible.

The divine purpose in religion is pure love and amity.

The Prophets of God were in the utmost love for all.

Each one announced the glad tidings of His successor and each subsequent one

confirmed the teachings and prophecies of the former.

There was no discord or variance in the reality of their teachings and mission.

The discord has arisen among their followers, who held fast to imitations.

If imitations be done away with the radiant shining Reality dawn in the souls of men, love and unity must prevail.

Thus will humanity be rescued from the strife and wars of six thousand years, dissensions will pass away and the illumination of unity dawn.

Consider how all the Prophets of God were persecuted and what hardships they experienced.

His Holiness Jesus Christ endured affliction and accepted martyrdom upon the cross in order to call men to unity and love.

What sacrifice could be greater?

He brought the religion of love and fellowship to the world.

Shall we make use of it to create discord, violence and hatred among men?

681. Moses was persecuted and driven out into the desert: Abraham was banished; Muhammad took refuge in caves; the Bab was killed and Baha'u'llah was exiled and imprisoned fifty years. Yet all of them desired only fellowship and love among men. They endured hardships, suffered persecution and death for our sakes that we might be taught to love one another, be united and affiliated instead of discordant and at variance. Enough of these six thousand years which have brought such vicissitudes and hardships into the world! Now in this radiant century let us try to carry out the good pleasure of God, that we may be rescued from these things of darkness and come forth into the boundless illumination <p353> of heaven, -- shunning division and welcoming the divine oneness of humanity. Perchance, God willing, this terrestrial world may become as a mirror celestial upon which we may behold the imprint of the traces of Divinity, and the fundamental qualities of a New Creation may be reflected from the reality of love shining in human hearts. Thus from the light and semblance of God in us may it be indeed proved and witnessed that God has created man after His own image and likeness.

PRAYER

682. O my God! O my God! Verily I invoke Thee and supplicate before Thy threshold, asking Thee that all Thy mercies may descend upon these souls. Specialize them for Thy favor and Thy truth, O Lord! unite and bind together the hearts, join in accord all the souls and exhilarate the spirits through the signs of Thy sanctity and oneness. O Lord! suffer these faces to become radiant through the light of Thy oneness. Strengthen the loins of Thy servants in the service of Thy Kingdom, O Lord! Thou Possessor of great mercy! O Lord of forgiveness and pardon! forgive our sins, suffer us to be pardoned for our shortcomings and cause us to turn to the Kingdom of Thy clemency, invoking the

Kingdom of Might and Power, humble at Thy shrine and submissive at the appearance of Thy evidences. O Lord God! make us as waves of the sea, as flowers of the garden, united, agreed, fresh and verdant through the bounties of Thy love. O Lord! dilate the breasts through the signs of Thy oneness and make all humanity as waves of the same ocean, as star shining from the same height of glory, as luscious fruits borne upon Thy Tree of Life. Verily Thou ART the Almighty, the Self-subsistent, the Giver, the Forgiving, the Pardoner, the Omniscient, the One Creator!

All Souls' Unitarian Church New York City July 14, 1912.

LOVE

683. Every subject presented to a thoughtful audience must be supported by rational proofs and logical arguments. Proofs are of four kinds: first, through sense-perception; second, through the reasoning faculty; third, from traditional or scriptural authority; <p354> fourth, through the medium of inspiration. That is to say there are four criterions or standards of judgment by which the human mind reaches its conclusions.

We will first consider the criterion of the senses. This is a standard still held to by the materialistic philosophers of the world. They believe that whatever is perceptible to the senses is a verity, a certainty, and without doubt existent. For example they say "here is a lamp which you see, and because it is perceptible to the sense of sight you cannot doubt its existence. There is a tree; your sense of vision assures you of its reality, which is beyond question. This is a man; you see that he is a man -- therefore he exists." In a word, everything confirmed by the sense is assumed to be as undoubted and unquestioned as the product of five multiplied by five: it cannot be twenty-six nor less than twenty-five. Consequently the materialistic philosophers consider the criterion of the senses to be first and foremost.

But in the estimation of the divine philosophers this proof and assurance is not reliable; nay, rather, they deem the standard of the senses to be false because it is imperfect. Sight for instance is one of the most important of the senses, yet it is subject to many aberrations and inaccuracies. The eye sees the mirage as a body of water -- regards images in the mirror as realities when they are but reflections. A man sailing upon the river imagines that objects upon the shore are moving, whereas he is in motion and they are stationary. To the eye the earth appears fixed while the sun and stars revolve about it. As a matter of fact the heavenly orbs are stationary and the earth turning upon its axis. The colossal suns, planets and constellations which shine in the heavens appear small, nay infinitesimal to human vision, whereas in reality they are vastly greater than the earth in dimension and volume. A whirling spark appears to the sight as a circle of fire. There are numberless instances of this kind which show the error and inaccuracy of the senses. Therefore the divine philosophers have considered this standard of judgment to be defective and unreliable.

The second criterion is that of the intellect. The ancient philosophers in particular considered the intellect to be the most important agency of judgment. Among the wise men of Greece, Rome, Persia and Egypt the criterion of true proof was reason. They held that every matter submitted to the reasoning faculty could be proved true or false, and must be accepted or rejected <p355> accordingly. But in the estimation of the people of insight this criterion is likewise defective and unreliable, for these same philosophers who held to reason or intellect as the standard of human judgment have differed widely among themselves upon every subject of investigation. The statements of the Greek philosophers are contradictory to the conclusions of the Persian sages. Even among the Greek philosophers themselves there is continual variance and lack of agreement upon any given subject. Great difference of opinion also prevailed between the wise men of Greece and Rome. Therefore if the criterion of reason or intellect constituted a correct and infallible standard of judgment, those who tested and applied it should have arrived at the same conclusions. As they differ and are contradictory in conclusions, it is an evidence that the method and standard of test must have been faulty and insufficient.

The third criterion or standard of proof is traditional or scriptural, namely that every statement or conclusion should be supported by traditions recorded in certain religious books. When we come to consider even the Holy Books -- the Books of God -- we are led to ask: "Who understand these books? By what authority of explanation may these books be understood?" It must be the authority of human reason, and if reason or intellect finds itself incapable of explaining certain questions, or if the possessors of intellect contradict each other in the interpretation of traditions, how can such a criterion be relied upon for accurate conclusions?

The fourth standard is that of inspiration. In past centuries many philosophers have claimed illumination or revelation, prefacing their statements by the announcement that "this subject has been revealed through me," or "thus do I speak by inspiration." Of this class were the philosophers of the Illuminati. Inspirations are the prompting or susceptibilities of the human heart. The prompting of the heart are sometimes satanic. How are we to differentiate them? How are we to tell whether a given statement is an inspiration and prompting of the heart through the Merciful assistance or through the satanic agency?

Consequently it has become evident that the four criterions or standards of judgment by which the human mind reaches its conclusions are faulty and inaccurate. All of them are liable to mistake and error in conclusions. But a statement presented to the mind accompanied by proofs which the senses can accept, which <p356> the faculty of reason can accept, which is in accord with traditional authority and sanctioned by the promptings of the heart, can be adjudged and relied upon as perfectly correct, for it has been proved and tested by all the standards of judgment and found to be complete. When we apply but one test there are possibilities of mistake. This is self-evident and manifest.

684. We will now consider the subject of Love which has been suggested, submitting it to the four standards of judgment and thereby reaching our conclusions.

We declare that love is the cause of the existence of all phenomena and that the absence of love is the cause of disintegration or non-existence. Love is the conscious bestowal of God -- the bond of affiliation in all phenomena. We will first consider the proof of this through sense-perception. As we look upon the universe we observe that all composite beings or existing phenomena are made up primarily of single elements bound together by a power of attraction. Through this power of attraction, cohesion has become manifest between the atoms of these constituent elements. The resultant being is a phenomenon of the lower, contingent type. The power of cohesion expressed in the mineral kingdom is in reality love or affinity manifested in a low degree according to the exigencies of the mineral world. We take a step higher into the vegetable kingdom where we find an increased power of attraction has become manifest among the several elements which form phenomena. Through this degree of attraction a cellular admixture is produced among these elements which make up the body of a plant. Therefore in the degree of the vegetable kingdom there is love. We enter the animal kingdom and find the attractive power binding single elements as in the mineral, plus the cellular admixture as in the vegetable, plus the phenomena of feelings or susceptibilities. We observe that the animals are susceptible to certain affiliation and fellowship, and that they exercise national selection.

Finally we come to the kingdom of man. As this is the superior kingdom, the light of love is more resplendent. In man we find the power of attraction among the elements which compose his material body, plus the attraction which produces cellular admixture or power augmentative, plus the attraction which characterizes the sensibilities of the animal kingdom, but still above and beyond <p357> all these powers we discover in the being of man the attraction of heart, the susceptibilities and affinities which bind men together, enabling them to live and associate in friendship and solidarity. It is therefore evident that in the world of humanity, the greatest king and sovereign is love. If love were extinguished, the power of attraction dispelled, the affinity of human hearts destroyed, the phenomena of human life would disappear.

This is a proof perceptible to the senses, acceptable to reason, in accord with traditions and teachings of the Holy Books and verified by the promptings of human hearts themselves. It is a proof upon which we can absolutely rely and declare to be complete.

But these are only degrees of love which exist in the natural or physical world.

Their manifestation is ever according to the requirement of natural conditions and standards.

Real love is the love which exists between God and His servants -- the love which binds together holy souls.

This is the love of the spiritual world, not the love of physical bodies and organisms.

For example, consider and observe how the bestowals of God successively descend upon mankind; how the divine effulgences ever shine upon the human world!

There can be no doubt that these bestowals, these bounties, these effulgences emanate from love.

Unless Love be the divine motive, it would be impossible for the heart of man to attain or receive them.

Unless love exists the divine blessing could not descend upon any object or thing.

Unless there be love the recipient of divine effulgence could not radiate and reflect that Effulgence upon other objects.

If we are of those who perceive, we realize that the bounties of God manifest themselves continuously, even as the rays of the sun unceasingly emanate from the solar center.

The phenomenal world through the resplendent effulgence of the sun is radiant and bright.

In the same way the realm of hearts and spirits is illumined and resuscitated through the shining rays of the Sun of Reality and the bounties of the love of God.

Thereby the world of existence, the kingdom of hearts and spirits, is ever quickened into life.

Were it not for the love of God, hearts would be inanimate, spirits would with and the reality of man would be bereft of the everlasting Bestowals.

685. Consider to what an extent the love of God makes itself manifest. Among the signs of His Love which appear in the world are the Dawning-Points of His Manifestations. What an infinite degree of Love is reflected by the Divine Manifestations toward <p358> mankind! For the sake of guiding the people they have willingly forfeited their lives to resuscitate human hearts. They have accepted the cross. To enable human souls to attain the supreme degree of advancement they have suffered during their limited years extreme ordeals and difficulties. If His Holiness Jesus Christ had not possessed love for the world of humanity, surely He would not have welcomed the cross. He was crucified for the love of mankind. Consider the infinite degree of that love! Without love for humanity John the Baptist would not have offered His life. It has been likewise with all the prophets and holy souls. If His Holiness the Bab had not manifested love for mankind surely He would not have offered His breast for a thousand bullets. If His Holiness Baha'u'llah had not been aflame with love for humanity, He would not have willingly accepted fifty years' imprisonment.

Observe how rarely human souls sacrifice their pleasure or comfort for others; how improbable that a man would offer his eye or suffer himself to be

dismembered for the benefit of another. Yet all the Divine Manifestations suffered, offered their lives and blood, sacrificed their existence, comfort and all they possessed for the sake of mankind. Therefore consider how much they love! Were it not for their love for humanity, Spiritual Love would be a mere name. Were it not for their illumination, human souls would not be radiant. How effective is their love! This is a sign of the love of God; a ray of the Sun of Reality.

Therefore we must give praise unto God, for it is the light of His bounty which has shone upon us through His love which is everlasting. His Divine Manifestations have offered their lives through love for us. Consider then what the love of God means. Were it not for the love of God all the spirits would be inanimate. The meaning of this is not physical death; nay, rather it is that condition concerning which His Holiness Christ declared "Let the dead bury their dead, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit." Were it not for the love of God, the hearts would not be illumined. Were it not for the love of God the pathway of the Kingdom would not be opened. Were it not for the love of God the Holy Books would not have been revealed. Were it not for the love of God the Divine Prophets would not have been sent to the world. The foundation of all these bestowals is the love of God. Therefore in the human <p359> world there is no greater power than the love of God. It is the love of God which has brought us here together tonight. It is the love of God which is affiliating the East and the West. It is the love of God which has resuscitated the world. Now must we offer thanks to God that such a great Bestowal and Effulgence has been revealed to us. ...

Green Acre, Maine August 16, 1912.

THE ESSENTIAL UNITY

686. He is El-Abha! O ye who are turned to the Supreme Appearance!

Day and night, morn and eve, at sunrise and at sunset, we are remembering with all our hearts and souls, the friends of the Merciful One, asking God's help and confirmation that the believers of the pure territory, the Holy Land, may become excellent in all conditions of morality, characteristics, behaviour, manners, conduct and actions, that they may appear with ecstasy, enthusiasm, love, consciousness, assurance, steadfastness, firmness, concord and harmony, with bright faces and splendid beauty in the community of the world.

O ye friends of God! Today is the day of union and this age is the age of harmony in the world of existence. "Verily, God loveth those who are working in His path in groups, for they are a solid foundation." Consider ye that he says "in groups," united and bounded together, supporting one another. "To work," mentioned in this holy verse, does not mean, in this greatest age, to perform it with swords, spears, shafts and arrows, but rather with sincere intentions, good designs, useful advices, divine moralities, beautiful actions, spiritual qualities, educating the public, guiding the souls of mankind, diffusing spiritual fragrances, explaining divine illustrations, showing convincing

proofs and doing charitable deeds. When the holy souls, through the angelic power, will arise to show forth these celestial characteristics, establishing a band of harmony, each of these souls shall be regarded as one thousand persons and the waves of this greatest ocean shall be considered as the army of the hosts of the Supreme Concourse.

What a great blessing it is when the torrents, streams, currents, tides, and drops are all gathered in one place! They will form a great ocean and the real harmony shall overcome and reign in <p360> such a manner that all the rules, laws, distinctions and differences of the imaginations of these souls shall disappear and vanish like little drops and shall be submerged in the ocean of spiritual unity. By the Ancient Beauty, in this case and condition, the blessings of the great ocean will overflow and canals shall become as spacious an an endless ocean and each drop shall become as a boundless sea!

O ye friends of God! Strive to attain to this high and sublime station and show forth such a brightness in these days, that its radiance may appear from the eternal horizons. This is the real foundation of the Cause of God; this is the essence of the divine doctrine; this is the cause of the revelation of the heavenly Scriptures; this is the means of the appearance of the Sun of the divine world; this is the way of the establishment of God upon the bodily throne.

687. O ye friends of God! Notice that His Holiness the Bab -- May the souls of all the creatures be a ransom to Him! -- for this very eminent intention, exposed His holy breast to the arrows of all casualties. So, as the principal design of the Blessed Perfection -- May the souls of the people of the Supreme Concourse be a ransom to Him! -- was the same great intention, therefore His Holiness the Bab made His blessed breast the target for thousands of bullets from the people of enmity and rancor in this path, and was martyred with great oppression. The pure blood of thousands of divine and holy souls was shed and poured in this path, and how many blessed bodies of the sincere friends of the divine God were hanged on the scaffold!

688. The Blessed Beauty of El-Abha -- May the divine souls of the existence be a ransom to His friends! -- endured personally all kinds of calamities and bore the most violent ordeals. There remained no torture which did not come to His holy body and no suffering which did not descend upon His pure spirit. How many nights He could not take rest, under the chains and heaviness of fetters, and how many days He gave himself not a minute's repose because of the burden of fetters and chains!

From Neyaveran to Tihran that pure spirit, who was brought up on a bed of down, was forced to run, with bare head and bare feet, under chains and fetters, and, in a dark and narrow subterranean prison, He was put with murderers, thieves, criminals and malefactors; at every moment a new torture was inflicted <p361> upon Him and at every moment His martyrdom was expected by all.

After a long time, he was sent from the city of His residence to foreign countries. For many years, in Baghdad, at every moment a new arrow was darted

toward His holy breast, and at every instant a sword was bent on His pure body. At no instant was there any hope for safety and security, and the enemies, with utmost dexterity were attacking the blessed soul from all sides, and He alone, personally, resisted them all.

After all these hardships and calamities, He was sent from Baghdad in Asia to Europe, and in that terrible exile, great affliction, vehement torture and constant attack, the plots, caluminations, enmity, rancor and hatred of the people of the Bayan were added to those which came from the people of the Qur'an. The pen in unable to explain it all, but surely you have heard and learned about it.

After twenty-four years in the greatest prison, Acca, His life was ended in great trouble and hardship.

In short, all the time of the sojourn of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'u'llah) -- May the souls of all existence be a ransom to His forbearance! -- in this mortal world, He was either restrained with chains or kept under hanging swords, enduring the most painful afflictions. At last, in this greatest prison, His holy body was extremely weakened from the intense sufferings and His beautiful person became as weak as a web from this continual hardship. His main purpose is bearing this heavy burden and all these troubles which gave forth their waves like an ocean, accepting the chains and fetters and showing forth the great forbearance, was for the sake of harmony, concord and union among all the people of the world and for the establishment of the signs of the real unity among all nations, until the essential Unity (of God) might (at last) appear in the existing realities, and the light of the saying: "Thou seest no difference among the creatures of God" might shine forth upon the whole world.

689. O friends of God! Now is the time of movement and striving -- then try and endeavor! As the Blessed Perfection -- May my soul be a ransom to the dust under the feet of His friends! -- was constantly in the field of martyrdom, we, also, must endeavor to pour out our lives, and to hear, with our spiritual ears, the divine advices and exhortations, leaving our limited beings and forsaking the vain ideas of differences of the physical world, in <p362> order to serve this eminent purpose and this principal design, which has been planted by the hand of divine favor; and not veil, with the dark clouds of self-interest and superstition, the light emanating from the Kingdom of Abha, nor become as barring dikes to the waves of the supreme ocean, nor prevent the diffusion of the fragrances of the garden of the glorious Beauty, nor stop the inundation of the rains of the divine grace in this day, nor hinder the rays of the Sun of Reality.

This is what God has commanded in His Scriptures, Books and holy Tablets, declaring His commandments to His sincere servants.

Upon you be the mercy and the blessings of God!

Star of the West, Vol. 7, No. 5.

SPIRIT

690. In the world of existence there is nothing so important as spirit. Nothing is as essential as the spirit of man. The spirit of man is the most noble of phenomena. The spirit of man is the meeting between man and God. The spirit of man is the cause of human life. The spirit of man is the collective center of all virtues. The spirit of man is the cause of the illumination of this world. The world may be likened to the body and man may be likened to the spirit of the body, because the light of the world is this spirit. Man in the world is the life of the world, and the life of man is the spirit. The happiness of the world depends upon man, and the happiness of man is dependent upon the spirit. The world may be likened to the lamp chimney, whereas man may be likened to the light itself. Man may be likened to the lamp, the spirit to the very light within the lamp. Therefore let us speak <p363> these human emanations have come. To them the eye and the ear are due; by them the senses of taste, smell and touch are caused; and when these elements are decomposed, these senses are likewise decomposed. This is the statement of the materialistic philosophers.

But the philosophers of God say, No! the spirit does exist; the spirit is living and eternal. Because of the objections of the materialistic philosophers, therefore, the wise men of God have advanced rational proofs in regard to the validity of the spirit. The materialistic philosophers do not believe in the Books of God, and, hence, for them traditional proofs are no evidence; materialistic proofs are necessary. Consequently, the philosophers and wise men of God have said that it is firmly established that existing phenomena may be resolved into grades, that is to say, the mineral, vegetable or animal kingdoms, which possess either the functions augmentative or the functions tangible.

692. When we look at the mineral we discover that it exists and is possessed of virtue, that is to say, the power of cohesion. When we consider the vegetable we see that it possesses the power of the mineral plus the power of growth. Therefore, it is evident that the vegetable kingdom is superior to the mineral. When we look at the animal kingdom we discover that the animal possesses both the power of the vegetable and those of the mineral, because it is both material and endowed with the virtues augmentative. It is possessed of the virtues of a kingdom, whereof the mineral and vegetable are deprived. That is to say, the animal has the sense of hearing, sight, taste, smell and touch, the five senses of perception. It likewise has the power of memory. These do not exist in the lower kingdoms.

693.

Just as the animal is more noble than the vegetable and the mineral, so is man superior to the animal.

When we look at the animal we see that, although it possesses the five senses, it is bereft of ideation; that is to say, it is not in touch with that which lies beyond nature, it is bereft of spiritual susceptibilities, it is bereft of the attractions of conscience, it is not in touch with the world of God, it

cannot deviate one hair's breadth from the law of nature.

It is different from man.

Man is possessed of the emanations of conscience; he has intelligence and perception and is capable of discovering mysteries in the universe.

All the human industries we see, all the inventions and undertakings we <p364> observe, are mysteries of nature and at one time were hidden; but the reality of man has discovered these mysteries.

As a matter of fact, according to nature's laws, these things should be hidden and latent, but man having transcended the laws of nature, discovered these mysteries and brought them from the invisible state to the invisible plane.

See what a marvel man is!

Consider electricity -- one of the mysteries of creation.

Under the requirement of natural law it should remain latent, but man discovered this power, brought it forth from the invisible state to the visible plane and utilized its energies.

That is to say, man transcended this law of nature.

How many of the mysteries of nature have been penetrated!

Columbus, while in Spain, discovered America.

Man is capable of discovering that the sun is stationary, while the earth revolves around it.

The animal cannot do this.

Man perceives the mirage is an illusion.

This is beyond the power of the animal.

The animal can only perceive through sense impressions, but cannot grasp intellectual realities.

The animal cannot conceive of the power of thought.

This is an intellectual matter and not limited to the senses.

The animal cannot conceive of the fact that the earth is spherical.

Intellectual phenomena are human powers.

All creation is captive of nature; it cannot deviate a hair's breadth from the laws established by nature.

But man wrests the sword from nature's hand and uses it upon nature's head.

For example, it is a requirement of nature that man should be a dweller upon the earth, but the power of the human spirit transcends the law and he soars aloft in aeroplanes.

This is contrary to the law and requirement of nature.

He sails at high speed upon the ocean.

He dives beneath its surface in submarines.

He imprisons the voice in a phonograph.

He communicates in the twinkling of an eye from the East to the West.

These are some of the things we know to be contrary to the law of nature. Man transcends nature's laws. The animal, the vegetable, the mineral cannot do this. This can only be done through the power of the spirit, because the spirit is the reality. But in the physical powers and senses man and the animal are partners. In fact, animal is often superior to man in sense perception. For instance, the vision of some animals is exceedingly acute; the ear of the animal can detect a voice at a long distance. Consider the instinct of a dog; it is much greater than a man's. But although the animal shares with man all the physical virtues and senses, a <p365> spiritual power is bestowed upon man, of which the animal is devoid. This is proof that there is something in man which is absent in the animal; there is a faculty in man which is minus in the animal; there is a virtue in man which is lacking in the animal. This is the spirit of man. All these wonderful accomplishments are due to the efficacy and penetration of the spirit of man. Were man bereft of this spirit, none of these accomplishments would have been possible. This is a proof that man is possessed of a spirit. This is evident as the sun at midday.

694.

All creatures of material organism are limited to an image or form.

That is to say, every created material being is possessed of one form.

It cannot possess two forms at the same time.

For example, a body may be triangular, spherical, square, a hexagon or an octagon, but it is impossible for a given object to be triangular and spherical simultaneously; it cannot possess two shapes at one time.

It may be either triangular or square.

If it is to become square it must first rid itself of the triangular shape.

It is absolutely impossible for it to be a square and triangular at the same time.

That is to say, in the reality of the creatures the different forms cannot be simultaneously possessed.

But in the reality of man all geometrical figures can be simultaneously conceived.

In other realities one image must be forsaken in order that another might be possible.

This is the law of change and transformation, and change and transformation are harbingers of mortality.

Were it not for change and transformation in form, phenomena would be immortal, but because phenomena are subject to change and transformation from one figure or shape to another, they are mortal.

But the reality of man is possessed of all virtues; he does not have to give up one image for another as other mere bodies do.

Therefore in that reality there is no change and transformation; there it is immortal and everlasting.

Verily the body of man may be in America but his spirit laboring and working in the far East, discovering, organizing and systematizing.

Although governing, making laws, erecting a building in Russia, his body is still here in America.

What is this power, which notwithstanding it is embodied in America, is still working in the east, organizing, systematizing, destroying, upbuilding?

It is the spirit of man.

This is irrefutable.

When you wish to reflect upon or consider a matter you consult something within you.

You say, shall I do it, or shall I not do <p366> it?

Is it better to do this or abandon it?

Whom do you consult?

Who is within you deciding this question?

Surely there is a distinct power, a distinct ego.

Were it not distinct from your ego you would not be consulting it.

It is greater than the faculty of thought.

It is your spirit which teaches you, which inspires and decides upon matters.

Who is it that interrogates?

Who is it that answers?

There is no doubt that it is the spirit and that there is no change or transformation there, for it is not composed of composite elements; and anything that is not composed of elements is eternal.

Change and transformation are peculiarities of composition.

There is no change and transformation in the spirit.

In proof of this the body may become weakened in its members.

It may be dismembered or one of its members may be incapacitated.

The whole body may be paralyzed and yet the mind, the spirit, remains ever the same.

The mind decides, the thought is perfect and yet the hand is withered, the feet have become useless, the spinal column is paralyzed, and there is no muscular movement at all, but the spirit is in the same status.

Dismember a healthy man -- the spirit is not dismembered.

Amputate his feet; his spirit is there.

He may become lame, the spirit is not affected.

The spirit is ever the same; no change or transformation can you perceive, and because there is no change or transformation, it is everlasting and permanent.

695. Consider man while in the state of sleep; it is evident that all his parts and members are at a standstill, are functionless. His eye does not see, his ear does not hear, his feet and hands are motionless, but, nevertheless, he does see in the world of dreams, he does hear, he speaks, he walks, he may even fly in an aeroplane. Therefore it becomes evident that though the body may be dead yet the spirit is permanent. Nay, the perceptions may be keener when man's body is asleep, the flight may be higher, the hearing may be better; all the functions are there and yet the body is at a standstill. Hence it is proof that there is a spirit in the man and in this spirit there is no distinction as to whether the body be asleep or absolutely dead and dependent. The spirit is not incapacitated by these conditions; it is not bereft of its existence, it is not bereft of its perfections. The proofs are many -- innumerable.

These are all rational proofs. Nobody can deny them. As we have shown there is a spirit and that this spirit is permanent and everlasting, we must strive to learn of it. May you become informed <p367> of this spirit, hasten to render it divine, to have it become sanctified and holy, and that it may become the very light of the world illuminating the East and the West.

I wish I might come and talk with you every night. I entertain great love for you all and am greatly pleased with this meeting.

Theosophical Society Boston, Mass. July 24, 1912.

THE SECOND BIRTH

696. Supplication.

O Thou kind God! In the utmost state of humility and submission do we entreat and supplicate at Thy Threshold, seeking Thy endless confirmations and illimitable assistance. O Thou Lord! regenerate these souls and confer upon them a new Life. Animate the spirits, inform the hearts, open the eyes and make the ears attentive. From Thy ancient Treasury confer a new being and animus and from Thy pre-existent Abode assist them to attain to new confirmations.

O God! Verily the world is in need of reformation. Bestow upon it a new existence. Give it newness of thoughts and reveal unto it heavenly sciences. Breathe into it a fresh spirit and grant unto it a holier and higher purpose.

O God! Verily Thou hast made this century radiant and in it Thou has manifested Thy merciful Effulgence. Thou hast effaced the darkness of superstitions and permitted the Light of Assurance to shine. O God! grant that these servants may be acceptable at Thy Threshold. Reveal a new heaven and spread out a new earth for habitation. Let a new Jerusalem descend from on high. Bestow new thoughts, new life upon mankind. Endow souls with new perceptions, and confer upon them new virtues. Verily Thou art the Almighty, the Powerful! Thou art the Giver, the Generous!

697. It is easy to bring human bodies under control. A king can bring under his rule and authority the bodies of his subjects throughout a whole country. In former centuries kings and rulers have brought under their individual control many millions of men and have been thereby enabled to carry out whatsoever they desired. If they willed to bestow happiness and peace they <p368> could do so, and if they determined to inflict suffering and discomfort they were equally capable. If they desired to send men to the field of battle, none could oppose their authority, and if they decreed their kingdoms should enjoy the bliss and serenity of immunity from war, this condition prevailed. In a word, how many kings and rulers have been able to control millions of human beings and have exercised that authority!

The point is this, that to gain control over physical bodies is an extremely easy matter, but to bring spirits within the bonds of serenity is a most arduous undertaking. This is not the work of everybody. It necessitates a divine and holy potency, the potency of Inspiration, the power of the Holy Spirit. For example, His Holiness Christ was capable of leading spirits into that abode of serenity. He was capable of guiding hearts into that haven of rest. From the day of His Manifestation to the present time, He has been resuscitating hearts and quickening spirits. He has exercised that vivifying influence in the realm of hearts and spirits, therefore His resuscitation is everlasting.

698. In this century of the "latter times" Baha'u'llah has appeared and so resuscitated spirits that they have manifested powers more than human. Thousands of His followers have given their lives and while under the sword, shedding their blood, they have proclaimed "Ya-Baha-ul-Abha!" Such resuscitation is impossible except through a heavenly potency, a power supernatural, the divine power of the Holy Spirit. Through a natural and mere human power this is impossible. Therefore the question arises, "How is this resuscitation to be accomplished?"

699. There is certain means for its accomplishment by which mankind is regenerated and quickened with a new birth. This is the "second birth" mentioned in the Heavenly Books. Its accomplishment is through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The resuscitation or rebirth of the spirit of man is through

the science of the Love of God. It is through the efficacy of the Water of Life. This life and quickening is the regeneration of the phenomenal world. After the coming of the spiritual springtime, the falling of the vernal showers, the shining of the Sun of Reality, the blowing of the breezes of perfection all phenomena become imbued with the life of a new creation and are reformed in the process of a new genesis. Reflect upon the material springtime. <p369>

When winter comes the trees are leafless, the fields and meadows withered, the flowers die away into the dust-heaps; in prairie, mountain and garden no freshness lingers, no beauty is visible, no verdure can be seen. Everything is clad in the robe of death. Wherever you look around you will find the expression of death and decay. But when the spring comes, and the showers descend, and the sun floods the meadows and plains with light, you will observe creation clad in a new robe of expression. The showers have made the meadows green and verdant. The warm breezes have caused the trees to put on their garments of leaves. They have blossomed and soon will produce new, fresh and delightful fruits. Everything appears endowed with a newness of life; a new animus and spirit is everywhere visible. The spring has resuscitated all phenomena and has adorned the earth with beauty as it willeth.

700. Even so is the Spiritual Springtime when it comes. When the Holy, Divine Manifestations or Prophets appear in the world, a cycle of radiance, an age of mercy dawns. Everything is renewed. Minds, hearts and all human forces are re-formed, perfections are quickened, sciences, discoveries and investigations are stimulated afresh and everything appertaining to the virtues of the human world is re-vitalized. Consider this present century of radiance and compare it with past centuries. What a vast difference exists between them! How minds have developed! How perception have deepened! How discoveries have increased! What great projects have been accomplished! How many realities have become manifest! How many mysteries of creation have been probed and penetrated! What is the cause of this? It is through the efficacy of the Spiritual Springtime in which we are living. Day by day the world attains a new bounty. In this radiant century neither the old customs nor the old sciences, crafts, laws and regulations have remained. The old political principles are undergoing change and a new body politic is in process of formation. Nevertheless some whose thoughts are congealed and whose souls are bereft of the light of the Sun of Reality seek to arrest this development in the world of the minds of men. Is this possible?

In the unmistakable and universal re-formation we are witnessing when outer conditions of humanity are receiving such impetus, when human life is assuming a new aspect, when sciences are stimulated afresh, inventions and discoveries increasing, civic <p370> laws undergoing change and moralities evidencing uplift and betterment, is it possible that spiritual impulses and influences should not be renewed and reformed? Naturally new spiritual thoughts and inclinations must also become manifest. If spirituality be not renewed, what fruits come from mere physical reformation? For instance, the body of man may

improve, the quality of bone and sinew may advance, the hand may develop, other limbs and members may increase in excellence, but if the mind fails to develop of what use is the rest? The important factor in human improvement is the mind. In the world of the mind there must needs be development and improvement. There must be reformation in the kingdom of the human spirit, otherwise no result will be attained from betterment of the mere physical structure.

In this new year new fruits must be forthcoming, for that is the provision and intention of spiritual reformation. The renewal of the leaf is fruitless. From the reformation of bark or branch no fruit will come forth. The renewal of verdure produces nothing. If there be no renewal of fruit from the tree, of what avail is the reformation of bark, blossom, branch and trunk? For a fruitless tree is of no special value. Similarly, of what avail is the reformation of physical condition sunless they are concomitant with spiritual reformations? For the essential reality is the spirit; the foundational basis is the spirit; the life of man is due to the spirit; the happiness, the animus, the radiance, the glory of man -- all are due to the spirit; and if in the spirit no reformation takes place, there will be no result to human existence.

Therefore we must strive, with life and heart, that the material and physical world may be reformed, human perception become keener, the merciful Effulgence manifest and the radiance of Reality shine. Then the Star of Love shall appear and the world of humanity become illumined. The purpose is that the world of existence is dependent for its progress upon reformation; otherwise it will be as dead. Consider, if a new springtime failed to appear, what would be the effect upon this globe, the earth? Undoubtedly it would become dissolute and life extinct. The earth has need of an annual coming of spring. It is necessary that a new bounty should be forthcoming. If it comes not, life would be effaced. In the same way, the world of spirit needs new life, the world of mind necessitates new animus and development, <p371> the world of souls a new bounty, the world of morality a reformation, the world of divine effulgence ever new bestowals. Were it not for this replenishment, the life of the world would become effaced and extinguished. If this room is not ventilated and the air freshened, respiration will cease after a length of time. If no rain falls all life-organisms will perish. If new light does not come, the darkness of death will envelop the earth. If a new springtime does not arrive, life upon this globe will be obliterated.

Therefore, thoughts must be lofty and ideals uplifted in order that the world of humanity may become assisted in new conditions of reform. When this reformation affects every degree, then will come the very "Day of the Lord" of which all the Prophets have spoken. That is the day wherein the whole world will be regenerated. Consider: are the laws of past ages applicable to present human conditions? Evidently they are not. For example, the laws of former centuries sanctioned despotic forms of government. Are the laws of despotic control fitted for present day conditions? How could they be applied to solve the questions surrounding modern nations? Similarly, we ask, would the status of ancient thought, the crudeness of arts and crafts, the insufficiency of

scientific attainment, serve us today? Would the agricultural methods of the ancients suffice in the twentieth century? Transportation in the former ages was restricted to conveyance by animals. How would it provide for human needs today? If modes of transportation had not been reformed the teeming millions now upon the earth would die of starvation. Without the railway and fast-going steamship, the world of the present day would be as dead. How could great cities, such as New York and London, subsist if dependent upon ancient means of conveyance? It is also true of other things which have been reformed in proportion to the needs of the present time. Had they not bee reformed, man could not find subsistence.

If these material tendencies are in such need of reformation, how much greater the need of the world of the human spirit, the world of human thought, perception, virtues and bounties! Is it possible that need has remained stationary while the world has been advancing in every other condition and direction? It is impossible!

Therefore, we must invoke and supplicate God and strive with the utmost effort in order that the world of human existence in <p372> all its degrees may receive a mighty impulse, complete human happiness be attained and the resuscitation of all spirits and emanations be realized through the boundless favor of the Mercy of God.

New Thought Forum Boston, Mass. August 25, 1912.

BAHA'I CENTERS

701. I have the utmost joy to find in the distant West such an established Baha'i center, where the friends of God have assembled associating with each other in the utmost love. This afford me great joy and I ask God that this revered assemblage may be made the cause of illumining the East and the West. This is my wish, and with the utmost happiness I am grateful on account of the susceptibilities of your conscience.

Today the people in general are self-occupied. They are engaged either in warfare, or in commercial, political, industrial, or agricultural pursuits. Their interests are of a personal nature; they are thinking of self-aggrandizement, having no desire, no purpose save the acquisition of worldly possessions.

The assemblage in the world which today is thoughtful of God, the assemblage which is occupied with the thought of illumining the world of humanity, the assemblage which is occupied with the mentioning of the kingdom of God, the assemblage which has as its chief motive the good pleasure of the Lord of Hosts, is verily the assemblage of Baha'is, for they have no intention, aim, or purpose save the attainment of the good pleasure of God, and entrance into the Kingdom of God, and of being the promulgators of the religion of God. They are the spreaders of the fragrances of God. These are the desires of the assemblage of the Baha'is.

All the sects of the world are on the wane except the Baha'i assemblages which day by day are achieving ideal progress, for they are confirmed by God's assistance.

I hope that many such assemblages may be founded in America, and that from all the centers of the world people may come to the Baha'i assemblages and there manifest the oneness of the world of humanity.

The people in general are all asleep; they are all inadvertent; <p373> they are all slumbering, because their thoughts are confined to materialism; they are not at all thoughtful of God's thoughts except you, who are thinking of God. Verily, you are the spirit of the world! You are the cause of the light of the world! You are the salt of the earth!

Do not look at your limited numbers now. Ere long you will see that the divine Radiance has flooded all regions. The believers in the various sects are decreasing in numbers, whereas the people of God are constantly increasing, growing stronger and greater, day by day becoming more effective.

702. Consider how the assembly of His Holiness Christ was limited to eleven souls, but that assemblage has given birth to innumerable assemblies! How many denominations are sheltered beneath it! Its efficacy is evident, and it has become the dominant factor of all the civilized world.

Now, praise be to God, your assembly is a great one; you are about two hundred in number; judge thereby of the future.

703. The Baha'is are not in one place only, but you will find Baha'i centers in most parts of the world, and they are daily increasing and spreading. You must rest assured, knowing for a certainty that the confirmations of the Kingdom are yours, that the favors of Baha'u'llah are with you, that the power heavenly is with you, that the assistance of God is with you. If all the inhabitants of the earth should gather they will fail to withstand you, for they are on the wane, whereas you are waxing stronger. They are retrogressing; you are progressing.

704. When they exiled us from Persia, from Tihran to Baghdad, the journey was made in thirty stages and in these thirty stages we did not find one Baha'i. Now in every one of these places there are great numbers of Baha'i friends.

705. Notwithstanding that the ruler of Persia and the Sultan of Turkey opposed the Cause so violently -- exercising tyranny and oppression, thinking to extinguish the Lamp of God -- yet this Lamp day by day grew in radiance, its powers increased and its illumination became greater, until it reached such a degree that now its lights are spread throughout the world -- even as far as San Francisco, which is very far from Persia. See what this will mean in the future!

706. At the time His Holiness Jesus Christ was crucified, there were eleven disciples and even they were doubting -- Peter heading <p374> them -- until Mary the Magdalene, that lioness of God, strengthened them and was the cause of confirming them. Then consider how great were the results!

707. And now, His Holiness Baha'u'llah, when He ascended, had half a million souls who were self-sacrificing and all were perfectly firm and staunch! Consider what a marvelous potency this will exercise.

Rest assured in the favor of God, and know that God is your assister. So with great power, with great confidence, strive that the lights of God may be spread and in this country from East to West the light may be shining.

Be confident! Have no doubt about it! This banner of Baha'u'llah will be unfurled, waving toward all regions! The lights of the Kingdom of God will illumine all these climes, and the call of God will reach the hearing of all the American Republic!

708. Hence, you must in the utmost love, in the utmost of sanctity strive night and day that you may be the cause of spreading the light. If we are not the instruments in spreading this Cause, others will be chosen. Then let us strive so that this crown may be placed upon our heads -- that we may be the promulgators of the light, that we may be the resuscitators of souls, that we may be sight-givers to the blind, that we may be the remedies to the sick, that we may guide the people. Otherwise, God will raise up a people who will hoist the standard of God, who will ignite the Lamp of God, who will conquer the cities of the hearts, who will show forth the potency of the Word of God.

But for us the desire is that we may be the instruments and thus we may be crowned. Otherwise, God is able to create instruments whereby His Word shall be published broadcast. If this does not happen today, and if not on the morrow, then on the day after tomorrow. But the desire is that today the Word may be spread, that our activity shall be beneath this banner and standard, that we shall be the cause of giving forth the summons of God, that we may invite the souls to the Kingdom, that we may be their guides.

Thus, this will be the cause of illuminating faces and will win the praise of all the Manifestations of God. This is our hope. This is the utmost of our desires, and I ask God that He may aid you all, that He may aid me, that together we may be occupied in the service of the Kingdom of God. <p375>

This is a very blessed gathering. It is a source of great joy. It is a source of great potency in the world. This very gathering has its effects. The assemblage here and the fellowship exercised are a magnet attracting the confirmations of God. Even now the confirmations of God are surrounding such a gathering as this. Ere long you will see its signs and your joy will reach the superlative degree.

Baha'i Assembly
San Francisco
October 5, 1912.

SUMMONS TO ACTIVITY

709. He is God!

O God! O God! Thou dost behold me, how my forehead is laid upon the dust of

humility and submission and how my face is covered in the earth of the threshold of thy singleness. O thou my Lord, the Unconstrained! Thou seest me lowly and contrite, supplicating, entreating and imploring toward the Kingdom of thy light by day and by night, that thou encircle us with the eye of thy providence and the glances of the outlook of thy mercifulness.

O Lord! Forgive our sins, pardon our shortcomings and deal with us under all circumstances through thy grace and generosity. O our Lord! We are sinners, but thou art the merciful forgiver. We are transgressors, but thou art the clement pardoner. Absolve our iniquities, remove our sorrows, destine for us through thy bestowal severance from the world, occupation with thy mentioning, enkindlement with the fire of thy love, perpetual contemplation of thy signs, the knowledge of thy words, meditation over thy verses and the attraction of thy lights.

O Lord! O Lord! These are thy servants; they have turned their faces toward thy countenance and they have resolved their joy and happiness in thy favor and bounty. Strengthen their backs in thy obedience. Reinforce their lives in thy adoration. Perfume their hearts with the fragrances of thy holiness. Ordain for them presence in the paradise of thy meeting. Suffer them to become such servants as peruse the verses of unity in the assemblages held in thy name, as attract the rays of singleness from the lamp of thy bestowal, as who are drawn towards thy beauty, humble before thy glory; who have abandoned aught else <p376> save thee and rely upon thy protection and preservation; as those rendered meek by the sway of thy Word, made submissive before thy beloved ones; as those diffusing thy fragrances, disclosing thy mysteries, informing people with thy teachings and suffering mankind to become rejoiced through thy glad tidings. Verily, thou art powerful over that which thou willest, and thou feedest whomsoever thou willest with thy hand. The world and the Kingdom belong to thee, and thou art the mighty, the omnipotent and the beloved!

O ye believers of God! O ye dear friends of Abdul Baha!

The goblet of the Covenant is overflowing and the outpouring of the bestowal of the Luminary of Effulgence is manifest and apparent in the regions from behind the invisible world, like unto the radiant moon.

The twilight of the Moon of Guidance is scattered and the grace of the Orb of the Beauty of Abha is continuous and renowned.

The fame of the grandeur of the Most Great Name hath reached the East and the West and the call of the Cause of the Blessed Perfection hath encircled the North and the South.

The fragrances of sanctity are being wafted and the breeze of life is passing by.

The Word of God is upheld and the everlasting Glory is revealed.

The lamp of divine unity is ignited and the flame of clemency is glowing.

From every direction the cry of "Ya-Baha-el-Abha" is raised and in the Orient

and in the Occident the teachings of God have struck wonder to the heart of every thinker.

Pamphlets and periodicals are being published and circulated in America, Europe and Africa.

A section of the press is engaged in praise and eulogy, and another section of the press is awakening the interests of the nations by exclaiming: "This Movement is stupendous and of paramount importance."

Some people express wonder and astonishment; other complain bitterly on account of their intense prejudices.

One of the nations says: "After the departure of His Holiness Christ only a limited number of people were His disciples; notwithstanding this His fame became world conquering and His song reached the sphere of ether."

But the Blessed Perfection -- may my life be a sacrifice to His believers! -- on the eve of His ascension, hundreds and thousands were associating together under the shade of the flag of His majesty.

From this illustration you can draw the conclusion that a mighty resurrection will be witnessed in the not far distant future.

One of the greatest apostles of His Holiness the Spirit <p377> was the mighty Peter; but, notwithstanding this, before Christ's crucifixion he became agitated and was harassed with fear; while thousands of souls, singing, dancing and clapping their hands, have given up their lives and hastened toward the city of martyrdom, for the sake of and on the path to the Most Great Name -- may be identity be a sacrifice to His friends!

In short, the affairs of the Cause revolve around just such a center of self-abnegation. How self-evident it is that the believers of God must clothe themselves in these days with the attributes of self-sacrifice, consecrate their time to the teachings of the heedless ones, diffuse the sweet aroma of the teachings, re-enkindle the white flame and make apparent the splendor of the Merciful.

O ye friends of God! Is it befitting that we rest for one moment after the departure of the Beauty of the Clement, or seek the organization of committees, or exhale one breath of comfort, or taste the honey of fleeting pleasure, or lay our heads on the cushions of repose, or pursue the luxury of the world of creation? No! I declare by God! This is not the condition of loyalty nor the state of faithfulness and appreciation.

Therefore, O ye friends! With heart and soul yearn for the service of the divine threshold and like unto the righteous ones become ye the guardians of the court of the merciful. Servitude at the holy threshold means the spread of the fragrances, the explanation of signs and verses, thralldom at the hall of unity and attachment to the palace of mercifulness. Consider with what severance, attraction and enkindlement the apostles of His Holiness the Spirit -- may my life be a ransom to Him! arose in the promulgation of the Word of God

after His crucifixion. We hope from the bestowal of the True One that we may likewise walk in the footsteps of those pure ones and hasten unhesitatingly and rejoicingly toward the arena of love and sacrifice. This is the inexhaustible outpouring. This is the grace of His Highness the forgiving Lord.

In these days the progress of the divine principles is impeded in some parts and retarded in others, and this has become conducive to the sorrow and grief of the Supreme Concourse, because the dwellers of the Kingdom of Abha are expecting to see each one of us fulfilling the conditions of loyalty and for the sake of the love of the Greatest Name suffer every form of persecution. A number of the merciful friends forsook their material <p378> tranquillity and composure and travelled from city to city, nay rather, village to village, in order to diffuse the fragrances of God. These souls, endowed with such pure spirits, became the objects of the commendation of the Supreme Concourse -- may my life be a ransom to them! -- for they became confirmed with this most exalted grace. They spent their days amidst the greatest difficulties and hardships, and employed their time in the guidance of the negligent ones.

O ye friends! This is not the time of rest and tranquillity! This is not the season of silence and stillness. The nightingale of the rose garden of uprightness must display its wonderful melodies and trills. The bird of guidance must exhibit its eloquent speech. The light and the heat are the concomitant results of the lamp. The brilliancy of the stars must be everlasting. The existence of the ocean connotes the waves. The birds must soar toward the apex. The pearls are inseparable from their lustre and sweet fragrance must qualify the blossoms of the rose garden of knowledge. It is hoped that through the favor of the living, self-subsistent One, we may become assisted in a befitting manner.

O ye believers of God! Divine teachings are conducive to eternal life, the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity, the means of peace and conciliation, love and salvation, the basis of fellowship, uprightness and friendship in the world of creation, and the instrument of unity and accord, solidarity and interdependence amongst the individuals of the body politic. Consequently you must lay the foundation of this structure in this mortal world; thus you may confer upon it infinite and abundant life and become the source of the enlightenment of the world of existence. It is incumbent upon you to consort with all the nations and people of the world with the utmost love and kindness, and show affection, justice, assistance, consideration and courtesy to all the different communities and sects. Become ye a remedy to every pain, a balsam of healing and recovery to every wound, to every weak one become ye a support and aid and succor every one that is poor. Become ye to the fearful ones the impregnable cave of safety and to the agitated ones a sure asylum. ... In this great cycle it is more acceptable and beloved to close one's eyes to all limitations. The friends may become the manifestors of the qualities of the Merciful and Clement and arise in the <p379> service of all humanity; nay, rather they must be most kind toward the animals; for verily His mercy hath encompassed all things.

O ye believers of God! This is the time of self-abnegation and renunciation and the era of servitude and loyalty. The utmost height of this servant is the station of servitude to His Highness the Almighty. If he becomes accepted at the threshold of servitude, how glorious will be this most excellent gift. Otherwise he will be deprived of the mercy of God. Therefore the utmost hope and aspiration of Abdul Baha is to open his wings in this space, to run toward this field, obtain infinite exhilaration from this wine, be intoxicated with this cup and acquire the longing of heart and spirit. Every other mention save this unchangeable, beloved name (Abdul Baha) will become the cause of grief and sorrow and the source of the greatest regret and illimitable remorse. I request from the friends of God that day and night they may supplicate and implore at the divine Kingdom so that my servitude may become accepted in the threshold of Baha'u'llah.

O ye believers of God! If you wish the joy, happiness and the composure of the spirit and the peace of the conscience of Abdul Baha, strengthen the bonds of union and harmony amongst yourselves so that all of you may become the waves of one sea, the drops of one river, the flowers of one garden, the links of one cuirass, soaring in the atmosphere and breaking forth into one glad song. This is the cause of my everlasting joy! This is the motive of the repose of my mind and heart in the eternal world! ... Today there is no greater service than union and accord amongst the believers. This is the imperative need! This is the happy consummation. This is the most great attainment and the manifest bestowal for those who are sheltered beneath the shadow of the Blessed Tree!

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Diary Notes, January 9, 1914.

CHRISTIANITY

710. The people of Christianity have clung to literal interpretation of the statement in the Gospel that Christ came down from heaven. The Jews likewise at the time of His Manifestation held to outward and visible expectation of the fulfilment of the prophecies. They said, "Messiah shall appear from heaven. This <p380> man came from Nazareth; we know his house; we know his parents and people; it is only hearsay that he descended from heaven. This cannot be proved."

The text of the Gospel states that He came from heaven although outwardly from the matrix of the mother. The meaning is that the Divine Reality of Christ was from heaven, but the body was born of Mary.

Therefore He came according to the prophecies of the Holy Book and likewise according to natural law; His Reality from heaven; His body earthly. As He came before, so must He come this time in the same way. But some arise with objections saying, "We must have literal proof of this through the senses."

711. The Reality of Christ was always in heaven and will always be. This is the intention of the text of the Gospel. For while His Holiness Jesus Christ walked

upon the earth, He said, "The Son of Man is in heaven." Therefore holding to literal interpretation and visible fulfilment of the text of the Holy Books is simply imitation of ancestral forms and beliefs. For when we perceive the Reality of Christ these texts and statements become clear and perfectly reconcilable with each other. Unless we perceive the Reality we cannot understand the meanings of the Holy Books, for these meanings are symbolical and spiritual, such as, for instance, the raising of Lazarus which has spiritual interpretation.

We must first establish the fact that the Power of God is infinite, unlimited and that it is within the Power to accomplish anything.

712. Secondly, we must understand the interpretation of Christ's words concerning "the dead." A certain disciple came to His Holiness and asked permission to go and bury his father. His Holiness answered, "Let the dead bury their dead." Therefore Christ designated as "dead" some who were still living; that is, let the living "dead," the spiritually "dead," bury their father. They were dead because they were not believers in Christ. Although physically alive they were dead spiritually. This is the meaning of Christ's words, "That which is born of flesh is flesh; that which is born of spirit is spirit." He meant that those who were simply born of the human body were dead spiritually, while those quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit were living, eternally alive. These are the interpretations of Christ <p381> Himself. Reflect upon them and the meanings of the Holy Books will become clear as the sun at mid-day.

713. The Holy Books have their special terminologies which must be known and understood. Physicians have their own peculiar terms, architects, philosophers have their characteristic expressions; poets have their phrases, and scientists their terminologies. In the Scripture we read the Zion is dancing. It is evident that this has other than literal interpretation. The meaning is that the people of Zion through great joy shall rejoice. The Jews said, Christ was not Messiah but Anti-Christ, because one of the signs of the Messiah's coming was the dancing of Mount Zion, which had to yet come to pass. In reality, when His Holiness appeared, not only Mount Zion but all Palestine danced and rejoiced. Again in the Scriptures it is said, "The trees shall clap their hands." This is symbolical. There are terms and expressions of usage in every language which cannot be taken literally. For instance, in Oriental countries it is customary to say, "When my friend entered the house, the doors and walls began to sing and dance." In Persia they say, "Get at the head," meaning engage in the matter according to its own terms and usages. All these have other and inner meanings.

714. You have asked concerning approval of Christian Science treatment and healing. Spirit has influence; prayer has spiritual effect. Therefore we pray, "O God; heal this sick one!" Perchance God will answer. Does it matter who prays? God will answer the prayer of every servant if that prayer is urgent. His Mercy is vast, illimitable. He answers the prayers of all His servants. He answers the prayer of this plant. The plant prays potentially, "O God! Send me rain!" God answers this prayer and the plant grows. God will answer any one. He

answers prayers potentially. Before we were born into the world did we not pray, "O God! Give me a mother; give me two fountains of bright milk; purify the air for my breathing; grant me rest and comfort; prepare food for my sustenance and living!" Did we not pray potentially for these needed blessings before we were created? When we came into this world did we not find our prayers answered? Did we not find mother, father, food, light, home and every other necessity and blessing, although we did not actually ask for them? Therefore it is natural that God will give to us when we ask Him. His Mercy is all-encircling. <p382>

715. But we ask for things which the Divine Wisdom does not desire for us, and there is no answer for our prayer. His Wisdom does not sanction what we wish. We pray, "O God! make me wealthy!" If this prayer were universally answered human affairs would be at a standstill. There would be none left to work in the streets, none to till the soil, none to build, none to run the trains. Therefore it is evident that it would not be well for us if all prayers were answered. The affairs of the world would be interfered with, energies crippled and progress hindered. But whatever we ask for, which is in accord with Divine Wisdom, God will answer. Assuredly!

For instance, a very feeble patient may ask the doctor to give him food which would be positively dangerous to his life and condition. He may beg for roast meat. The doctor is kind and wise. He knows it would be dangerous to his patient, so he refuses to allow it. The doctor is merciful, the patient ignorant. Through the doctor's kindness the patient recovers; his life is saved. Yet the patient may cry out that the doctor is unkind, not good, because he refuses to answer his pleading.

716.

God is merciful.

In His Mercy He answers the prayers of all His servants when according to His Supreme Wisdom it is necessary.

When Christians act according to the teachings of Christ, they are called Baha'is.

For the foundations of all the Divine Prophets and Holy Books are one.

The difference among them is one of terminology only.

Each springtime is identical with the former springtime.

The distinction between them is only one of the calendar -- 1911, 1912, etc.

The difference between a Christian and a Baha'i therefore is this; there was a former Springtime and there is a Springtime now.

No other difference exists because the foundations are the same.

Whoever acts completely in accordance with the teachings of Christ is a Baha'i.

The purpose is the essential meaning of "Christian," not the mere word.

The purpose is the Sun itself and not its dawning points.

For though the Sun is one sun, its dawning points are many.

We must not adore the dawning points but worship the Sun.

We must adore the reality of religion and not blindly cling to the appellation "Christianity."

The Sun of Reality must be worshipped and followed.

We must seek the fragrance of <p383> the rose from whatever bush it is blooming; whether Oriental or Western.

Be seekers of Light, no matter from which lantern it shines forth.

Be not lovers of the lantern.

At one time the Light has shone from a lantern in the East, now in the West.

If it comes from North, South, from whatever direction it proceeds, follow the Light.

Dublin, New Hampshire
August 5, 1912.

IMMORTALITY

717. I have great joy this evening in being present at this meeting. Praise be to God! I see before me faces of souls who have capacity, all of whom have for their greatest desire the investigation of truth, which is conducive to the greatest joy.

According to the philosophy of God, in the material or phenomenal world there are two great issues or affairs:

One is that which concerns life, the other concerns death.

One is relative to existence, the other to non-existence; one is composition, the other decomposition.

People imagine that existence is the expression of reality or being, and that non-existence is the expression of annihilation -- some imagining that man's death means his annihilation.

This is a mistake.

Total annihilation is an impossibility.

At most, composition is subject ever to decomposition or disintegration; that is to say, existence means that certain elements have become composite and from that composite a being is formed -- inasmuch as these elements have gone into the formation of endless forms of genesis we have the variegated expressions of life; and non-existence simply means the opposite or decomposition of these forms.

For instance, certain elements have formed man, then this composite man is subject to disintegration.

This is no other than death, but the elements remain just the same.

Hence, total annihilation is an impossibility.

Existence will never be non-existence.

It would be the same as saying that light can become darkness, and light can never become darkness.

Existence can never become non-existence, hence there is no death for man; nay, rather, man is everlasting, everliving, and as a rational proof thereof the following is advanced, that every atom of the phenomenal elements is transferable from one form to another, from one degree to another.

For example, take the grain <p384> of sand or dust; you can say that that grain traverses all the degrees of existence.

Once it goes into the formation of the mineral in becoming petrified, as the rock; once it become vegetative in becoming the tree; at another time it becomes an animal, and still at another time, a later period, it becomes man.

Hence it traverses or is transferred from one degree to another degree in the phenomenal existence, but to non-existence, never.

Non-existence, therefore, is an expression applied to change of form.

People consider that this transference or apparent change is death or annihilation, whereas it is never so.

You may consider this very point which I presented, namely, the grain of sand which in the mineral kingdom at first existed; later on it was transferred from that lowest form of life to the vegetable, later to the animal, and at last to the human kingdom, showing that it is only a transformation and not an annihilation, for the elements are ever present, and elements only change forms, hence there is no death, it is life everlasting.

For example, you can see that when clay dies in the mineral kingdom, it becomes a tree; but it does not die, it has been transformed only.

It has been transferred from the mineral kingdom to the vegetable kingdom.

This vegetable is used or consumed by the animal, and there, when utilized, you can say it dies, but in reality it has become transformed and transferred to the animal kingdom.

The animal is utilized by man.

It dies in that animal form, or kingdom, but it is transmuted or transformed to the human kingdom, consequently it becomes evident that there is no annihilation.

Death, therefore, is applicable to a change or transference from one degree to

another.

In the mineral kingdom there was a spirit, the mineral spirit; in the vegetable kingdom it became transformed and reappeared as a vegetative spirit; in the animal kingdom it attained the animal spirit, and in the human kingdom it aspired to the human spirit, hence it is only degrees or transferences, and there never is for man annihilation.

Man is everlasting, everliving.

And if we think of death it is only an imaginary term implying change.

The reality is this, that it is only a transference from one degree to another, from one form of composition or genesis to another, and transferences should never be called death.

We will take, for example, this light, and supposing we say that this light, having reappeared in another incandescent lamp, has died in the one and <p385> reappeared in another.

This is not death.

These perfections of the mineral were translated or transformed into the vegetative, and from the vegetable kingdom they were transformed to the animal, the virtue always attaining plus, or the superlative degree, and from the vegetable kingdom they were transferred into the animal and human, and we find the same virtues manifesting themselves more fully, therefore we see that the tree never died, that the animal has not died, but what must be said is that the reality of the vegetable or animal entity, or the mineral reality, has been transferred from a lower form to a higher form, finally attaining the superlative degree.

Therefore death is only an expression applicable to these changes, and the question of non-existence is a relative one.

Absolute non-existence is inconceivable.

For example, this rose becomes disintegrated and this symmetry is corrupted, but the elements remain changeless; nothing affects that elemental being.

It is impossible for the elements whereof this rose is formed to become non-existent, and it is imply that these elements go from one degree or are transferred from one state to another, and man only through his ignorance is afraid of death; death is imaginary and absolutely unreal; it is human imagination.

The bestowal and grace of God have rendered the realm of existence alive and full of being.

For existence there is no change or transformation; existence is ever existence, and it can never be translated into non-existence.

It is only a graduation.

A degree beneath the highest degree is considered as non-existence.

For example, this dust beneath our feet as compared to our being is non-existent.

The human body becomes dust and you can say it has become non-existent, therefore this dust in comparison or in relation to the higher form of human being, is as non-existent, but in its own sphere it is existent, it has its mineral being; therefore it is well proved that absolute non-existence is impossible, it is only relative.

The purpose is this: that the everlasting bestowal of God vouchsafed to man is never subject to corruption; inasmuch as He has endowed existence or the phenomenal world with being, it is impossible for it to become non-being, for it is the very genesis of God; it is in the realm of creation; it is a creational world and not a subjective world, and that bounty is continuous and permanent.

For instance, He endows man with the bestowal of being, and that bounty or bestowal is continuous and there is no cessation; <p386> therefore, just as the rays of the sun are continuous, the heat of the sun emanates forever, no cessation is conceived for it, even so that bestowal of God as regards humanity is ever descending upon it, is ever continuous, and never is there severance therefrom.

If we say that the bestowal of existence at some time ceases, it would be the same as saying that the sun can exist with cessation of its rays.

Is it possible for the sun to have a cessation of its effulgence or rays?

Therefore the effulgences of existence are ever-present and continuous.

The conception of annihilation is a factor in human degradation, it is the cause of human debasement, it is the cause of human fear, it is the cause of the dispersion of human thought; but the conception of composition or existence is conducive to human sublimity, the cause of human progress, the cause of human virtues, therefore it behooves man to never think of non-existence, of death -- which is absolutely an imaginary thing; he must never think of that which degrades him, nor think of the degradation of the human soul.

Man must see himself ever living, so that hour by hour he may advance until the human reality may become more apparent.

If he considers non-existence he will become utterly incompetent; his will will be weakened; his power will not remain; love of progress will wax cold, and the acquisition of human virtues will cease.

Therefore you must thank God that God has rendered you all alive and existent.

Endeavor day and night to acquire more virtues of the human type, and consider yourselves as the lights which never have any sunset, any setting; an existence which is never non-existence; a light which is never to be followed by darkness.

When man is not endowed with insight he is not informed of these important mysteries.

This outer retina, so delicate, may sometimes be a hindrance to the insight, which can alone perceive.

The bestowals of God which are visible in all phenomenal life are sometimes rendered invisible because of the delicate retina, which sometimes forms a hindrance, which makes him uninformed, but when those scales are off, when the veil is torn asunder, then the great signs of God will become visible, he will witness the light filling the world.

The bestowals of God are all manifest.

The promises of heaven are present.

The favors of God are surrounding all, but if this cover should remain he is made to deny all these great signs, and is deprived of <p387> all these manifestations of God's bestowals; therefore we must endeavor in order that the veil concealing the insight may be removed, that we may witness the manifestation of God's signs and discern the mysterious graces of God, and see that the material blessings, as compared with the spiritual blessings, are as nothing.

The spiritual blessings of God are the greatest.

When we were in the mineral kingdom, although there we were endowed with certain blessings of God, they were incomparable with the blessings in the human kingdom.

Although when we were in the matrix of the mother we were blessed with certain blessings of God, as compared with the blessings or bestowals of this world they were as nothing.

Likewise if we transfer from the phenomenal phases of life to the spiritual and attain insight, we shall consider that the material blessings, as compared with the spiritual blessings, are as nothing.

In the spiritual world the divine bestowals are infinite, for that which is in the material world is subject to disintegration; for every composition there is a decomposition, but in the world of spirit there is no separation, there is no decomposition.

It is absolute immortality and entire solidity and firmness.

It is changeless; therefore we must thank, God for He has created for us material blessings and also spiritual bestowals.

He has given us material graces and heavenly ones; He has given us sight that we may see these lights, and He has given us insight wherewith we can see the lights of God.

He has given us the outer ear wherewith we can hear the melodies, and He has given us the inner hearing wherewith we can hear the melodies of God.

Therefore, we must strive with heart and soul in order that the perfections and virtues latent within the realities of the phenomenal world may become developed and manifested, for the human reality may be compared to the seed.

If you sow the seed and nurture it, a mighty tree can be forthcoming therefrom.

The virtues of that seed will follow, become revealed, it will become branch, give its leaves and blossoms, and fructify.

All these virtues were hidden within the inner part of the seed.

Through the bounty or blessing of cultivation these virtues became apparent.

Likewise the Merciful God has deposited within the human realities certain distinct virtues which are hidden or latent.

When education touches the human being those virtues which are the deposits of God, like unto the unfoldment of the <p388> tree within the fecundated seed, will become apparent from the human reality.

Theosophical Society
Chicago
May 4, 1912.

ADDRESS TO THE JEWS

718. The first bestowal of God in the world of humanity is religion, because religion consists in Divine teachings to men; and most assuredly Divine teachings are preferable to all other sources of instruction.

Religion confers upon man the life everlasting. Religion is a service to the world of morality. Religion guides humanity to the eternal happiness. Religion is the cause of everlasting honor in the world of man.

Religion has ever helped humanity to progress. As a proof thereof, let us first investigate religion from an unbiased standpoint, and let us find out whether religion is the cause of progress and development, or whether it is not; whether or not religion is the impetus which allows man to advance extraordinarily.

Let us investigate independently, that we may not be bound by blind imitations or dogmas, for were we to be bound by blind imitations, then some will believe that religion is a cause of happiness, and others will disagree, saying that religion has been a cause of degradation. Hence, we must first investigate as to this: whether or not religion is the cause of human advancement, and let us give it impartial and thorough research, that no doubt shall linger in our minds.

How can we find this out? That is, how can we discover whether or not religion has been the cause of human progress or retrogression?

We will first investigate the founders of religions -- the prophets. We will review the episodes of their lives, the events prior to their rise, and those

subsequent thereto. But we shall not present to you certain tradition which are subject to both credence and refutation. Nay, rather we shall cite certain historical facts provable to all, certain facts and evidences well known throughout the world, which are irrefutable. They are these:

719. Amongst the great prophets was His Holiness Abraham <p389> who, being an iconoclast and a herald of the oneness of God, was banished by the people from his native land.

Let us observe right here how religion is an impetus to progress.

His Holiness Abraham founded a family, and this family God blessed, and it was through the religious basis that the house of Abraham made progress and advancement. Through the Divine benediction, noteworthy and famous prophets have issued from the lineage of Abraham. There appeared an Ishmael. There appeared an Isaac. There appeared a Jacob. There appeared a Joseph. There appeared a Moses. There appeared an Aaron. David issued therefrom. There appeared Solomon. The Holy Land was conquered by them and was theirs by right, and the great Solomonic wisdom was established; and this was due to the religion which they founded.

Hence, we learn that religion is the cause of honor, is the cause of advancement, is the cause of civilization, is the cause of the happiness of mankind, even as the episode of Abraham well illustrates this fact and as his family clearly points thereto. Even unto the present time his house is visible and manifest throughout the world.

Let us discover, or consider, the greater phase of it.

720. The children of Israel were in bondage and captivity in the land of Egypt. They were subject to the tyranny and oppression of the Copts. They were in the utmost state of degradation. One Copt conquered or subdued one hundred Septs. They would make use of them as workingmen or laborers.

The children of Israel were then in abject poverty, in the lowest abasement, in the lowest degree of ignorance, the lowest degree of barbarism when, suddenly, His Holiness Moses appeared amongst them.

When His Holiness Moses appeared amongst them, outwardly he was no other than a shepherd, but through the power of religion he exhibited such majesty and grandeur and influence that they continue to be seen. His prophethood was spread throughout the land. His law was the foundation of the law.

He Holiness Moses was single and alone, and this single, lone personage, through the power of religion, rescued all the children of Israel from bondage. He conducted them to the Holy land, and there he founded the great civilization which has become permanent, a civilization and an education which are most noteworthy. <p390>

Thereby they attained to the highest pitch of honor and glory. He saved them from their bondage and captivity. He imbued them with qualities which caused them to progress.

721. They proved to be a civilizing people, an educated and a scholarly people. Their philosophy became noteworthy. Their industries became famous. In one word, along all the lines of advancement which characterize a progressive people they achieved progress. They reached such a height that at last they were the ones who established this Solomonic sovereignty, and their sciences and arts reached such a state of comprehensiveness that even the Greek philosophers were wont to journey to Jerusalem, in order to study with the Jews philosophy and the basis of law. According to Oriental history, this is an established fact.

Even Socrates, the Greek philosopher, came to the Holy Land and consorted with the Jewish doctors, studying wisdom or philosophy with them. He studied with them the basis of their belief, and when he returned to Greece he there formulated his basis for Divine unity, and there he advanced his belief in the immortality of the spirit after the dissolution of the body. These verities Socrates learned no doubt from the Jewish doctors with whom he came in contact.

Likewise Hippocrates and many other philosophers used to go to the Holy Land, to Palestine, and there they acquired lessons from the Jewish prophets, studying with them the basis of ethics and morality, returning to their countries with contributions which have made Greece famous.

722. A cause, or a movement, which renders a weak nation, such as the Jews were before, strong and changes them into a mighty and powerful nation; which rescues them from captivity and causes them to attain sovereignty; which transforms their ignorance into knowledge and science, and endows them with an impetus to advance along all degrees of attainment -- this is not merely a theory or a story which I am telling; it is an historical fact which is provable, it is history well established in the world -- makes it evident that religion is the cause of honor to men; that religion is the cause of the sublimity of man.

When we speak of religion we mean the foundation of religion, not the blind imitations, or dogmas, which has crept in afterwards, and which are ever destructive, which are ever the cause of the effacement of a nation, which are ever the cause of hindrance <p391> to national progress. Ever, as it is recorded in the Torah, and confirmed in all histories, when the Jews were fettered with imitations of religion, then the wrath of God became manifest.

723. When they had lost the foundations of the law of God, then God sent Nebuchadnezzar, who came and conquered the Holy Land. He killed all the men; he made captive the women and children; he fired all the hamlets and villages. Seventy thousand Jews did Nebuchadnezzar make captive and take with him to Persia. He destroyed the Holy of Holies, the great Temple. In short, he burned the Torah: the Holy Bible was burned through his cause.

Thus we learn that the foundation of the Divine religions is ever the cause of progress; and thus, when it leaves the central axis, the holy foundation becomes destroyed, and as it were beclouded or surrounded by certain blind imitations. Then the reverse takes place: it is a cause of debasement, a cause

of degradation.

Even so was the case with the Greek nation when they were the conquerors, and they were followed by the Romans, by whom the Israelites were almost done away.

Under Titus, the Roman emperor, when he was a general of the Roman army, the Holy Land was laid waste and made wilderness, and the Israelites were scattered broadcast in the world, because he also killed their noteworthy men, pillaged their possessions, and made Jerusalem a heap of dust. That was the scattering and dispersion of the Jews, which ever since has continued.

Hence we learn that the foundation of the religion of God, which was laid by His Holiness Moses, was the cause of eternal honor, was the cause of the advancement of the nation, was the cause of the life of the Hebrew people, was the cause of homage paid forever to this notable people. The dogmas, or blind imitations, which later crept in, proved to be the causes of the Israelites' destruction. They caused the Israelites to be scattered throughout the earth, and to be expelled from their rightful habitation, the Holy Land.

In short, what is the mission of prophets?

724. The mission of the prophets is no other than the advancement or the education of the world of humanity. The prophets are the real teachers or educators. The prophets are the universal instructors. <p392>

Should we desire to find out whether or not any of these great souls or prophets has been a prophet, we will investigate the facts of the case, and the line of our investigation will be the question of education. If he has been an educator, if he has really educated a people, if he has trained a nation, causing it to attain to the highest point of knowledge after it had been in the lowest abyss of ignorance, then we are sure that such a one is a prophet; and this is a clear and plain mode of procedure, and irrefutable.

725. We do not have to go to other proofs. We do not have to cite miracles, saying that out of rock water gushed forth, because such a miracle may be denied by others -- they may refute it. We do not need such miracles.

The very deeds of Moses are proofs conclusive concerning his prophethood. We are in need of no further evidences: evidences which are usually refutable. If a man be unbiassed, be fair, and investigate reality, he will without doubt bear testimony to the fact that the personage Moses was verily the man of God, a great personage.

Let us not digress. Let us go to the subject. But here I wish you to be very fair in your judgment, setting aside, for the moment, all religious prejudice.

726. All of us should thoroughly investigate or search for verities, because the purpose of the religions of God has been proved to be no other than the education of humanity and the cause of amity and fellowship among men. Therefore I wish to cite this principle: that the foundations of the religions of God are one. They are not multiple, for they are realities. Reality does not admit multiplicity, because every one of the Divine religions is divisible into

two departments. One department is concerned with the world of morality, and that is essential. It is concerned with the ethical sublimity of human nature. It is concerned with the advancement of the world of humanity in general. It has to do with the knowledge of God. It has to do with the discovery of the verities of existence. This is the ideal aspect, the essential department. This department is not subject to change or transformation at all. This is one; it is the foundation of all the religions of God. As regard that, all the religions are one and the same.

The second department, or division, has to do with social <p393> transactions, or human conduct under certain special conditions, and is not the essence of reality. This is subject to change and transformation according to the exigency or requirements of the time and place.

To wit: In the time of Noah, certain conditions required that all sea-foods be allowable, or lawful. During the period of the prophethood of Abraham it was considered allowable, because of a special condition, for a man to marry his aunt; even as Sarah was the sister of Abraham's mother. During the time of Adam it was expedient that a man marry his own sister -- even as Abel, Cain and Seth, the children of Adam married their own sisters, because (so they thought) it was according to the conditions of the time; but in the law of the Torah that practise was abrogated, forbidden. There were certain laws, formerly recognized, which were annulled during the time of Moses. For example, camel's flesh was accepted as food proper for man during the time of Abraham, but was made unlawful during the time of Jacob.

Such changes and variations in religious teaching have to do with the non-essential affairs of existence. They are not important.

His Holiness Moses lived in the wilderness of Terah, where retribution had to be made a matter of direct action. There were no penitentiaries. There were no means of indirect punishment. Hence, according to the exigency of the time and place, it was a law of God that an eye was to be for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. If a man's tooth were broken by another man, his tooth would be broken. If a man, for instance, caused the deafness of another, the other would make him deaf. But you cannot do that now. You would not blind a man because he accidentally blinded you. Is it possible to carry such things out?

727. In the Torah there were ten commandments concerning murder. Is it possible to carry these out? Can these ten ordinances concerning the punishment of murderers be carried out?

In modern times conditions are such that even the question of capital punishment -- the one form which some nations have decided to apply in cases of murder -- is a moot question. Wise men are discussing whether it is feasible or not.

Thus, everything that is valid, is valid only for the time. The exigency of that age required that if a man committed theft of so much as one dollar they chopped off his hand, but now you cannot cut off a man's hand for a thousand

dollars. You cannot do <p394> it; it is impossible. It was useful for that time, but things are useful only according to the exigencies of the time. Time changes, and when the times change, the laws have to change. But remember, these laws are not of importance -- they are the externalities of religion. The essentials, which are spiritual in character, which have to do with the morality, which have to do with the ethical development of man, which have to do with the faith of man -- they are of the ideal, are necessary and permanent; they have one foundation, and they are not subject to change or variation.

728. Hence, for the fundamental basis of the religion of God there is no change nor variation. That is the basis, the fundamental foundation of religion. That never, never changes.

The basis of the law of Moses His Holiness Christ promulgated. That selfsame foundation of religion was promulgated by Muhammad. All the great prophets have served that foundation. They have served this reality. Hence, the purpose and result of all the prophets have been one and the same. They were the advancement of the body politic. They were the cause of the honor of mankind. They were the Divine civilizations of man, whose foundation is one; and, as we declared before, the proofs establishing the validity of a prophet, the proofs of his inspiration, are, after all, the very deeds of valor and greatness which he performs. If a prophet has proved to be instrumental in the elevation of mankind, undoubtedly his prophethood is valid.

Again I wish you to be very fair in the judgment of these following remarks.

729. At a time when the Israelites had again been put in captivity, at a period when the Roman Empire had dispersed and effaced the Hebrew nation because the law of God had, as it were, passed from amongst them, and the foundations of the religion of God had been destroyed: at such a time as this Jesus Christ appeared amongst them.

When His Holiness Christ appeared amongst the Jews, the first thing he did was to proclaim the validity of the Mosaic mission. He declared that the Torah, the Old Testament, was the Book of God. He declared that all the prophets of Israel were valid and true. He eulogized Moses, and through his commendation the name of Moses was spread throughout the entire world. The fame of Moses, through the Christian movement, was spread broadcast.

Before the rise of Christ it is a fact that in Persia the name <p395> of Moses had not been heard. Throughout India they had no knowledge of Judaism, and were it not for the Christianizing of Europe it would not have had the knowledge of the Old Testament which it has. Throughout Europe there was not a copy of the Old Testament. But listen to this and judge it aright: it was through the instrumentality of Christ, it was through the translation of the New Testament -- the little volume of the Gospel -- that the Old Testament, the Torah, was translated into six hundred languages and spread throughout the world at large.

The names of the Israelitish prophets became household names everywhere. All the nations of the world believed in this, that verily the children of Israel

were chosen people of God, that this nation was a Holy nation, that the blessing of God attended this nation, and that all the prophets of God which had issued therefrom were the sources of Divine inspiration, the daysprings of inspiration, and each one of them shone like a star.

Hence, His Holiness Christ really promulgated Judaism, for he was a Jew, and not opposed to Jews. He did not deny the validity of the prophethood of Moses. Nay, he rather promoted it. He did not efface the Torah. Nay, rather did he promulgate it. At most it comes to this: that the portion of that dispensation which had to do with social transactions -- this portion underwent revision, and that fact is not important; but the essential teaching of Moses he virtually promoted. To do this, he left no effort undone.

730. Likewise, with the superlative power and the efficacious Word of God he gathered together most of the nations of the East and the West. This was accomplished at a time when those nations were in the utmost of contention and strife. He ushered all of them into the overshadowing tent of the oneness of humanity. He so educated them that they united and agreed, even so that the Roman, the Greek, the Chaldean, the Assyrian and the Egyptian nations were perfectly blended, and the heavenly civilization was the result. Now, this efficacy of the Word, and this heavenly power, which are extraordinary, prove conclusively the validity of His Holiness Christ. Consider how his heavenly sovereignty is yet permanent and lasting. Verily, this is conclusive proof and manifest evidence.

731. Then we behold, appearing from another horizon, the prophet of Arabia -- Muhammad. <p396>

Perchance you do not know that the first proclamation of Muhammad to his tribe was this statement: "Moses was verily a prophet of God, and the Torah is a book of God. Verily, O people, ye must believe in the Torah and in Moses and the prophets. Ye must accept as valid all the prophets of Israel."

In the Qur'an, the Muhammadan Bible, there are seven statements -- in fact, seven repetitions -- of the episode of Moses, and in all his historical summaries Muhammad praises Moses.

He states that His Holiness Moses was the greatest prophet of God; that God guided him in the Sahara, or wilderness, of Terah; that through the light of guidance Moses harkened to the summons of God; that he was the bearer of the Ten Commandments; that all the contemporary nations of the world arose against him; that eventually Moses triumphed over them all, because falsehood is ever defeated by truth.

There are many instances of this kind in Muhammad. I am citing merely a few.

732. Consider that His Holiness Muhammad was born amongst the savage and barbarian nations of Arabia, lived amongst them, and (outwardly) was illiterate and uninformed of the Holy Books of God.

The Arabian nations were in the utmost state of ignorance and barbarism -- to

the degree that they buried their daughters alive. They considered this action to be the greatest valor and of the nature of sublimity. Under the Persian and Roman governments they lived in conditions of extreme captivity and bondage. They were scattered throughout the Arabian desert, subject to continuous strife and bloodshed.

When the light of Muhammad dawned, the darkness of ignorance was dispelled from the Arabian desert. Those barbarous nations, in a short space of time, reached a superlative degree of civilization, so that their civilization extended even to Spain, and was established in Baghdad, whence it was transplanted to Europe.

What greater proof than this could there be concerning the prophethood of Muhammad -- unless a man close his eyes to justice and obstinately remain unfair?

Thus the Christians are now believers in Moses. They believe that he was a prophet of God, and they praise him most highly. And the Muhammadans are believers in Moses, praising him most <p397> highly, proving his validity; and likewise they believe in His Holiness Christ and praise him highly.

Has harm come to these nations -- the Christians and the Muhammadans -- because they have admitted the validity of Moses and accepted him? No, on the contrary, it proves that in this respect they have been fair minded.

Then what harm is there that the Jewish nation, in turn, should also now praise His Holiness Christ, should also no praise His Holiness Muhammad, and by this humane acceptance and praiseworthy view of the subject do away forever with this enmity and hatred which have divided mankind so many centuries -- that bloodshed shall cease, that this fanaticism shall pass away forever, that all mankind may be united; and this corruption shall cease as soon as that acceptance is established.

The Christians and the Muhammadans admit that Moses was the Interlocutor of God. Why do not you say that Christ was the Word of God? Why do you not say just the few words that will do away with all this sort of thing, and there will be no hatred left, no fanaticism left, no warfare in the Land of Promise, no bloodshed whatever. Then forever will there be peace.

733. Verily, I now declare unto you that Moses was no other than the Interlocutor of God; that Moses was the most noteworthy prophet of God; that Moses brought the fundamental law of God; that Moses was the founder of the ethical basis which has proved the source of human happiness.

What harm is there in this? Do I lose by saying this to you? And believing it as a Baha'i? Not at all. On the contrary, as a Baha'i it benefits, and the founder of the Baha'i Movement, Baha'u'llah, is well pleased with me and confirms me therein. He says: "Well done; you have been fair in your judgment; you have impartially investigated the truth; you have arrived at the conclusion full well; you have believed in a prophet of God, in Moses; you have accepted the Book of God, the Torah."

Now, inasmuch as it is possible to do away with this prejudice with such a bit of liberalism in the world, why not do it?

Why not do away with this continuous strife? Why not establish a bond which can easily connect the hearts of men? What harm is there in this religion that every one should praise the teacher or the founder of another religion? Even as the other <p398> nations praise His Holiness Moses, and admit that Moses was the founder of Judaism, why not have the Hebrews also praise the other great men?

What harm comes from it? None at all. It is no loss to you at all. Nay, rather you thereby contribute to the welfare of mankind. Nay, rather you would be instrumental in establishing the happiness of the world of humanity. Nay, rather the eternal honor of man is dependent on this modern liberalism.

Inasmuch as our God is one, and He has created us all -- He provides for us all, He protects us all, and we acknowledge such a kind and clement Lord -- why should we, His children, His followers, fight one another? Why should we so readily break one another's hearts?

God is so merciful and kind, and His aim in religion has ever been to establish the bond of unity and affinity!

Praise be to God, the medieval ages of darkness have passed away, and this century of radiance has dawned -- this century wherein the reality of things is becoming evident; this century wherein science has discovered the means to master nature; this century which in its entirety is a service to the world of humanity; this century wherein we have established the foundation of the world of humanity. Is it fitting that we should still linger in our fanaticism and tarry in our prejudice? Is it behooving that we should still be bound with old fables and superstitions, and be handicapped by the superannuated beliefs of dark ages that are past -- again waging religious wars, again fighting one another, still shedding each other's blood, shunning one another, anathematizing one another? Is it becoming?

Is it not better for us to be most loving to one another? Is it not preferable for us to enjoy fellowship together? And unite and sing anthems of unity towards God, and praise all the prophets in a good and praiseworthy spirit?

734. Then you will observe how the world shall prove to be a paradise and the promised day shall come. That will be the day when the wolves and the sheep shall quaff from the same stream; when, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, the quail and the eagle shall together enjoy the same nest, and the gazelle, or the deer, shall enjoy the same pasture with the lion.

What does this mean?

It means that this fact is symbolic of contending nations -- that <p399> religions, which have formerly been as wolves and sheep, divergent creeds, will associate with each other. Notwithstanding their former attitude, they will then, through this liberality, associate with each other in perfect fellowship,

in the utmost love.

This is the meaning of the statement of His Holiness Isaiah. Otherwise, you will never come to see a day when this prophecy can literally come to pass; for the wolf will never enjoy the companionship of the sheep, and the lion and the deer will never be seen together -- because the lion and the deer will see each other, but the deer will be within the lion, and the sheep will be ever the prey of the wolf. As you know, the teeth of the lion are carnivorous. It has no molars to enjoy grass. Hence it must eat flesh.

Therefore this prophecy is symbolic of the following condition: when certain nations and races, symbolized or typified by lions and wolves and sheep, amongst whom there is no bond or fellowship or association, will be unified in that day of promise, and will treat each other with the utmost kindness and liberality.

735. In a word: the age is ours when fellowship is to be established.

The century has come when all the nations are to be unified. The century has come when all the nations shall enjoy international peace.

The century has come when all the races and tribes of the world shall do away with racial prejudice and associate fully. The century has arrived when all the nativities of the world shall prove to be one home of the human family. Thus may mankind, in its entirety, rest comfortably and in peace under the great and broad tabernacle of the one Lord.

Congregation Emmanu-el
San Francisco
October 12, 1912

THE MICROCOSM AND THE MACROCOSM

736. When we ponder over the reality of the microcosm, we discover that in the microcosm there are deposited three realities. Man is endowed with an outer or physical reality. It belongs to the material realm, the animal kingdom, because it has sprung <p400> from the material world. This animalistic reality of man he shares in common with the animals.

The human body is like animals subject to nature's laws. But man is endowed with a second reality, the rational or intellectual reality; and the intellectual reality of man predominates over nature.

All these sciences which we enjoy were the hidden and recondite secrets of nature, unknowable to nature, but man was enabled to discover these mysteries, and out of the plane of the unseen he brought them into the plane of the seen. Thus while man's physical reality is captive to nature, man is the governor of nature through this intellectual power.

Yet there is a third reality in man, the spiritual reality. Through its medium one discovers spiritual revelations, a celestial faculty which is infinite as regards the intellectual as well as physical realms. That power is conferred

upon man through the breath of the Holy Spirit. It is an eternal reality, an indestructible reality, a reality belonging to the divine, supernatural kingdom; a reality whereby the world is illumined, a reality which grants unto man eternal life. This third, spiritual reality it is which discovers past events and looks along the vistas of the future. It is the ray of the Sun of Reality. The spiritual world is enlightened through it, the whole of the Kingdom is being illumined by it. It enjoys the world of beatitude, a world which had no beginning and which shall have no end.

That celestial reality, the third reality of the microcosm, delivers man from the material world. Its power causes man to escape from nature's world. Escaping, he will find an illuminating reality, transcending the limited reality of man and causing him to attain to the infinitude of God, abstracting him from the world of superstitions and imaginations, and submerging him in the sea of the rays of the Sun of Reality. This fact is proved from scientific as well as spiritual evidence.

737. When we ponder over the conditions of phenomena, we observe that all phenomena are composed of single elements. This singular cell-element travels and has its coursings through all the grades of existence. I wish you to ponder carefully over this. This cellular elements has at some time been in the mineral kingdom. While staying in the mineral kingdom it has had its coursings and transformations through myriads of images and forms. <p401>

Having perfected its journey in the mineral kingdom, it has ascended to the vegetable kingdom; and in the vegetable kingdom it has again had its journeys and transformations through myriads of conditions. Having accomplished its functions in the vegetable kingdom, the cellular elements ascends to the animal kingdom.

In the animal kingdom again it goes through the composition of myriads of images, and then we have it in the human kingdom. In the human kingdom likewise it has its transformations and coursings through multitudes of forms. In short, this single primordial atom has had its great journeys through every stage of life, and in every stage it was endowed with a special and particular virtue or characteristic.

738. Consequently, the great divine philosophers have had the following epigram: All things are involved in all things. For every single phenomenon has enjoyed the postulates of God, and in every form of these infinite electrons it has had its characteristics of perfection.

Thus this flower once upon a time was of the soil. The animal eats the flower or its fruit, and it thereby ascends to the animal kingdom. Man eats the meat of the animal, and there you have its ascent into the human kingdom, because all phenomena are divided into that which eats and that which is eaten. Therefore, every primordial atom of these atoms, singly and indivisibly, has had its coursings throughout all the sentient creation, going constantly into the aggregation of the various elements. Hence do you have the conservation of energy and the infinity of phenomena, the indestructibility of phenomena,

changeless and immutable, because life cannot suffer annihilation but only change.

The apparent annihilation is this: that the form, the outward image, goes through all these changes and transformations. Let us again take the example of this flower. The flower is indestructible. The only thing that we can see, this outer form, is indeed destroyed, but the elements, the indivisible elements which have gone into the composition of this flower are eternal and changeless. Therefore the realities of all phenomena are immutable. Extinction or mortality is nothing but the transformation of pictures and images, so to speak -- the reality back of these images is eternal. And every reality of the realities is one of the bounties of God.

Some people believe that the divinity of God had a beginning. <p402> They say that before this particular beginning man had no knowledge of the divinity of God. With this principle they have limited the operation of the influences of God.

For example, they think there was a time when man did not exist, and that there will be a time in the future when man will not exist. Such a theory circumscribes the power of God, because how can we understand the divinity of God except through scientifically understanding the manifestations of the attributes of God?

How can we understand the nature of fire except from its heat, its light? Were not heat and light in this fire, naturally we could not say that the fire existed.

Thus, if there was a time when God did not manifest His qualities, then there was no God, because the attributes of God presuppose the creation of phenomena. For example, by present consideration we say that God is the creator. Then there must always have been a creation -- since the quality of creator cannot be limited to the moment when some man or men realize this attribute. The attributes that we discover one by one -- these attributes themselves necessarily anticipated our discovery of them. Therefore, God has no beginning and no ending; nor is His creation limited ever as to degree. Limitations of time and degree pertain to the forms of things, not to their realities. The effulgence of God cannot be suspended. The sovereignty of God cannot be interrupted.

As long as the sovereignty of God is immemorial, therefore the creation of our world throughout infinity is presupposed. When we look at the reality of this subject, we see that the bounties of God are infinite, without beginning and without end.

739. The greatest bounties of God in this phenomenal world are His Manifestations. This is the greatest postulate. These Manifestations are the Suns of Reality. For it is through the Manifestation that the reality becomes known and established for man. History proves to us that apart from the influence of the Manifestations, man sinks back into his animal condition,

using even his intellectual power to subserve an animal purpose. Therefore there is no cessation whatsoever in the future for the appearance of the Manifestations of God, because God is infinite and His purpose cannot be limited in any way. If we ever dare to limit <p403> and circumscribe God's purpose within any bounds, then of necessity we have dared to set limitations to the omnipotence of God. The created has dared to define his Creator!

Consequently, the perfect man ever beholds the rays of the Sun of Truth. The perfect man ever awaits and expects the coming of the effulgence of God, he ever ponders over the methods and purposes of God, knowing that of certainty the realities of the Divine are not finite, the Divine names and attributes are not finite. God's graces and bounties are without limit, and the coming of the Manifestations of God are not circumscribed by time. Were you to enter any Baha'i gathering of the East, it would be difficult to tell who is Christian, who is Jew -- they are like so many flames that have been one mighty flame. All these separate channels, thanks to Baha'u'llah, are converging into one world-stream!

The White Lodge
Wimbledon, England
January 3, 1913.

THE AFTER LIFE

740. Thou hast asked concerning the spirit and its immortality after its departure. Know thou that at the time of tis translation it ascends and ascends until it reaches the presence of God, clothed in a temple (body) which will not become subject to the changes wrought by ages and cycles, nor by the contingencies of the world, nor the emanations thereof. It will continue to exist through the eternality of the Kingdom of God -- its sovereignty, its dominion, its potency. From it will appear the signs of God and His qualities, the providence of God and His bestowal. Verily the pen is unable to move in a befitting manner in explaining this truth -- its exaltation and loftiness. The hand of Mercy shall cause it to enter into men's minds, though it cannot be grasped by an explanation, nor be described by those means which are available to the world.

Blessed is the spirit which abandons the body, previously sanctified and freed from the doubts of the nations. Verily, it moves in the atmosphere of the will of its Lord, and enters into the Supreme Paradise. It is welcomed by the angels of the Most High. It associates with the prophets of God, and His chosen ones, and it converses with them, and relates to them those events which <p404> have happened to it in the path of God, the Lord of both worlds.

Were one to become informed of that which is pre-ordained for the spirit in the worlds of God, the Lord of the Throne and the earth, he would immediately become enkindled with the fire of yearning for this impregnable, exalted, holy and most glorious state of being.

741. The prophets and the messengers have come in order to guide mankind to the

straight path of the True One. Their aim has been no other than the education of the people, so that at the time of death they may depart to the Supreme Friend, with perfect sanctification, purification, and severance. They are the leaven of existence and the greatest means for the appearance of sciences and arts in this world.

742. As to the question concerning the soul, know thou, verily, that "soul" is a term applied to numerous realities, according to the exigencies of the following relations with respect to development in the world of existence:

(1) In the mineral kingdom, soul is called "latent force," silently working for the disintegration of the substance of the mineral.

(2) In the vegetable kingdom it is called "virtue augmentative" or the power of growth, which attracts and absorbs the delicate materials of inorganic substance found in the mineral kingdom of matter, and transforms them into the condition of growth. Thus the inorganic substance found in the mineral kingdom becomes growing vegetable life through the effect of the Word of God. This vegetable soul, i.e., "virtue augmentative," or power of growth is a quality which is produced by the admixture of elements, and appears in accidental organisms, of which contingency is an essential attribute.

(3) In the animal kingdom it is called "sense perception" or instinct. This term soul, as applied to the animal kingdom, is also a natural quality resulting from the mixture of the elements, and it appears from their mingling and combination, for it is a quality which results from the composition of bodies (organisms), and is dispersed at their decomposition. From this we are to understand that the animal soul is not endowed with the capacity of attaining immortality, as the life force is dispersed at the decomposition of the animal tissues.

All these things up to this point are a contingent reality, and <p405> are not a divine reality. But a contingent reality which is perpetuated by the fullness of existence, will then suffer no corruption, and will thus become a divine reality, for the accidental reality is only distinguished from the existent reality by its subjection to corruption. For transformation is an essential necessity to ever contingent reality, and this is what the mature wisdom has deemed advisable.

(4) In the human world, soul signifies the "rational being" or mind. This has a potential existence before its appearance in human life. It is like unto the existence of a tree within the seed. The existence of the tree within the seed is potential; but when the seed is sown and watered, the signs thereof, its roots and branches, and all of its different qualities, appear. Likewise the "rational soul" has a potential existence before its appearance in the human body, and through the mixture of elements and a wonderful combination, according to the natural order, law, conception and birth, it appears with its identity.

Be it known that to know the reality or essence of the soul of man is

impossible, for in order to know a thing, one must comprehend it, and since a thing cannot comprehend itself, to know one's self in substance or essence is impossible. As the comprehender cannot be comprehended, man cannot know himself in reality or essence. In order to obtain knowledge of any reality, or soul of man, the student must study the manifestations, qualities, names and characteristics of man. This much can be stated, that the reality of man is a pure and unknown essence constituting a depository, emanating from the light of the Ancient Entity -- God. This essence or soul of man, because of its innate purity, and its connection with the unseen Ancient Entity, is old as regards time, but new as regard individuality. This connection is similar to that of the ray to the sun -- the effect to the primal Cause. Otherwise, the thing that is generated, or the creature, has no connection with or relation to its Generator or Creator.

Since the pure essence, whose identity is unknown, possesses the virtues of the worlds of matter and of the Kingdom, it has two aspects -- first, the material and physical; second, the mental and spiritual -- which are attributes not found as qualities of matter. It is the same reality which is given different names, according to the different conditions wherein it becomes manifest. Because of its attachment to matter and the phenomenal world, when it governs <p406> the physical functions of the body it is called the human soul. When it manifests itself as the thinker, the comprehender, it is called the mind. And when it soars into the atmosphere of God, and travels in the spiritual world, it becomes designated as spirit.

There are two sides to man. One is divine, the other worldly; one is luminous, the other dark; one is angelic, the other diabolic. In all sensuous conditions man is equal to the animals, for all animal characteristics exist in him. Likewise, divine and satanic qualities are contained in man; knowledge and ignorance; guidance and error; truth and falsehood; generosity and avarice; valor and timidity; inclination towards God and tendency towards Satan. Chastity and purity, corruption and vileness, economy and avidity, good and evil -- all are contained in man.

743 (5) If the angelic aspect becomes more powerful, and the divine power and brightness surround man, then the second birth takes place, and eternal life is found at this point. Man becomes then the noblest among creatures. On the other hand, if sensuous qualities surround, and if terrestrial darkness and sensual passions predominate, if they meet in man only the worldly feelings, if they find him a captive of evil qualities and fallen into everlasting death, then such a man is the basest and most abject among all creatures. In such a man, divine power does not exist. An animal is not considered unjust and evil because of its cruelty and injustice, for it is not endowed, as is man, with divine qualities; but if man falls into the same evil condition, it is evident that he has permitted the divine qualities with which he was endowed to be overcome by his ungodlike attributes. This shows the baseness and meanness that exist in human nature.

Ahmad Sohrab, Diary Notes February, 1914.

COMMUNE TO BE READ BY THE FRIENDS OF GOD IN PERSIA
(Revealed during the War)

744. He is God

Thou seest me, O my God, on this lofty mountain; the sublime and supreme Threshold; the shelter of every great one and the refuge of all the glorious and noble. <p407>

Verily, the youths whose hearts were burning with the fire of the love of God in past ages have taken shelter therein -- the meeting place of the prophets, the refuge of His Holiness Elijah, the shelter of Isaiah. The Spirit of God, Jesus the Christ (upon Him be greeting and praise!) passed over it; and (it was) the Supreme Threshold, pressed by the feet of the Lord of Hosts.

O Lord, this is a mountain to which Thou hast given the name Carmel in the Torah. And Thou hast attributed it to Thyself in the innermost heart of the Tablets and Scriptures.

O Lord, verily, I invoke Thee in this Supreme Threshold, under the wing of the gloomy nights; pray to Thee with throbbing heart and flowing tears, imploring Thee, supplicating between Thy hands, and cry: O my Lord, verily the fire of battles is raging in the valleys, hills and streams, and the conflagration of war is burning even under the seas and high in the air, destroying and devastating. The earth is enveloped by its own fires and the sea is encompassed by its storms, thunderbolts and floods.

O Lord, the souls are stifling, the death rattle is in their throats, the earth quakes, and has become so small that even the birds are frightened in their nests and the animals terrified in their lairs and caves.

We hear only the sighs of the maidens and the cry of the orphans, the moaning of the mothers, and the tears of the fathers because of false reports. We see only tears flowing from every bereaved mother and the heart of every father, bereft of sons, burning. Towns are being devastated, people are perishing, the children are made orphans, and the women are becoming widows. And this is only because of our heedlessness of Thy commemoration and our deprivation of Thy love. Verily, we have been occupied with ourselves. The intoxication of passion seized us; we have taken the road of heedlessness and blindness; have abandoned the path of guidance and have chosen the path of obstinacy and forgotten the commandments of the ancient Scriptures. We have forsaken the exhortations in the preserved Tablets and Parchments -- the great verses.

O my Lord! O my Lord! I confess and acknowledge the sins. Verily, every dark calamity and every hard ordeal has surrounded us by our own hands in this transient world. O Lord, verily, the minds are astounded, the souls are repelled. And there remain <p408> only darkened faces, deaf ears, speechless tongues and hearts heedless of Thy commemoration, filled with human passions and desires.

O Lord, Thou hast said in Thy manifest Book and in Thy great Glad Tidings with

explicit statement: "God does not change that which a people have, until they change what is within themselves." "And when they forgot God, He made them forget themselves."

O my Lord, verily, the nations have gone too deep into the fields of battle and strife. Nothing will check this sweeping torrent and this grinding war save Thy mercy, which has encompassed that which was and is.

O Lord, do not deal with us according to our offenses, and forgive our sins and trespasses. Imperfections are the characteristic of everything possible of creation in the arena of Thy world. And to Thy forgiveness and pardon Thou hast accustomed every one in existence.

O my Lord, only favor and mercy to every sinner who has fallen into the pit of degradation and wretchedness, is befitting to divinity, and only by the imperfections of servitude will the perfections of divinity become manifest. O Lord, verily, the brilliant rays of the Sun of Reality are the removers of the utter darkness, and the pure Water cleanses the foulness and the sorrow of the world.

O my Lord, verily, the sins are bubbling foam and Thy mercy is a full ocean. Trespasses are bitter trees and Thy pardon is a fire whose flame is intense.

O my Lord, remove the veil, scatter this dense cloud on the horizon, extinguish these fires, subdue this flood, in order to stanch the bloodshed as compassion to the widows and mercy to the orphans, that these hurricanes may cease, the thunderbolts be extinguished, the torrents quelled, the land become visible, the souls find composure and the breasts be dilated. And we will thank Thee for Thy abundant favor, O Thou dear! O Thou forgiver!

O my Lord, verily, Thou hast clearly stated in the Tablets and Scriptures that had the ordinances fallen on solid rock, rivers would have gushed forth, and the rock had crumbled to pieces from fear of the Beloved, the Powerful. But the hearts are harder than the rock. The souls are in heedlessness and pride. <p409> The people of heedlessness do not profit by the verses and exhortations.

O my Lord, verily, Thy exhortations are celebrated and have been spread broadcast in the East and the West of the earth. Thou hast called all to love and harmony and to forsake discord in all regions, so that the East of the earth may embrace the West; the people of the desert may embrace the people of the city; their scattered members become reunited and the lost ones gathered together; that the darkness of the earth may pass away and its Lights shine forth. But the eyes and the inner sight have become blind, the ears deaf, the hearts hardened, and the susceptibilities become like rocks and stones. The minds and intellects are being confused. Souls have forgotten the explicit teachings of the Book wherein Thou hast warned them of punishment. Thus they have merited severe punishment and deserved the sentence of torment.

O Lord, forgive our sins and stumbling. Make us not an example for the possessors of insight. Guide us to the Straight Path, so that we may awake from the slumber of passion and be saved from heedlessness and blindness. Deliver

us, O Lord of Revelation, from the abyss of passions, and preserve us from errors.

O my Lord, verily, we have forgotten faithfulness and are reveling in unfaithfulness. With the people of oppression and vice we are associating. There is no deliverer for us save Thee. There is no answerer save Thee. There is no refuge save Thee. Verily, we have trusted in Thee and we lay our affairs in Thy hands. Deal with us according to Thy favor and pardon, and punish us not according to Thy justice and wrath. Verily, Thou art the compassionate. Verily, Thou art the pardoner. Verily, Thou art the forgiver!

O my Lord, the people of righteousness and goodness and the communities of freedom in every country are turning to Thee, at dusk and dawn supplicating between Thy hands during the wing of the night and in the dew of the morn, lamenting as a bereaved mother laments during the grievous nights, burning with fire of sorrow, yearning and separation. They are longing for Thy meeting even with rending of soul, as they traverse the dunes and the hills, and cross the valleys and heights. But these wars that demolish mountains have intervened so that news has ceased and the doors are closed. <p410>

O Lord, comfort them in their loneliness; deliver them from their terror and guide them in their affairs.

O my Lord, Thou knowest my sighs, my cries and my anguish, the burning pain because of their separation; my great longing for their meeting; my yearning for their love; my desire for their remembrance and my anxiety to behold them. Day and night their remembrance is my treasure and my rose garden. When night comes my heart loves the memory of their illumined faces. I yearn for them as the nightingale yearns for the beautiful meadows.

O my Lord, O my Lord! open the doors; prepare for us the means; render the path safe and pave the way so that the sincere ones may be reunited in the lofty meetings; the attracted ones gathered together for Thy commemoration in the great assemblies, to speak among the people of Thy bestowals and taste of the honey of meeting Thee. Then the breezes of acceptance will reach them and they will be swayed thereby as if intoxicated by wine.

Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Doer, the Giver and verily, Thou art the Generous, the Compassionate, the Chosen One!

Star of the West, Vol. 8, No. 14.

TABLET TO THE HAGUE

745. O ye esteemed ones who are pioneers among the well-wishers of the world of humanity.

The letters which ye sent during the war were not received, but a letter dated February 11, 1916, has just come to hand, and immediately an answer is being written.

Your intention deserved a thousand praises, because you are serving the world

of humanity, and this is conducive to the happiness and welfare of all. This recent war has proved to the world and the people that war is destruction while Universal Peace is construction; war is death while peace is life; war is rapacity and blood-thirstiness while peace is beneficence and humaneness; war is an appurtenance of the world of nature while peace is the foundation of the religion of God; war is darkness upon darkness while peace is Heavenly Light; war is the destroyer of the edifice of mankind while peace is the everlasting life of the world of humanity; war is like a devouring wolf while peace is like the angels of Heaven; war is the struggle for existence while <p411> peace is mutual aid and co-operation among the peoples of the world and the cause of the good pleasure of the True One in the heavenly realm.

There is not one soul whose conscience does not testify that in this day there is no more important matter in the world than that of Universal Peace. Every just one bears witness to this and adores that esteemed Assembly because its aim is that this darkness may be changed into light, this bloodthirstiness into kindness, this torment into bliss, this hardship into ease and this enmity and hatred into fellowship and love. Therefore the effort of those esteemed souls is worthy of praise and commendation.

But the wise souls who are aware of the essential relationships emanating from the realities of things consider that one single matter cannot, by itself, influence the human reality as it ought and should, for until the minds of men become united, no important matter can be accomplished. At present Universal Peace is a matter of great importance, but unity of conscience is essential, so that the foundation of this matter may become secure, its establishment firm and its edifice strong.

746. Therefore His Holiness Baha'u'llah, fifty years ago, expounded this question of Universal Peace at a time when he was confined in the fortress of Acca and was wronged and imprisoned. He wrote about this important matter of Universal Peace to all the great sovereigns of the world, and established it among his friends in the Orient. The horizon of the East was in utter darkness, nations displayed the utmost hatred and enmity towards each other, religions thirsted for each other's blood, and it was darkness upon darkness. At such a time His Holiness Baha'u'llah shone forth like the sun from the horizon of the East and illumined Persia with the lights of these teachings.

747. Among his teachings was the declaration of Universal Peace. People of different nations, religions and sects who followed him came together to such an extent that remarkable gatherings were instituted consisting of the various nations and religions of the East. Every soul who entered those gatherings saw but one nation, one pathway, one teaching, one order; for the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah were not limited to the establishment of Universal Peace. They embraced many teachings which supplemented and supported that of Universal Peace.

748. Among these teachings is the independent investigation <p412> of reality, so that the world of humanity might be saved from the darkness of imitation and

attain to the truth; might tear off and cast away this ragged and outgrown garment of 1,000 years ago and put on the robe woven in the utmost purity and holiness in the loom of reality. As reality is one and cannot admit of multiplicity, therefore different opinions must ultimately become fused into one.

749. And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is the oneness of the world of humanity; that all human beings are the sheep of God and He is the kind Shepherd. This Shepherd is kind to all the sheep, because He created them all, trained them, provided for them and protected them. There is no doubt that the Shepherd is kind to all the sheep; and should there be among these sheep ignorant ones, they must be educated; if there be children, they must be trained until they reach maturity; if there be sick ones, they must be healed. There must be no hatred and enmity, for as by a kind physician these ignorant, sick ones should be treated.

750. And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is that religion must be the cause of fellowship and love. If it becomes the cause of estrangement, then it is not needed, for religion is like a remedy: if it aggravates the disease, then it becomes unnecessary.

751. And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is, that religious, racial, political, economic and patriotic prejudices destroy the edifice of humanity. As long as these prejudices prevail, the world of humanity will have no rest. For a period of 6,000 years history informs us about the world of humanity. During these 6,000 years the world of humanity has not been free from war, strife, murder and bloodthirstiness. In every period war has been waged in one country or another, and that war was due to patriotic prejudice. It has therefore been ascertained and proved that all prejudices are destructive of the human edifice. As long as these prejudices persist, the struggle for existence must remain dominant, and bloodthirstiness and rapacity continue. Therefore, even as was the case in the past, the world of humanity cannot be saved from the darkness of nature, and cannot attain illumination, except through the abandonment of prejudices and the acquisition of the morals of the Kingdom. <p413>

If this prejudice and enmity are on account of religion, religion should be the cause of fellowship, otherwise it is fruitless. And if this prejudice be the prejudice of nationality, all mankind are of one nation; all have sprung from the tree of Adam, and Adam is the root of the tree. That tree is one and all these nations are like branches, while the individuals of humanity are like leaves, blossoms and fruits thereof. Then the establishment of various nations and the consequent shedding of blood and destruction of the edifice of humanity result from human ignorance and selfish motives.

As to the patriotic prejudice, this is also due to absolute ignorance, for the surface of the earth is one native land.

Every one can live in any spot on the terrestrial globe.

Therefore all the world is man's birthplace.

These boundaries and outlets have been devised by man.

In the creation, such boundaries and outlets were not assigned.

Europe is one continent, Asia is one continent, Africa is one continent, Australia is one continent, but some of the souls from personal motive and selfish interests have divided each one of these continents and considered a certain part as their own country.

God has set up no frontier between France and Germany; they are continuous.

Yea, in the first centuries, selfish souls for the promotion of their own interests assigned boundaries and outlets, and day by day attached more importance to these, until this led to intense enmity, bloodshed and rapacity in subsequent centuries.

In the same way this will continue indefinitely, and if this conception of patriotism remains limited within a certain circle, it will be the primary cause of the world's destruction.

No wise and just person will acknowledge these imaginary distinctions.

Every limited area which we call our native country we regard as our mother-land, whereas the terrestrial globe is the mother-land of all, and not any restricted area.

In brief: for a few days we live on this earth and eventually we are buried in it -- it is our eternal tomb.

Is it worth while that we should engage in bloodshed and tear one another to pieces for this eternal tomb?

Nay, far from it:

God is not pleased with such conduct nor would any sane man approve of it.

Consider! The blessed animals engage in no patriotic quarrels. They are in the utmost fellowship with one another and live together in harmony. For example, if a dove from the East and a dove from the West, a dove from the North and a dove from the <p414> South chance to arrive in one spot at the same time, they immediately associate in harmony. So is it with all blessed animals and birds. But the ferocious animals, as soon as they meet, attack and fight with each other, tear each other in pieces, and it is impossible for them to live together peaceably in one place. They are all unsociable and fierce, savage and combative fighters.

Regarding the economic prejudice, it is apparent that whenever the ties between nations become strengthened and the exchange of commodities accelerated, and any economic principle is established in one country, it will ultimately affect the other countries and universal benefits will result. Then why this prejudice?

As to the political prejudice: the policy of God must be followed, and it is indisputable that the policy of God is greater than human policy. We must follow the Divine policy and that applies alike to all individuals. He treats all individuals alike; no distinction is made, and that is the foundation of the Divine Religions.

752. And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is the origination of one language that may be spread universally among the people. This teaching was revealed from the pen of His Holiness Baha'u'llah in order that this universal language may eliminate misunderstandings from among mankind.

753. And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is the unity of women and men. The world of humanity has two wings -- one is woman and the other man. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of woman becomes equal to the world of man in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be.

754. And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is voluntary sharing of one's property with others among mankind. This voluntary sharing is greater than equality, and consists in this: that man should not prefer himself to others, but rather should sacrifice his life and property for others. But this should not be introduced by coercion so that it becomes a law and man is compelled to follow it. Nay, rather, man should voluntarily and of his own choice sacrifice his property and life for others, and spend willingly for the poor, just as is done in Persia among the Baha'is.

755. And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is man's freedom: that through the Ideal Power he should be emancipated and free from the captivity of the world of nature; for <p415> as long as man is captive to nature he is a ferocious animal, as the struggle for existence is one of the exigencies of the world of nature. This matter of the struggle for existence is the fountainhead of all calamities and is the supreme affliction.

756. And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is that religion is a mighty bulwark. If the edifice of religion shakes and totters, commotion and chaos will ensue and the order of things will be utterly upset, for in the world of mankind there are two safeguards that protect man from wrong doing. One is the law which punishes the criminal; but the law prevents only the manifest crime and not the concealed sin; whereas the ideal safeguard, namely, the religion of God, prevents both the manifest and the concealed crime, trains man, educates morals, compels the adoption of virtues and is the all-inclusive power which guarantees the felicity of the world of mankind. But by religion is meant that which is ascertained by investigation and not that which is based on mere imitation, the foundation of divine religions and not human imitations.

757.

And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is that although material civilization is one of the means for the progress of the world of mankind, yet until it

becomes combined with divine civilization the desired result, which is the felicity of mankind, will not be attained.

Consider!

These battleships that reduce a city to ruins within the space of an hour are the result of material civilization; likewise the Krupp guns, the Mauser rifles, dynamite, submarines, torpedo boats, armed aircraft and bombing aeroplanes -- all these weapons of war are the malignant fruits of material civilization.

Had material civilization been combined with divine civilization, these fiery weapons would never have been invented.

Nay, rather, human energy would have been wholly devoted to useful inventions and would have been concentrated on praiseworthy discoveries.

Material civilization is like a globe of glass.

Divine civilization is the light itself, and the glass without the light is dark.

Material civilization is like the body.

NO matter how infinitely graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead.

Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the body gets its life from the spirit, otherwise it becomes a corpse.

It has thus been made evident that the world of mankind is in need for the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Without the spirit the world of mankind is lifeless, and without this light the world of mankind is in <p416> utter darkness.

For the world of nature is an animal world.

Until man is born again from the world of nature -- that is to say, becomes detached from the world of nature, he is essentially an animal, and it is the teachings of God which convert this animal into a human soul.

758. And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is the promotion of education. Every child must be instructed in sciences as much as is necessary. If the parents are able to provide the expenses of this education, it is all right; otherwise the community must provide the means for the teaching of that child.

759. And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is justice and right. Until these are realized on the plane of existence, all things will be in disorder and remain imperfect. The world of mankind is a world of oppression and cruelty, and a realm of aggression and error.

760. In fine, such teachings are numerous. These manifold principles, which constitute the greatest basis for the felicity of mankind and are of the bounties of the Merciful, must be added to the matter of Universal Peace and combined with it, so that results may accrue. Otherwise the realization of

Universal Peace in the world of mankind is difficult. As the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah are combined with Universal Peace, they are like a table provided with every kind of fresh and delicious food. Every soul can find at that table of infinite bounty, that which he desires. If the question is restricted to Universal Peace alone, the remarkable results which are expected and desired will not be attained. The scope of Universal Peace must be such that all the communities and religions may find their highest wish realized in it. At present the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah are such that all the communities of the world, whether religious, political or ethical, ancient or modern, find in the teachings of Baha'u'llah the expression of their highest wish.

For example, the people of religions find, in the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah, the establishment of Universal Religion -- a religion that perfectly conforms with present conditions, which in reality effects the immediate cure of the incurable disease, which relieves every pain and bestows the infallible antidote for every deadly poison. For if we wish to arrange and organize the world of mankind in accordance with the present religious imitations and thereby to establish the felicity of mankind, it is impossible and <p417> impracticable: for example, the enforcement of the laws of the Old Testament and also of the other religions in accordance with present imitations. But the essential basis of all the divine religions which pertains to the virtues of the world of mankind and is the foundation of the welfare of the world of man, is found in the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah in the most perfect presentation.

Similarly, with regard to the people who clamor for freedom: the moderate freedom which guarantees the welfare of the world of man is found in the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah.

761. Likewise with regard to the party of "equality" which seeks the solution of the economic problems: until now all proposed solutions have proved impracticable except the economic proposals in the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah, which are practicable and cause no distress to society.

So with the other parties: when ye look deeply into this matter, ye will discover that the highest aims of those parties are found in the teachings of Baha'u'llah. These teachings constitute the all-inclusive power among all men, and are practicable. But there are some teachings of the past, such as those of the Torah, which cannot be carried out at the present day. It is the same with the other religions and the tenets of the various sects and the different parties.

762.

For example, the question of Universal Peace, about which His Holiness Baha'u'llah says that the Supreme Tribunal must be established; although the League of Nations has been brought into existence, yet it is incapable of establishing Universal Peace.

But the Supreme Tribunal which His Holiness Baha'u'llah has described will fulfil this sacred task with the utmost might and power.

And his plan is this: that the national assemblies of each country and nation -- that is to say, parliaments -- should elect two or three persons who are the choicest men of that nation, and are well informed concerning international laws and the relations between governments and aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity in this day.

The number of these representatives should be in proportion to the number of inhabitants of that country.

The election of these souls who are chosen by the <p418> national assembly -- that is, the parliament -- must be confirmed by the upper house, the congress and the cabinet and also by the president or monarch so that these persons may be the elected ones of all the nation and the government.

From among these people the members of the Supreme Tribunal will be elected, and all mankind will thus have a share therein, for every one of these delegates is fully representative of his nation.

When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any international question, either unanimously or by majority rule, there will no longer be any pretext for the plaintiff or ground of objection for the defendant.

In case any of the governments or nations, in the execution of the irrefutable decision of the Supreme Tribunal, be negligent or dilatory, the rest of the nations will rise up against it, because all the governments and nations of the world are the supporters of this Supreme Tribunal.

Consider what a firm foundation this is!

But by a limited and restricted League the purpose will not be realized as it ought and should.

This is the truth about the situation, which has been stated.

763. Consider how powerful are the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah. At a time when His Holiness was in the prison of Akka and under the restrictions and threats of two bloodthirsty kings, notwithstanding this fact, his teachings spread with all power in Persia and other countries. Should any other teaching, or any principle, or any community fall under the threat of a powerful and bloodthirsty monarch it would be annihilated within a short space of time. At present for fifty years the Baha'is in Persia and most regions have been under severe restrictions and the threat of sword and spear. Thousands of souls have given their lives in the arena of sacrifice and have fallen as victims under the swords of oppression and cruelty. Thousands of esteemed families have been uprooted and destroyed. Thousands of children have been made fatherless. Thousands of fathers have been bereft of their sons. Thousands of mothers have wept and lamented for their boys who have been beheaded. All this oppression and cruelty, rapacity and bloodthirstiness did not hinder or prevent the spread of the teachings of Baha'u'llah. They spread more and more every day, and their

power and might became more evident.

764.

It may be that some foolish person among the Persians will affix his name to the contents of the Tablets of His Holiness <p419> Baha'u'llah or to the explanations given in the letters of Abdul Baha and sent it to that esteemed Assembly.

Ye must be aware of this fact, for any Persian who seeks fame or has some other intention will take the entire contents of the Tablets of His Holiness Baha'u'llah and publish them in his own name or in that of his community, just as happened at the Universal Races' Congress in London before the War.

A Persian took the substance of the Epistles of His Holiness Baha'u'llah, entered that Congress, gave them forth in his own name and published them, whereas the wording was exactly that of His Holiness Baha'u'llah.

Some such souls have gone to Europe and have caused confusion in the minds of the people of Europe and have disturbed the thoughts of some Orientalists.

Ye must bear this face in mind, for not a word of these teachings was heard in Persia before the appearance of Baha'u'llah.

Investigate this matter so that it may become to you evident and manifest.

Some souls are like parrots.

They learn any note which they may hear, and sing it, but they themselves are unaware of what they utter.

There is a sect in Persia at present made up of a few souls who are called Babis, who claim to be followers of His Holiness the Bab, whereas they are utterly unaware of His Holiness.

They have some secret teaching which are entirely opposed to the teachings of Baha'u'llah, and in Persia people know this.

But when these souls come to Europe, they conceal their own teachings and utter those of His Holiness Baha'u'llah, for they know that the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah are powerful, and they therefore declare publicly those teachings, they say that they are taken from the Book of the Bayan, and the Book of the Bayan is from His Holiness the Bab.

When ye get hold of the translation of the Book of the Bayan, which has been translated in Persia, ye will discover the truth that the teachings of Baha'u'llah are utterly opposed to the teachings of this sect.

Beware lest ye disregard this fact.

Should ye desire to investigate the matter further, inquire from Persia.

765. In fine, when travelling and journeying throughout the world, wherever one finds construction, it is the result of fellowship and love, while everything that is in ruin shows the effect of enmity and hate. Notwithstanding this, the

world of humanity has not become aware and has not awakened from the sleep of heedlessness. Again it engages in differences, in disputes and <p420> wrangling, that it may set up ranks of war and may run to and fro in the arena of battle and strife.

So is it with regard to the universe and its corruption, existence and non-existence.

Every contingent being is made up of different and numerous elements, and the existence of everything is a result of composition.

That is to say, when between simple elements a composition take place a being arises; the creation of beings comes about in this way.

And when that composition is upset, it is followed by decomposition, the elements disintegrate, and that being become annihilated.

That is to say, the annihilation of everything consists in the decomposition and the separation of elements.

Therefore every union and color of leaves, of flowers and of fruits, will make an admirable garden, and will appear in the utmost loveliness, freshness and sweetness.

Likewise, when difference and variety of thoughts, forms, opinions, characters and morals of the world of mankind come under the control of one Supreme Power, that influence of composition among the elements is the cause of life, while dissociation and separation is the cause of death.

In short, attraction and harmony of things are the cause of the production of fruits and useful results, while repulsion and inharmony of things are the cause of disturbance and annihilation.

From harmony and attraction, all living contingent beings, such as plant, animal and man, are realized, and from inharmony and repulsion decay sets in and annihilation becomes manifest.

Therefore whatever is the cause of harmony, attraction and union among men is the life of the world of humanity, and whatever is the cause of difference, of repulsion and of separation is the cause of the death of mankind.

And when ye pass by a garden wherein vegetable beds and plants, flowers and fragrant herbs are all combined so as to form a harmonious whole, this is an evidence that this plantation and this rose garden have been cultivated and arranged by the care of a perfect gardener, while when ye see a garden in disorder, lacking arrangement, and confused, this indicates that it has been deprived of the care of the skilful gardener, nay, rather, it is nothing but a mass of weeds.

It has therefore been made evident that fellowship and harmony are indicative of training by the real Educator, while separation and dispersion prove wildness and lack of the Divine Training. <p421>

Should any one object that, since the communities and nations and races and peoples of the world have different formalities, customs, tastes, temperaments, morals, varied thoughts, minds and opinions, it is therefore impossible for ideal unity to be made manifest and for complete union among men to be realized, we say that differences are of two kinds: one leads to destruction, and that is like the different between warring peoples and competing nations who destroy one another, uproot each other's families, do away with rest and comfort and engage in bloodshed and rapacity.

That is blameworthy.

But the other difference consists in variation.

This is perfection itself and the cause of the appearance of Divine bounty.

Consider the flowers of the rose garden.

Although they are of different kinds, various colors and diverse forms and appearances, yet as they drink from one water, are swayed by one breeze and grow by the warmth and light of one sun, this variation and this difference cause each to enhance the beauty and splendor of the others.

The differences in manners, in customs, in habits, in thoughts, opinions and in temperaments is the cause of the adornment of the world of mankind.

This is praiseworthy.

Likewise this difference and this variation, like the difference and variation of the parts and members of the human body, are the cause of the appearance of beauty and perfection.

As these different parts and members are under the control of the dominant spirit, and the spirit permeates all the organs and members, and rules all the arteries and veins, this difference and variation strengthen love and harmony, and this multiplicity is the greatest aid to unity.

If in a garden the flowers and fragrant herbs, the blossoms and fruits, the leaves, branches and trees are of one kind, of one form, of one colour, and of one arrangement, there is no beauty or charm, but when there is variety in the world of oneness, they will appear and be displayed in the most perfect glory, beauty, exaltation and perfection.

Today nothing but the power of the Word of God which encompasses the realities of things can bring the thoughts, minds, hearts and spirits under the shade of One Tree.

He is the Potent in all things, the Vivifier of souls, the Preserver and the Controller of the world of mankind.

Praise be to God, in this day the light of the Word of God has shone forth upon all regions; and from all sects, communities, nations, tribes, peoples, religions and denominations, souls have gathered together under the shadow of the <p422> Word of Oneness, and have in the utmost fellowship united and

harmonized!

766. Some time ago, during the war, a Tablet was written regarding the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah which may appropriately be appended to this epistle: --

O people of the world!

The dawn of the Sun of Reality is assuredly for the illumination of the world and for the manifestation of mercy. In the assemblage of the family of Adam, results and fruits are praiseworthy and the holy bestowals of every bounty are abundant.

It is an absolute mercy and a complete bounty, the illumination of the world, fellowship and harmony, love and union; nay, rather mercifulness and oneness, the elimination of discord and the unity of whosoever are on the earth in the utmost of freedom and dignity.

The Blessed Beauty said: "All are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch."

He likened the world of existence to one tree and all the souls to leaves, blossoms and fruits (thereon).

Therefore all the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruits must be in the utmost of freshness, and the bringing about of this delicacy and sweetness depends upon union and fellowship.

Therefore they must assist each other with all their power, and seek everlasting life.

Thus the friends of God must manifest the mercy of the Compassionate Lord in the world of existence and must show forth the bounty of the visible and invisible King.

They must purify their sight, and look upon mankind as the leaves, blossoms and fruits of the tree of creation, and must always be thinking of doing good to some one, of love, consideration, affection and assistance to somebody.

They must consider every one on the earth as a friend; regard the stranger as an intimate, and the alien as a companion.

They must not be bound by any tie; nay, rather they should be free from every bond.

In this day the one who is favored in the threshold of grandeur is the one who offers the cup of faithfulness and bestows the pearl of gift to the enemies, even to the fallen oppressor, who lends a helping hand, and considers every bitter foe as an affectionate friend.

These are the commands of the Blessed Beauty, these are the counsels of the Greatest Name. O ye dear friends! The world is <p423> engaged in war and struggle, and mankind is in the utmost conflict and danger. The darkness of unfaithfulness has enshrouded the earth and the illumination of faithfulness

has become concealed. All nations and tribes of the world have sharpened their claws and are warring and fighting with each other. The temple of man is shattered. Thousands of families are wandering disconsolate. Thousands of thousands of souls are besmeared with dust and blood in the arena of battle and struggle every year, and the tent of happiness and life is overthrown. The prominent men become commanders and boast of bloodshed, and glory in destruction. One says: "I have severed with my sword the necks of a nation"; and one: "I have leveled a kingdom to the dust"' and another: "I have overthrown the foundation of a government." This is the pivot around which revolve the pride and glory of mankind. In all regions friendship and uprightness are denounced and reconciliation and regard for truth are despised. The herald of peace, reformation, love and reconciliation is the Religion of the Blessed Beauty which has pitched its tent on the apex of the world and proclaimed its summons to the people.

Then, O ye friends of God!

Appreciate the value of this precious Revelation, move and act in accordance with it and walk in the straight path and the right way.

Show it to the people.

Raise the melody of the Kingdom, and spread abroad the teachings and ordinances of the loving Lord so that the world may become another world, the darkened earth may become illumined and the dead body of the people may obtain new life.

Every soul may seek everlasting life through the breath of the Merciful.

Life in this mortal world will quickly come to an end, and this earthly glory, wealth, comfort and happiness will soon vanish and be no more.

Summon ye the people to God and call the souls to the manners and conduct of the Supreme Concourse.

To the orphans be ye kind fathers, and to the unfortunate a refuge and shelter.

To the poor be a treasure of wealth, and to the sick a remedy and healing.

Be a helper of every oppressed one, the protector of every destitute one, be ye ever mindful to serve any soul of mankind.

Attach no important to self-seeking, rejection, arrogance, oppression and enmity.

Heed them not.

Deal in the contrary way.

Be kind in truth, not only in appearance and outwardly.

Every soul of the friends of God must concentrate his mind on this, that he may manifest the mercy of God and the bounty of the Forgiving <p424> One.

He must do good to every soul whom he encounters, and render benefit to him, becoming the cause of improving the morals and correcting the thoughts so that

the light of guidance may shine forth and the bounty of His Holiness the Merciful may encompass.

Love is light in whatsoever house it may shine, and enmity is darkness in whatsoever abode it dwell.

O friends of God! Strive ye so that this darkness may be utterly dispelled and the Hidden Mystery may be revealed and the realities of things made evident and manifest.

Haifa, Palestine December 17, 1919.

THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE

767. Two things are most urgently necessary to the political realm: the Legislative Power, the Executive Power.

The center of the executive power is the government, and the legislative power lies in the hands of thoughtful and wise men. On the other hand, if these strong pillars and firm foundations are not complete and comprehensive, how can it be supposed that there will be safety and salvation for the nation? But as, in these latter days, such excellency is rare, the government and the whole body of the nation are in sore need of just and discerning directions. Thus it is of the utmost importance to establish an assembly of learned men who, being proficient in the different sciences and capable of dealing with all the present and future requirements, will settle the questions in accordance with forbearance and firmness.

Firstly: the elected members must be religious persons, God-fearing, high-minded and followers of the law. Secondly: they should have an accurate knowledge of the divine commandments, of the most important fundamental matters and of the rules of the loosing and binding of domestic and foreign relations; they should possess a knowledge of the sciences and arts necessary to civilization, and finally be contented with the income derived from their personal property. ...

The election of temporary members of the assemblies of the kingdom should depend upon the choice and satisfaction of the public, for members elected by the people are pledge to carry <p425> out their will and to follow out their instructions. Consequently they are careful to administer impartial justice, and to live according to true religion, so that they may establish a good reputation and keep their dignity in the eyes of the people.

768. All the civic affairs and the legislation of material laws for the increasing needs of the enlightened humanity belong to the House of Justice. This, the House of Justice, will be not only a body for the legislation of laws according to the spirit and requirement of the time, but a board of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes arising between peoples. When the Universal House of Justice is organized the members will do their utmost for the realization of greater cordiality and comity amongst the nations. The laws of Baha'u'llah are the unchangeable, organic laws of the Universal House of

Justice. They are the very foundation upon which the structure of additional legislation is built. ... As regards the places for the convening of such a general body, it will be decided by the members. The Universal House of Justice has only the legislative function; the executive power belongs to the administrative department of government. At first, National Houses of Justice will be established in every country, and they will elect in turn members to the Universal House of Justice. Again I repeat, the House of Justice, whether National or Universal, has only legislative power, and not executive power. For example, in Europe and America the Parliament or Congress enacts laws, while the Government executes these laws. The House of Justice cannot fulfil two functions at the same time -- legislative and executive ...

Friends of God! Set forth the example of Justice! Justice is a universal quality. From the highest to the lowest, justice should be sacred; from the sovereign to the merchant, the minister of state to the artisan, all must be just. Be just, respect the rights of each man -- "do unto others what you would have them do unto you." A workman who commits an injustice is as much to blame as a tyrant. Each one of us can choose between justice and injustice. I hope that you will be just in your relations with others, that you will never harm your fellows, that you will respect the rights of all men and, above all, consider the rights of other before your own.

Star of the West, Vol. 7, No. 15. <p426>

SALUTATION TO THE FRIENDS OF GOD

769. O ye who are attracted by the fragrance of God! Verily, this mundane world is a mirage of the desert, but the Kingdom is like unto a sea of great surges and rolling waves.

Those who longed for the mirage have indeed become more thirsty the more they hastened toward it, and for a drop of water have they perished in grief.

Ye see, as the condition really is, that the people of the world are striving day and night for the sake of attaining perfect happiness and a tranquil existence; but the result is no other to them than disappointment, affliction, lamentation and destruction.

But those who have advanced to the Kingdom of God, have assuredly advanced unto a sea of clear and limpid water, and thus have attained unto the greatest bounty, the perfect rest, and the eternal life to which there is no abrupt end. Their faces have shone with joy, their souls were delighted with happiness, their hearts were illumined and their cups overflowing with abundance. Their edifices have risen high, their palaces have been adorned, their suns have shone, their stars gleamed, and their diadems radiated dazzling light. Their dominions have expanded and their lights have spread to all ages and generations. These are their upraised thrones, their palaces, their luminous lamps and their shining moon throughout all horizons.

These are their traces in this world: how much more, then, would be their light in the highest of the high -- consider therefore, O ye servants of the

Merciful!

Since this is so, have no more care for the world and its desires; but rather cling to the spiritual world and its gifts; spread the fragrances of God, be submissive to the Word of God, establish a spiritual meeting place wherefrom the utterance of sanctity and purity will arise to God; assembly there with fragrance and spirituality and celebrate the name of your Lord by day and by night. At that time ye should become illumined lamps, spiritual stars -- nay, rather eternal suns! This is a favor that was longed for by the spirits of godly people and the hearts of queens in former ages.

May salutations and praise be upon you! <p427>

PRAYERS

770. Praise be unto Him whose light hath risen, whose appearance hath become exalted, whose signs are promulgated, and whose evidences are fulfilled. The tongue of the realities of all things hath uttered: "Glory be unto my God, El-Baha!" Thanks for His manifest Beauty and for His great Splendor! -- for He hath quickened mankind with the spirit of guidance and hath rendered clear the White Path of gifts, through the arguments which are brilliant and clear to the hearts of the intelligent, and whereby these hearts are moved, enlightened, illuminated and become cognizant of the Mighty Message in this Manifest Day of the manifestation of the honorable station when the mystery of existence floweth as flow the souls in the bodies.

771. My Lord! My Lord! I praise Thee and I thank Thee for that whereby Thou hast favored Thy humble servant, Thy slave beseeching and supplicating Thee, because Thou hast guided him unto Thine obvious Kingdom and caused him to hear Thine exalted Call in the contingent world and to behold Thy Signs which prove the appearance of Thy victorious reign over all things.

772. Praise be unto Thee, for Thou hast sent down unto us this spiritual table, supreme benefit and heavenly blessing. O our Lord! Strengthen us to partake of this heavenly food, so that its fine essence may run through the pillars of our spiritual being and we may thereby obtain a celestial power for serving Thy Cause, promulgating Thy Signs, and adorning Thy vineyard with lofty trees, the fruits whereof shall be near and of perfuming fragrance. Verily Thou art the Possessor of great bounty! Verily Thou art the Clement, the Merciful!

773. O Thou Forgiving Lord!

Although certain souls finished the days of life in ignorance, were estranged and selfish, yet the ocean of Thy forgiveness is, verily, able to redeem and make free the sinners by one of its waves. Thou redeemest whomsoever Thou willest and deprivest whomsoever Thou willest not! Shouldst Thou deal justly, we all are sinners and deserve to be deprived; and shouldst Thou observe mercy, every sinner shall be made pure and every stranger shall <p428> become a friend. Therefore, forgive and pardon and grant Thy mercy unto all. Thou art the Forgiver, the Light-giver, the Compassionate!

774. O Thou Benevolent God!

Grant us a shelter in Thy threshold and inform us of Thy mysteries! Make our eyes seeing and our ears hearing! Suffer our hearts and souls to be drawn unto Thee by the power of supplication and prayer.

O God, wandering are we: point out to us the way of Truth!
Thirsty are we: give us the Water of Life!
Hungry are we: spread before us the Supper of the Lord!
Sad are we: bring to our hearts the joy of heaven.
Prisoners of the nether world are we: bestow upon us the freedom of the realm of might!

Attached to the terrestrial world are we: make us wooers of the celestial world.

In the bondage of passion, desire and temptation are we: release us from these chains and fetters.

Humble and lowly are we: make dear to us the kingdom of Thy Glory.

Deprived are we: make us the confidants of mystery.
Faded are we: refresh and rejoice us by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Dead are we: quicken us by the life eternal, so that in this age of Lights we may obtain an abundant share from the bounties of the forgiving Lord, enter the Kingdom of God, seek after the unending Outpouring, and attain unto the Everlasting Gift.

Verily, Thou art the Giver, the Bestower, the Merciful; and Thou art the Forgiver, the Glorious, the Helper!

Make me one of those who cut themselves from everything save Thee, who sanctify themselves from everything pertaining to the world, and who separate themselves from the defects of the suspicious. <p429>

O my God! Let my heart be dilated with joy by the spirit of confirmation from Thy kingdom, and illumine my sight with beholding the hosts of success continually descending upon me from Thy omnipotence. Thou art the Almighty, the Invincible, the Powerful!

776. O my Lord! O my Lord! This is a lamp, lighted by the Fire of Thy Love, and ablaze with the Flame which is ignited in the Tree of Thy Mercy.

O my Lord! Increase its enkindlement, heat and flame, with the Fire which is kindled in the Sinai of Thy Manifestation. Verily, Thou art the Confirmer, the Assister, the Powerful, the Generous, the Loving!

777. O Creator, we are poor, shower Thy goodness upon us. We are needy; give us a portion of Thy wealth. We are in want; satisfy our needs. We are humble; raise us to honor.

All the birds and beasts are fed from the Table of Thy gifts, and all the creatures are made happy by the abundance of Thy favor! Deprive not this helpless soul from Thy great bounty, and favor this impotent one with Thy power. Give me, in a right way, my daily living, and confer a blessing upon my necessities, that we may be independent of any beside Thee, and be free from the remembrance of any but Thee.

I beg that we may walk in Thy path, and seek Thy face, and declare Thy secrets. Thou art the loving, the powerful; and Thou art the breadgiver of the world of man!

778. O my God, my God!

I am a servant attracted to Thee, humbly coming to the door of Thy Oneness and addressing the kingdom of Thy Mercy.

Yea, my God, permit me to be entirely Thine, occupied in thinking of Thee, inflamed by the fire of Thy love, and separated from all save Thee, so that I may work in Thy Cause, spread Thy wisdom, transmit Thy knowledge and the joy of knowing Thee.

Yea, my God, I am a flame lighted by the hand of Thy power. Let it not be extinguished by the winds of trials. Increase my love for Thee, my ardor for the Beauty of Thy Oneness, the fire that burneth in me in the Sinai of Thy Singleness, and the eternal <p430> life in me, through Thy bounty and grace; for Thou art the Protector, the Watcher, the Pitiful and the Merciful!

779. O loving God! I am a young child, a suppliant, a captive. Be Thou my refuge, my support, my protector. I am in distress: give me the means of tranquillity. I am needy: bestow upon me the treasure of the Kingdom. I am dead: give me the Spirit of Life. I am weak: favor me with power and strength, so that I may be a servant in Thy Threshold, with perfect purity and sanctity; sacrifice myself unto Thee, be quit of myself and seek Thee, walk in the path of Thy good pleasure, speak Thy secret, and witness the signs of Thy Oneness wherever I look. O God! Make me ablaze, like unto the fire of Thy love, and make me free from attachment to this mortal world, until I find the peace of soul and the rest of conscience.

Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty! Thou art the Hearer, the Seer!

780. O my God! O my God!

Praise be unto Thee! for Thou hast created me of the most excellent substance, in the most honored form, and in the most exalted kind of Thy creation; didst nurture me from the breast of Thy favor, didst nurse me in the bosom of Thy mercy, until I grew up under the protection of Thy divinity, in the cradle of Thy training, and reached full growth through Thy favor and grace.

Then Thou hast made me to experience various circumstances and suffer countless calamities, afflictions and troubles in myself and griefs in my soul.

Thou hast guided me to the fountain of Thy favor and illumined my sight through

the light of Thy guidance, quickened my spirit with Thy fragrances of holiness and moved my heart with the breeze of the garden of Thy care.

Then I became rejoiced at the appearance of Thy Beauty, the rising of Thy Lights and the dawning of the morn of Thy Oneness.

Thou hast delivered me from the depths of sorrows, saved me from the darkness of griefs and dilated my breast by showing unto me Thy greatest Signs in the Day of Resurrection.

O my Lord!

Engage me in Thy love, so as to cut myself from aught but Thee, to be consumed with the love of Thy Beauty, to burn with the fire of love for Thy Face, so that I may be entirely drawn unto Thee and become ablaze by the fire enkindled in the <p431> Tree of Sinai.

O my Lord!

Verily, with Thee I am free from all else, while turning unto Thy Glorious Kingdom.

Deliver me from every gloomy sorrow; shelter me under the protection of Thy greatest favor; save me from attachment to this inferior world.

O my Lord!

Verily, I am humble; elevate me through Thy greatest bounty!

I am poor; enrich me by Thine abundant treasury!

I am ill; heal me by Thy precious medicine, and make me a sign of Thy favor among Thy servants!

Verily, Thou art powerful to do that which Thou willest!

Verily, Thou art Potent and Supreme!

781. O my Lord!

Thou knowest that the people are encircled with pain and calamities and are environed with hardships and trouble. Every trial doth attack man and every dire adversity doth assail him like unto the attack of a serpent. There is no shelter and asylum for him except under the wing of Thy protection, preservation, guard and custody.

O Thou the Merciful One! O my Lord! Make Thy protection my armory, Thy preservation my shield, humbleness before the door of Thy Oneness my guard, and Thy custody and defense my fortress and my abode. Preserve me from the suggestions of myself and my desire, and guard me from every sickness, trial, difficulty and ordeal.

Verily, Thou art the Protector, the Guardian, the Preserver, the Sufficer, and verily, Thou art the Merciful of the Most Merciful!

782. O compassionate God! Thanks be unto Thee for Thou hast awakened me and

made me conscious. Thou hast given me a seeing eye and favored me with a hearing ear; hast led me to Thy Kingdom and guided me to Thy Path. Thou hast shown me the right way and caused me to enter the Ark of Deliverance. O God! Keep me steadfast and make me firm and unyielding. Protect me from violent tests and preserve and shelter me in the strongly fortified protection of Thy Covenant and Testament. Thou art the Powerful! Thou art the Seeing! Thou art the Hearing! O Thou the Compassionate God! Bestow upon me a heart which, like unto glass, may be illumined with the light of Thy love, and confer upon me a thought which may change this <p432> world into a rose garden through the spiritual bounty. Thou art the Compassionate, the Merciful! Thou art the Supreme, Beneficent God!

783. O my Lord! Confirm me to serve Thy beloved and to be submissive and humble before Thy chosen ones. Make me to know the meaning of Thy Words and inform me of the mysteries of Thy signs. Place me in the shadow of the standard of Thy Testament and preserve me from Thy tests which break backs and unveil the sins of the black sliders and tend to disgrace the party of deception and the people of wickedness. Verily, Thou art the Mighty, the Pardoner!

784. Praise be to Thee! O my God, and the God of all things; my Splendor and the Splendor of all things; my Hope and the Hope of all things; my Sovereign and the Sovereign of all things; my King and the King of all things; my Beloved and the Beloved of all things; and my Mover and the Mover of all things!

I ask Thee not to prevent my attaining the Sea of Thy Benevolence, nor to keep me from the Shore of Thy Nearness!

O God! All else beside Thee will not profit me, and the nearness of all else save Thee will not suffice me.

I ask Thee by Thy Riches, whereby Thou hast been independent of all else beside Thyself, to make me of those who look unto Thee and arise for Thy service.

O God! Forgive Thy servants and worshippers; verily, Thou art the Forgiver, the Merciful!

THE VICTORY OF THE COVENANT

785. He is El-Abha!
From the lights of that shining brilliancy and brightness, the horizons have already shone:
Blessed are they who are successful!
From that blessed Tree in Mount Sinai a call has been vociferously raised:
Blessed are they who are hearing!
From that holy fragrance in that White Spot all sides are regions have been perfumed:
Blessed are they who inhale the sweet fragrance! <p433>
The Light of Unity has been transfigured in the Temple of Seclusion:
Blessed are they who are wishing for Light!
The face of El-Baha has been uncovered:

Blessed are they who are thereby attracted!
The cup of bounty, overflowing with the wine of fulfillment, is passing around:
Blessed are they who are drinking!
The Kingdom of El-Abha and the Supreme God has been honored and glorified:
Blessed are they who are winning a place in the Kingdom!

The clouds of generosity are overflowing with the greatest abundance -- truly, it is a great abundance! The hearts have been enlightened from the Lights of the Face of the Beloved -- truly, it is a clear Light!

Abdul Baha, the Servant of Baha, has clad Himself in the mantle of servitude and devotion, for the beloved of El-Baha -- truly, this is a great Victory!
<p434>

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LOOM OF REALITY

786. Verily, if my Lord destine unto me and cause me to taste the sweetness of the cup of the great martyrdom, my greatest desire will be fulfilled. Fear not if this Branch be severed from the material earth and cast aside the leaves -- nay, rather, its leaves will flourish, for this Branch will grow after it is cut from the earth, will ascend until it shelters the universe, its foliage will reach the Supreme Apex and bear fruits, imparting fragrance perfume into the world.

787. As to life, however, it has no beginning, nor will it have any end. The eternal grace of God has always been the cause of life. It has had no starting point and it will not approach any end. But concerning the degrees through which the soul has gone, these degrees are spiritual. Consider all the advancement of the world of humanity which is at present manifest and known. This has been realized through the spirit. The manifestation of the divine laws and disciplines which are essential to the realities of beings; and in the world of the Kingdom they are ideals which in the appearance of the holy Manifestations of God are realized.

788. The fruits of the deeds of man, i.e., the harvest of the reward of man's conduct, is gathered in the heavenly realm.

789. But as to evolution: it is true of both body and the spirit. Consider how many sciences, arts, discoveries and achievements have come into existence since the days of Moses till the present time through the progress of the human soul in knowledge and perfections. Similarly, how much the soul has evolved from the moral point of view.

When the body of man is perfected, physical evolution comes to an end, since nature does not seek to build a higher form than that of man. But the evolution of spirit continues until reason, <p435> the mental powers, and the emotional capacities are evolved in it. These are not produced by entities which pass from body to body, but by the universal or World Spirit of man. The results of each individual life-experience go to the general enrichment of humanity. As a

hundred lamps may be lit from a single flame, so the one World Spirit illumines the minds of countless men. Without this spirit, man's body, like the lamp, is lifeless matter.

790. Have full assurance that love is the mystery of the appearance of God; that love is the divine aspect of God; that love is spiritual grace; that love is the light of the Kingdom; that love is as the breath of the Holy Spirit in the spirit of man. Love is the cause of the manifestation of truth in the material world. Love is the essential bond of union which exists between God and all things in their ultimate reality. Love is the source of the greatest happiness of the material and the spiritual worlds. Love is the light by which man is guided in the midst of darkness. Love is the communication between truth and man in the realm of consciousness. Love is the means of growth for all who are enlightened.

Love is the highest law in this great universe of God. Love is the law of order between simple essences, whereby they are apportioned and united into compound substances in this world of matter. Love is the essential and magnetic power that organizes the planets and the stars which shine in infinite space. Love supplies the impulse to that intense and unceasing meditation which reveals the hidden mysteries of the universe.

Love is the highest honor for all the nations of men. To that people in whom God causes love to appear the Supreme Concourse, the angels of heaven, and the hosts of the kingdom of the Glorious One make salutation. When the hearts of a people are void of this Divine power -- of the love of God -- they will descend to the lowest estate of mortals, they will wander in the desert of error, they will fall into the slough of despair and there is no deliverance for them. They become like worms which delight in groveling in the earth.

O friends of God! be ye manifestations of the love of God and lamps of guidance in all horizons, shining by the light of love and harmony.

How beautiful is the shining of this shining!

791.

Thou hast written that thou art a student in the progressive <p436> spiritual school.

Happy is thy condition!

If the various progressive schools join themselves to the universal university of the Kingdom, such knowledge and sciences will be brought into light that man will see the potentialities of the "Open Tablet" of existence are infinite; will realize that all the created things are as letters and words; will be instructed in the lessons of the degrees of significances; will perceive the signs of oneness in the primordial atoms of the earth; will hear the voice of the Lord of the Kingdom; will behold the confirmations of the Holy Spirit and will find such ecstasy and joy that, unable to contain himself in the vast area of existence, he will prepare himself for the journey toward the Kingdom and

will hasten to the immensity of the Realm of Might.

As soon as a bird is fledged, it cannot keep itself on the ground; nay, rather it soareth up toward the Supreme Apex -- except the birds whose feet are tied, whose wings are clipped, whose feathers are broken and who are soiled with water and clay.

792.

O thou seeker of Truth!

The realm of the Kingdom is a unit.

The only difference lies in this: that when the season of spring dawneth, a new and wonderful motion and rejuvenation is witnessed in all the existing things; the mountains and meadows are revived; the trees find freshness and delicacy and are clothed with radiant and bright leaves, blossoms and fruits.

In like manner the preceding Manifestations form an inseparable link with the subsequent dispensations; nay, rather, they are identical with each other.

Since the world is constantly developing itself, the rays become stronger, the outpouring becometh greater and the sun appeareth in the meridian orbit.

793.

O thou yearner after the Kingdom!

Each Manifestation is the heart of the world and the proficient Physician of every patient.

The world of humanity is sick, but that skilful Physician hath the healing remedy and He bestoweth Divine teachings, exhortations and advices which are the remedy of every ailment and the dressing for every wound.

Undoubtedly the wise physician discovereth the needs of the patient at every season and prescribeth suitable medicine.

Therefore, when thou wilt compare the teachings of the Beauty of Abha with the requisitions and necessities of the present time, thou wilt conclude that they are to the sick body of the world the swift healing antidote; nay, rather, they are the remedy producing everlasting health.

The prescription of the proficient physicians of the past and the future will not <p437> be the same; nay, rather, they will be in accord with the ailment of the patient.

Although the medicine is changed, yet all of these changes are for the sole purpose of healing the sick.

In former dispensations the sick body of the world could not bear strong and overpowering remedies.

That is why His Holiness the Christ said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of the Comforter, who is sent by the Father, is come, He will guide you unto all truth."

Therefore, in this age of lights, specific teachings have become universal, in order that the outpouring of the Merciful One environ both the East and the West, the oneness of the Kingdom of humanity become manifest and the luminosity of truth enlighten the world of consciousness.

The descent of the New Jerusalem is the heavenly religion which secures the prosperity of the human world and is the effulgence of the illumination of the realm of God.

In reality Emmanuel was the forerunner of the second coming of His Highness the Christ and the herald of the path of the Kingdom.

This is self-evident, that the letter is an organic member of the word. This membership denoted subordination; that is, that the letter draws its life from the word and hath spiritual relationship with it and is accounted a part of it. The apostles were the Letters and His Highness Christ the Essence of the Word; and the significance of the Word, which is the Everlasting Outpouring, casts a splendor upon those Letters. Since a letter is a part of the word itself, it is intrinsically identical with the word.

I hope that thou shalt arise to perform all that which His Highness Emmanuel hath predicted. Know thou this of a certainty, that thou shalt become assisted. The confirmations of the Holy Spirit are descending uninterruptedly. The power of the Word shall penetrate in such wise that the Letter will become the reflective mirror of the Sun of the Word, and the radiation of the lights of the Word shall illuminate the whole earth. But the heavenly Jerusalem, which is established upon the apex of the world and the Holy of Holies of the Almighty, which hath hoisted its banner, comprehendeth and includeth in it all the perfections and teachings of the former dispensations. Likewise, it is the herald of the oneness of the world of humanity, the ensign of universal peace, the spirit of eternal life, the lights of divine perfections, the surrounding bestowal of the realm of existence, <p438> the adornment and grandeur of the world of creation, and the cause of the tranquillity of humankind.

794. Turn thy attention toward the holy Tablets.[1] Read and reflect upon the Tablets of Ishraqat, Tajalliyat, the Words of Paradise, the Glad Tidings, Tarazat and the Book of Aqdas. These divine teachings in this day are the remedy of the ailments of the world of man, and the dressing of the wounded body of existence; they are the spirit of life, the ark of salvation, the magnet of the everlasting glory, and the penetrative power in the reality of man!
[1 For quotations from the Tablets referred to here, see Contents.]

795. The beloved of God must be the cause of spreading the Heavenly Love. They must impart spiritual concord; deal with all men in the utmost sincerity and kindness in accord with the commands and exhortations of the Merciful One. And they must treat all with benevolence. They must render devoted service to the

friends, wish prosperity for enemies, show kindness to the bad tempered, and be affectionate toward the unjust. They must become a salutary water to thirsty ones, a swift healing to sick persons, a remedy to the ailing; comfort the minds of those afflicted with calamities; become the light of guidance to the erring, an affectionate guide to the wandering, a seeing eye to the blind, a hearing ear to the deaf, an eternal life to the dead, and an everlasting joy to the dispirited.

796. Prayer and supplication are two wings whereby man soars toward the heavenly mansion of the True One. However, verbal repetition of prayer does not suffice. One must live in a perennial attitude of prayer. When man is spiritually free his mind becomes the altar and his heart the sanctuary of prayer. Then the meaning of the verse "He will lift up from before his eyes the veil" will become fulfilled in man.

797. People think religion is confined to an edifice, to be worshipped at an altar. In reality it is an attitude toward divinity which is reflected through life. The confirmations of the Spirit come to that man or woman who accepts his life with radiant acquiescence. Release comes by making of the will a door through <p439> which the confirmations of the Spirit come. By religion we mean those necessary bonds which unify the world of humanity. This has ever been the essence of religion, for this object have all the Manifestations come to the world. Alas! that the leaders of religion afterwards have abandoned this solid foundation and have fabricated a set of blind dogmas and rituals which are at complete variance with the foundation of divine religion.

798. Indifference breeds deterioration. Silence is the cause of retrogression. Thoughtlessness leads to forgetfulness. Passivity, inaction, produce oblivion. Consequently do ye not seek one moment of rest by day or by night. Nay, rather strive after composure of heart in the heaven of Unity. Do ye not for one moment obey the instinct of the worldly consciousness for ease. Seek ye divine happiness through the hardships and sorrows of this physical world, and behold spiritual well-being in the struggles of this fleeting existence. Distill sugar and honey from the bitter poison of suffering. Recognize the caress of divine favor in the arrows of misfortune. Consider the lowest degree of humiliation in the path of the Blessed Perfection as the highest station of Glory. Know descent to be identical with ascent, and consider death itself the essence of life.

799. The Word of God is the storehouse of all good, all power and all wisdom. The illiterate fisherman and savage Arabs through it were enabled to solve such problems as were puzzles to eminent sages from the beginning of time. It awakens within us that brilliant intuition which makes us independent of all tuition, and endows us with an all-embracing power of spiritual understanding. Many a soul after fruitless struggles in the ark of philosophy was drowned in the sea of conflicting theories of cause and effect, while those on board the craft of simplicity reached the shore of the Universal Cause, aided by favorable winds blowing from the point of divine knowledge. When man is associated with that transcendent power emanating from the Word of God, the

tree of his being becomes so well rooted in the soil of assurance that it laughs at hurricanes of skepticism violently attempting its destruction. For this association of the part with the Whole endows him with the Whole, and this union of the particular with the Universal makes him all in all. <p440>

800. Evil does not exist. Death is only the lack of life; therefore death does not exist. Darkness is only the lack of light. Evil is only the lack of good. Ignorance is only the lack of knowledge. Poverty is the lack of wealth. Misleading is the lack of guidance. Miserliness is the lack of generosity. The non-existence of light is darkness. The lack of sight is blindness. The lack of hearing is deafness. All these things are non-existent. God did not create any evil thing. God did not create a man poor. Poverty is only the lack of wealth. Guidance is the gift of God, and if a man is deprived of it, he will be misled; but he is not misled by God -- it is only the result of the lack of guidance.

801. Everything save man has one condition, but man has two. The animal has one condition of nature, but man has the animal nature and the Divine nature. If the Divine nature predominates he will be good, but if the human nature predominates he will be evil. One will lift him up, but the other will send him to the lowest depths. Man can become so degraded that he will worship a stone, which is of the lowest kingdom; but the spiritual will raise him to the Supreme Realms. Jesus Christ had the same two conditions, the earthly and the heavenly; man has the same. Man has the power of knowledge which will exalt him to heaven, and the power of ignorance which will debase him to the lowest condition. The more a person advances in Divine matters, the more will he receive the attributes of light; and the more he retrogrades, the more he will receive the qualities of darkness. The world is dark and in darkness, but the spiritual world is light. This is the Heavenly Kingdom.

802. People must live for one another, and not live in seclusion as do the monks and nuns. People should not live solitary lives. Light is of no value in an empty room. A tree is of no service to any one on the summit of a mountain, but should stand in a place where it will give shade and where its fruits can be gathered. The believers should be together as much as possible. Two lamps in a room give more light than one.

803. Man must work, and in that work show the qualities of God and thus do good. His work, both material and spiritual, must <p441> reveal what he himself is. By his arts, sciences, inventions and all of his work, man must reveal his highest capacity.

804. 9 is the last number and it is the greater number. 10 is simply the continuation of the number 1 because 10 is 1 and 100 is 1. Place the units up to 10 and we simply return to the number 1. The units end at 9. Number 9 is the highest, and from it all other numbers are made. The calculation of the word "Bab" is 5 and Baha is 9. If you multiply 9 by 5 you have 45. Now 45 is the Arabic numerical value of the word Adam.

As Adam is the Father of humanity, and means the real man, therefore the product of the Bab and Baha is equal to the number Adam. There is no great

difference between the Greatest Name and the name of Adam. In their nature they are one. (The digits of 45 added equal 9.) Also, 1 plus 2 equals 3; 3 plus 3 equals 6; 6 plus 4 equals 10; 10 plus 5 equals 15; 15 is the number of Eve. By the physical marriage of Adam and Eve the race originated, and by the appearance of the Manifestation (Baha'u'llah) and the Bab, the Spiritual Generation had its origin. Therefore there is great knowledge and understanding when the two names are made into one, because if you add from 1 to 9 consecutively, the result is equal to the number of Baha and the Bab multiplied together, which equals 45, and it is equal to the number of Adam; and this is the wisdom in it. The name of God which Christ gave to His disciples was the Name of the Kingdom of Baha'u'llah. It was the same spiritually, but it was a Name which was never pronounced. All the Bible was written for Baha'u'llah. Everywhere, "Lord of Hosts" refers to the Manifestation.

805. The highest expression of the life of man on this planet in this age and many ages to come is Celestial: that is, to live and act in accord with the teachings of Baha'u'llah and to be steadfast in the love of Abdul Baha. The principles of the Religion of the Blessed Perfection adorn the spirit with the highest attributes of the Kingdom of Abha, illumine the heart with the Sun of the love of God, make him a servant of the world of humanity, a standardbearer of Universal Peace, and an orb shining from the heaven of righteousness. <p442>

He forgets himself and lives in the flow of the love of the True One; he embraces all mankind with an ineffable tenderness, striving day and night to serve his fellowman. He becomes a herald of the Supreme Concourse and wins the good pleasure of the Lord of Hosts. He will be attracted with the love of the Beloved, and immerse his whole being in the ocean of humility and meekness. He will enlist himself in the army of human progress, to realize the limitless advancement of the human race. Through his zeal, he will sacrifice everything in the path of God, and quaff from the chalice of eternal life.

This is the most glorious bounty of this Age; this is the bestowal of the Baha'i Circle; this is the Light that illuminates every heart. This is the water that allays every thirst one; this is the Divine Elixir that changes man into the image and likeness of the Almighty.

806. To tamper with psychic forces while in this world interferes with the condition of the soul in the world to come. These forces are real, but are not to be active on this plane.

The child in the womb has its eyes, ears, hands and feet, but these powers are not in activity. The whole purpose of the womb-life is the coming forth into this world. So, the whole purpose of this matrix-world life is the coming forth into the world of Reality, where all these (psychic) forces will be active. They belong to that world.

This mineral and these trees have no knowledge of the animal and human worlds; they cannot imagine them, they deny their very existence. While the human world is helping the animal and developing the vegetable kingdoms, these kingdoms are unconscious of it. Similarly, the human world cannot comprehend the world of

the Kingdom; it is absolutely ignorant of the Kingdom, while the heavenly spirits have influence in the human world.

Observe how clear this point is, yet the professors and philosophers of the world ignore this Reality! The psychic mediums, however, are speaking of the world of thought and not the world of Reality. But a heavenly soul who is conscious of the divine world, whose eye of discernment is open, who is severed from the world of nature, and has attained to spiritual power -- this soul is cognizant of the divine world and the world of spirits. Reality is pure spirit, it is not physical. That is, it occupies no space. <p443>

807. By God, who is the only God, and there is no God but Him, this servant swears the masters did not come that man should adore them, or worship them, or acknowledge their prophethood. No! rather the masters of all time have suffered for no other purpose than this -- that fleshly veils might be rent asunder and Reality become manifest.

808. There are before you so many temptations, trials, afflictions, calamities and difficulties because you have to be purified through fire and sifted through the sieve in order to separate the wheat from the tares. Verily, I say unto you: none will be saved but the believers, and from the believers only the sincere, and even those are in great danger, especially in such a time.

Consider ye! What calumny, slander, cruelty and oppression were brought down upon the Apostles by the Israelites for the sake of faith and assurance. They extended the hands of pillage, they persecuted and tortured those sanctified souls. Therefore, there is no doubt but that you will become afflicted with trial, calamity and oppression in the Path of the Beauty of Abha. But these trials are the essence of bestowal, and pure bounty, and the proofs of your acceptance at the Threshold of Oneness. Consequently, when the fire of trials is lighted, celebrate ye in joy, dance with overflowing emotions, rejoicing that, praise be to God, you have become the target of contempt in the Path of the Beauty of Abha, and are hated by the people of passion and desire!

809. This Cause has become world-wide. In a short space of time it has permeated throughout all regions, for it has a magnetic power which attracts all intelligent men and women toward this center. If a person become informed of the reality of this Cause, he will believe in it, for these teachings are the spirit of this age.

The Baha'i Movement imparts life. It is the cause of love and amity amongst mankind. It establishes communication between various nations and religions. It removes all antagonisms. And when this Cause is fully spread in Europe, warfare will be a thing of the past, universal peace will be realized, the oneness of the world of humanity will be recognized, and religion and science will work hand in hand.

The Baha'i Movement bestows upon man a new spirit, a new light, and a new motion. It enlarges the sphere of thought. It <p444> illumines the horizon of the intellect. It expands the arena of comprehension.

This is the ultimate goal of human life. This is the fruit of existence. This is the brilliant pearl of cosmic consciousness. This is the shining star of spiritual destiny.

810. Though unity was produced in bygone centuries, still complete unity was not feasible, for the means and causes of union were wanting, and among the five continents of the world connection and communication did not exist. Moreover, even among the people of one continent, intercourse and interchange of ideas was difficult. Therefore intercourse, unity, connection and interchange of ideas among all the people of the world through one center was impossible. But now the means of connection are man, and the five continents of the world are really as one.

The connection of commerce, art, science and agriculture is now evident, and has absolute sway. Therefore union and harmony are possible to be produced among all. These means of connection are the wonders of this glorious century and great epoch. Former centuries were deprived of this possibility, for this enlightened century has another power, another splendor, another condition. That is why you see it daily bringing forth some new wonder. Finally it will ignite shining lights in the gatherings of the world. Like the aurora of the morning, the signs of these great lights are already apparent on the horizon.

The first light is political union, and a little trace of this has already appeared.

The second light is harmony of ideas in regard to essential matters, and the effect of this will soon be apparent.

The third light is the union of freedom; that likewise will surely be produced.

The fourth light is the union of religion, and this is the essential foundation. The evidence of this union will appear in the gatherings of the world with divine power.

The fifth light is the union of nations. In this century the union of brotherhood will appear in absolute might -- at last all the people of the world will consider themselves natives of one country.

The sixth light is the union of all classes. All the people of the world will be as one kind. <p445>

The seventh light is the union of one language. That is, a language will be made which all the people will learn and through it converse one with another.

These things which have been mentioned will surely come to pass, for they are confirmed by a heavenly power. Consider that in Persia there were so many different classes, antagonistic sects and diverse ideas that its conditions were the lowest in the world. But now through the breath of the Holy Spirit it has attained to such a degree of union and connection that these different people, antagonistic creeds and hostile classes are as one soul. You will see them associating, conversing and mingling with one another in perfect union, brotherhood and fraternity. In large meetings you can see Christians, Jews,

Zoroastrians and Moslems associating in perfect union, brotherhood, love, freedom and joy.

Consider what the power of the Greatest Name has done!

811. As to your question regarding the stars: Know that these brilliant stars are numberless and their existence is not devoid of wisdom both useful and important.

Rather they are worlds, as is this world of ours. But they differ in their bodies, by the difference of elements, from this earthly body. The differ in formation. The beings existent upon these bodies are according to their formation.

As to the worlds whereunto Christ (unto whom be Glory) referred: They are spiritual, divine, heavenly, single, unlocated -- souls know them. But, verily, the sight of the people of the Kingdom of El-Abha perceives them, and the intellect of the people of the Supreme Concourse apprehends them.

812. The disease which afflicts the body politic is lack of love and absence of altruism. In the hearts of men no real love is found, and the condition is such that unless their susceptibilities are quickened by some power so that unity, love and accord develop within them, there can be no healing, no relief among mankind. Love and unity are the needs of the body politic today. Without these no progress nor prosperity can be attained. Therefore the friends of God must adhere to that Power which will create this love and unity in the hearts of the sons of men. Science cannot cure the illness of the body politic. Science cannot <p446> create amity and fellowship in human hearts. Neither can patriotism or racial prejudice effect a remedy. It can be accomplished solely through the divine bounties and the spiritual bestowals which have descended from God in this Day for that very purpose.

This is an exigency of the times, and the divine remedy has been provided. The spiritual Teachings of the Religion of God alone can create this love, unity and accord in human hearts. Therefore, hold to these heavenly agencies which God has provided so that through the love of God this soul-tie may be established, this heart-attachment realized, the light of the reality of unity be reflected from you throughout the universe.

The secrets of the whole economic question are divine in nature, and are concerned with the world of the heart and spirit. In the Baha'i Teachings this is most completely explained, and without the consideration of the Baha'i Teachings it is impossible to bring about a better state.

813. Baha'is consider it more blessed and a greater privilege to bestow than to gain and receive. They believe that bestowing good upon one another is the greatest means of help to both. This is not the principle and practise of their calumniators, who make even religion a source of livelihood.

814. The body of man, which has been formed gradually, must similarly be decomposed gradually. This is according to the real and natural order and

divine law. If it had been better for it to be burned after death, in its creation it would have been so planned that the body would automatically become ignited after death, be consumed and turned into ashes. But the divine order formulated by the heavenly ordinance is that after death this body shall be transferred from one stage to another different from the preceding one, so that according to the relations which exist in this world, it may gradually combine and mix with other elements, thus going through stages until it arrive in the vegetable kingdom, there turning into plants and flowers, developing into trees of the highest paradise, becoming perfumed and attaining the beauty of color.

Cremation suppresses it speedily from attainment to these transformations, the elements becoming so quickly decomposed that transformation to these various stages is checked. <p447>

815. Now as to what thou askest concerning the Spirit and its return to this world of humanity, and this elemental space: Know that the Spirit in general is divided into five sorts, the Vegetable Spirit, the Animal Spirit, the Human Spirit, the Spirit of Faith, and the Divine Spirit of Sanctity.

The Vegetable Spirit is the virtue perceptive, resulting from the admixture and absorption of the vital elements generated in the heart, which apprehend sense impressions.

The Human Spirit consists of the rational faculty, which apprehends general ideas and things intelligible and perceptible.

Now these spirits are not reckoned as "Spirit" in the terminology of the Scriptures and the usage of the people of Truth, inasmuch as the laws governing them are the same laws as govern all other phenomenal being, in respect to generation and corruption and production and change and reversion, as is clearly indicated in the Gospel where it says: "Let the dead bury their dead." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit"; inasmuch as he who would bury these dead was alive with the vegetative, animal and rational human soul, yet did Christ (to whom be Glory!) declare such to be dead and devoid of life, in that this person was devoid of the Spirit of Faith, which is of the Kingdom of God.

In brief, for these three spirits there is no restitution or return, but they are subordinate to reversions and production and corruption.

But the Spirit of Faith, which is of the Kingdom, consists of the all-comprehending grace and the perfect attainment, and the power of sanctity, and the divine effulgence from the Sun of Truth on luminous, light-seeking essences, from the Presence of the Divine Unity. And by this Spirit is the life of the spirit of man, when it is fortified thereby, as Christ (to whom be Glory!) saith: "That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." And this Spirit hath both restitution and return, inasmuch as it consists of the Light of God and the unconditioned grace. So, having regard to this state and station, Christ (to whom be Glory!) announced that John the Baptist was Elias "who was for to come" before Christ. And the likeness of this station is as that of

lamps <p448> kindled from one another: for these, in respect to their glasses and oilholders, are different, but in respect to their Light, one, and in respect to their illumination, one; nay, each is identical with the other, without imputation of plurality, or diversity, or multiplicity, or separateness. This is the Truth, and beyond the Truth there is only error.

816. But as to the question of the Trinity: Know, O advancer unto God, that in each one of the cycles wherein the Lights have shone forth upon the horizons, and the Forgiving Lord hath revealed Himself on Mount Paran, or Mount Sinai, or Mount Seir, there are necessarily three things, the Giver of the Grace, the Grace, and the Recipient of the Grace: the Source of the Effulgence, the Effulgence, and the Recipient of the Effulgence; the Illuminator, the Illumination, and the Illuminated. Look at the Mosaic cycle -- the Lord and Moses, and the Fire the intermediary; and in the Messianic cycle, the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost and the intermediary; and in the Muhammadan cycle, the Lord and the Apostle, and Gabriel the intermediary. Look at the sun and its rays, and the heat which results from its rays; the rays and the heat are but two effects of the sun, but inseparable from it and sent out from it; yet is the sun one in its essence, unique in its real identity, single in its attributes, nor can anything possibly resemble it. Such is the essence of the truth concerning the Unity, the real doctrine of the Oneness, the undiluted reality as to the divine Sanctity.

817. In short, by religion we mean those necessary bonds which unify the world of humanity. This has ever been the essence of the religion of God. This is the object of divine teaching and laws. This is the Light of the everlasting Life. But a thousand times, alas! this solid foundation is abandoned and forgotten, and the leaders of religion have fabricated a set of blind dogmas and rituals which are at complete variance with the foundation of divine religion. As these dogmas differ from each other, they become oppositions, oppositions breed strife, and strife ends in war and bloodshed. Thus religion, which was destined to become the cause of friendship, has become the cause of enmity. Religion, which was to confer everlasting life, has become a fiendish weapon of death. Hence, these superannuated, tattered dogmas, <p449> which are current among present day religions, must be totally given up; and thus, free from past traditions, the people must investigate the real objects of divine religion -- when the true religion of God shall become unveiled in the utmost beauty and sublimity in the assemblage of the world.

818. Search untiringly for truth and reiterate the teachings which harmonize with the crying needs of the hour. This will be the cause of the progress of man, the illumination of the Orient and the Occident. The important thing is to spread the Teachings of Baha'u'llah in our own century. Whoever listens to these Teachings properly explained, will say: "Here is the Truth -- that which will render life a greater thing!"

819. The days of human existence are like vanishing shadows. Compared to the world of Reality, they are brought to a close with extreme speed. >From amongst the world of humanity those who lead a heedless life are afflicted with

manifest loss; for when the days of their life come to a sudden end, there is no trace, no leaves, no blossom, no fruit. They shall remain in the lowest degree, and no mention is left behind for them. From king to servant, all walk this fleeting path and live in this circle, but none shall endure save those who are freed from every tie. They are not greedy after comfort, nor do they seek flitting pleasures. They are not longing for honor, neither pursue the phantasmal imaginations of glory and wealth. They are the devotees, the tried soldiers of Baha'u'llah -- wanderers over mountain and desert. In the state of complete renunciation they call the people to the Kingdom of God, and they are the cause of the guidance of souls. Like unto the candle, they are aflame with all the virtues of the world of humanity. This is everlasting glory. This is eternal life. This is true attainment. This is the divine sublimity of the creation of God.

820. Were it not for the favors of the Blessed Perfection, no one would have given us any importance. There are some who become proud and haughty and forget this fact. In their utter blindness they consider themselves to be important. Then they fall from their high pedestal, and great is the noise thereof.

Meekness and humility are the hallmarks of faith. As soon as a <p450> believer feels himself the least degree superior to others, the beginning of his spiritual decline has set in, all unaware to himself. There are no offices in this Cause. I do not and have not "appointed" any one to perform any special service, but I encourage every one to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy, and not theocracy. The difference between me and others is this: I confess and acknowledge my own inability, weakness and humility, and know that all these outward confirmations are the favors of the Blessed Perfection. There are some who imagine, and little by little come to believe, that their spiritual successes are by and through themselves.

821. There are two kinds of love, one universal and one individual. You must love humanity in order to uplift and beautify humanity. Even if people slay you, yet must you love them. Individual love cannot be forced, and you are not required to love anybody personally; but if they are in your lives, see to it that they are means to your development and that you are means to their development, through your universal love for them. We are creatures of the same God, therefore we must love all as children of God even though they are doing us harm. Christ loved his persecutors. It is possible for us to attain to that love. God manifested His Love by creating man in His own image. Man must manifest this love by developing himself and others in the image of God.

822. It is possible so to adjust oneself to the practise of nobility that its atmosphere surrounds and colors every act. When actions are habitually and conscientiously adjusted to noble standards, with no thought of the words that might herald them, then nobility becomes the accent of life. At such a degree of evolution one scarcely needs try any longer to be good -- all acts are become the distinctive expression of nobility.

823. As there is no one who has not his place indicated in the world (for nothing useless exists on this earth), we must treat every one with respect and affection, for in each individual we can see a sign of the divine favor and power, that power which has been able to draw such a being out of matter, make of him <p451> a creature with sensorial faculties, and endow him with intellectual and spiritual potentiality. This is one of the proofs of the divine power. Let us respect these living proofs of God.

824. The centers of divine perfections are the Manifestations of God as seen in His prophets. In whichever country, or at whatever time they come, they are the center of the divine perfections; and as the sun in the material heavens develops the material beings, so do these spiritual suns develop the world of souls.

Let us turn toward the spiritual Sun and acquire a spiritual light which will render the world luminous, so that we may be freed from matter and acquire celestial qualities, that this limited existence may become eternal.

825. The Divine Reality is far removed from man. It is absolutely remote and independent in Its essence; abstract, limitless, impersonal beyond human comprehension.

Man is limited, weak, without power, helpless. The Divine Reality represents power absolute, capacity for all things, fulfilment for all the needs of man.

The Divine Reality is to man what the sun is to the earth. The sun is life, radiance, heat, power, energy. The earth is dead, inert, helpless, incapable of initiative or change.

The sun in its remoteness could never reach the earth -- and the earth, wretched, helpless -- could never attain to the glory and splendor of the sun. An intermediary there must be. In some way the radiant, life-giving power of the sun must be brought to the darkened earth, and this becomes possible through the media of light and heat. Through their means this dark ball of earth becomes the home of fragrant, blooming life.

As there must be an intermediary to transmit to the earth the life-giving power of the sun, so must there be an intermediary to bring God to man; and this is realized through the ever-present power of the Holy Spirit. As the media of light and heat carry fragrance and bloom to the earth, so the Holy Spirit brings to man perfection and inspiration. The earth alone is but a senseless clod -- touched by the sun it becomes life and energy. So the Holy Spirit touches the heart of man and awakens him to eternal life. It gives to man all possibilities. The cause of life widens before his eyes; eternity opens to him and becomes his, and every moment <p452> it is his inviolable possession. Limitations disappear, and he becomes more and more sensitive to the teachings of the Holy Spirit. All things are his own.

Without the intermediary of the Holy Spirit, man would remain dull, helpless and deprived of attainment. But touched by that Divine Elixir he becomes tender, loving, responsive, and capable of every perfection of existence.

Turn your faces away from the contemplation of your own finite selves and fix your eyes upon the everlasting radiance, then will your souls receive in full measure the divine powers of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of the infinite bounty.

826. In the Baha'i Cause, arts, sciences and all crafts are considered as worship. The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability, conscientiously concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God. Briefly, all effort and exertion put forth by man from the fulness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity. This is worship: to serve mankind and minister to people's needs. Service is prayer. A physician ministering to the sick, gently, tenderly, free from prejudice, and believing in the solidarity of the human race -- he is offering praise.

827. When the teachers delivers an address, first of all his own words must have a supremely powerful effect over himself, so that others in turn may be affected; his utterances must be like a flame of fire, burning away the veils of dogma, passion and desire. Moreover, he must be in the utmost state of humility and self-effacement, that others may be rendered mindful. He must have attained the station of renunciation and annihilation. Then, and not until then, will he teach the people with the humility of the Supreme Concourse.

828. Truthfulness is the foundation of all the virtues of the world of humanity. Without truthfulness, progress and success in all the worlds of God are impossible for a soul to attain. When this holy attribute is established in man, all the other divine qualities will also become realized. <p453>

829. Economy is the foundation of human prosperity. The spendthrift is always in trouble. Prodigality on the part of any person is an unpardonable sin. We must never live on others like a parasitic plant. Every person must have a profession, whether it be literary or manual, and must live a clean, manly, honest life, an example of purity to be imitated by others. It is more kingly to be satisfied with a crust of stale bread than to enjoy a sumptuous dinner of many courses, the money for which comes out of the pockets of others. The mind of a contented person is always peaceful and his heart at rest. He is like a monarch ruling over the whole world. How happily such a man helps himself to his frugal meals! How joyfully he takes his walks, how peacefully he sleeps!

830. The food of the future will be fruit and grains. The time will come when meat is no longer eaten. Medical science is yet only in its infancy, but it has shown that our natural diet is that which grows out of the ground. The people will gradually develop up to the condition of taking only this natural food.

831. Economics must commence with the farmer and thence reach out and embrace the other classes, inasmuch as the number of farmers is greater than that of other groups. Therefore it is becoming that the economic problem be solved for the farmer first, for the farmer is the first active agent in the body politic.

In brief: from among the wise men of every village a Board should be organized,

and the affairs of that village should be under the control of the Board. Likewise, a general storehouse should be founded and a secretary appointed for it. At the time of the harvest, with the approval of the members of the Board, a determined percentage of the entire harvest should be appropriated for the storehouse.

This storehouse is to have seven revenues: tithes, taxes on animals, wealth without inheritors, all things who owner cannot be discovered, a third of all treasure found in the ground, a third of the output of the mines, and voluntary contributions.

On the other hand, there are seven expenditures. First, the general running expenses of the institution, salaries, etc., and the administration of public safety, including a department of hygiene. <p454>

Second, tithes to the general government. Third, taxes on animals for the State. Fourth, support of an orphanage. Fifth, support of cripples and incurables. Sixth, support of educational institutions. Seventh, supplying any deficiency in the expenses of the poor.

If anything is left in the storehouse, that must be transferred to the general treasury of the nation for general national expenses. When such a system is established, each individual member of the body politic will live in the utmost comfort and happiness, and the degrees will be preserved. There will be no disturbance of these degrees whatsoever, for they are the essential needs of the body politic.

The body politic is like an army. An army needs a commander-in-chief, colonel, captain, lieutenant, and private. It is impossible for all to enjoy the same rank; preservation of degrees is necessary, but each member of that army must live in the utmost comfort and ease.

Likewise a city is in need of a mayor, judge, merchant, banker, artisan and farmers. Undoubtedly these degrees should be preserved, otherwise the public order would be disturbed.

The government of a country should make laws which conform to the divine law.

832. All the prophets were sent, all the books were revealed, that the law of love might be promoted. Let us have love and more love, a love that melts all opposition, that sweeps away all barriers, that conquers all foes, a love that aboundeth in charity, large-heartedness, tolerance, and noble striving, a love that triumphs over all obstacle, a boundless, an irresistible, sweeping love! Ah me! Each one must be a sign of love, a center of love, a sun of love, a star of love, a palace of love, a mountain of love, a world of love, a universe of love! Hast thou love? Then thy power is irresistible. Hast thou sympathy? Then all the stars will sing thy praise.

833. In whatsoever matter man wisheth to engage, he must first acquire some capability and make provisions and preparations therefore. In this day, whatever soul intendeth to raise the voice of the Kingdom, and to draw people

under the Tree of Life in the ideal paradise, and to invite them to eternal life, must first be delivered <p455> from all attachments, must even shut his eyes to rest, quietude, and to the mortal existence of this world.

I hope that thou hast abandoned all such mortal things, and when thou hast attained to this great bounty, that is, when thou art delivered from the attachments of this mortal world, and hast intended to endure all calamities in the path of God -- in such wise that reproaches on the part of the enemy will seem to thee as praise and glorification, and the blame of the people of hatred will appear like unto admiration and applause, and the bitterness of afflictions will taste as the honey of favor and all hardships be as sweetness -- then canst thou step into the path of the Kingdom and become the herald of God.

Consequently, do thou show a steadfast and firm footing in this station, engage in guiding the people and call them unto the Kingdom; then wilt thou find how the divine magnet -- the power of the Word of God -- will attract hearts and bestow ecstasy and enthusiasm upon souls!

When thou reachest this station, there shall remain no obstacles and no veil shall intervene, and all that is thy highest wish shall be realized.

834. In these times thanksgiving for the bounty of the Merciful One consists in the illumination of the heart and the awareness of the soul. This is the reality of thanksgiving.

835. Verily know that the word of Abdul Baha, and his speech, is a hidden mystery and concealed fact. No one is informed of its greatness and importance at this time, but in future centuries the signs thereof will be manifested, the lights will dawn forth, the fragrances will be diffused and the greatness and importance will be known. Know thou its value, and deem great its station.

836. The power of the sympathetic nerve are neither entirely physical nor entirely spiritual, but are between the two (systems). The nerve is connected with both. Its phenomena shall be perfect when its spiritual and physical relations are become normal.

When the material world and the divine world are well correlated, when the hearts become heavenly and the aspirations grow pure and divine, perfect connection shall take place. Then shall <p456> this power produce a perfect manifestation. Physical and spiritual diseases will then receive absolute healing.

837. Verily, I bow my face to the dust of the Threshold of El-Baha and to Him who sitteth on the Throne, I petition as a suppliant captive, begging Him to make thee to behold His glorious face and to purify thine insight from aught else save Him among the people. Verily, He is the refuge of all and our great protection!

We are all poor at His door, weak before His power, lowly at His threshold, and we possess the power neither of good nor evil. He is indeed the Confirmer, the

Strengthener, the Benevolent!

Truly hath He opened before our faces the doors of the Kingdom, granted us the treasures of His mysteries through the divine bounty, and hath chosen us for His love, for attainment unto His lights, the study of His teachings, the spreading of His name, the guidance unto His path, and service in His great vineyard. I pray for confirmation in thy behalf, and thou shouldst pray for strength on my part. Thy prayers for me should be that I may attain martyrdom in His path, that my spirit may be His sacrifice, and that my blood may be shed for His love.

Verily, I long for that cup, which is overflowing with the bounty of God, as a patient desiring to be healed, as a thirsty soul seeking water, as the poor in quest of wealth, and as one in separation yearning after the meeting of the beloved.

838. This period of time is the Promised Age, the assembling of the human race to the "Resurrection Day," and now is the great "Day of Judgment." Soon the whole world, as in spring, will change its garb. The turning and falling of the autumn leaves is past; the bleakness of the winter time is done. The new year hath appeared and the spiritual springtime is at hand. The black earth is becoming a verdant garden; the deserts and mountains are teeming with red flowers; while the birds are singing among the rose branches like the angels in the highest heavens, announcing the glad tiding of that spiritual spring, and the sweet music of their voices is causing the real essence of all things to move and quiver.

O my spiritual friend! Dost thou know from what airs emanate the notes sung by these birds? They are from the melodies <p457> of peace and reconciliation, of love and unity, of justice and security, of concord and agreement. In a short time this heavenly singing will intoxicate all humanity; the foundations of enmity shall be destroyed; unity and affection shall be witnessed in every assembly; and the lovers of the love of God at these great festivals shall behold their splendor.

Therefore, contemplate what a spirit of life God hath given that the body of the whole earth may attain life everlasting! The Paradise of El-Abha will soon spread a pavilion from the pole-star of the world, under whose shelter the beloved shall rejoice and the pure hearts repose in peace.

839. You ask if, through the appearance of the Kingdom of God, every soul hath been saved. The Sun of Reality hath appeared to all the world. This Luminous Appearance is salvation and life; but only he who hath opened the eye of reality and who hath seen these lights will be saved.

840. When the people of Baha desire to enter the sacred union of matrimony, eternal connection, ideal relationship, spiritual and physical association of thought and conception of life must exist between them; so that in all the grades of existence and all the worlds of God this union may continue forever; for this real union is a splendor of the light of the love of God.

The bridegroom must, before the bridesman and a few others, say: "Verily, we are content with the will of God." And the bride must rejoin: "Verily, we are satisfied with the desire of God." This is Baha'i matrimony.

841. What thou hast written was perused. Thou hast questioned how thou canst accept this divine Cause, for thou art a member of the church. Know thou: in the day of the Manifestation of Christ, many souls became portionless and deprived because they were members of the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem. According to that membership, they became veiled from his brilliant Beauty. Therefore, turn thy face to the Church of God, which consists in divine instructions and merciful exhortations. For what similarity is there between the church of stone and cement, and the Celestial Holy of Holies? <p458>

Endeavor that thou mayest enter this Church of God. Although thou hast given oath to attend the (material) church, yet thy spirit is under the Covenant and Testament of the spiritual divine temple. Thou shouldst protect this. Although they consider the wine and the bread in the church as the blood and body of Christ, yet this is but appearance and not reality. The reality of Christ is the words of the Holy Spirit. If thou art able, take a portion thereof.

842. The performance of the celebration of baptism would cleanse the body, but the spirit hath no share; but the divine teachings and the exhortations of the Beauty of Abha will baptize the soul. This is the real baptism. I hope thou wilt receive this baptism.

843. O friends! It is the wish of Abdul Baha that the friends may establish general unity and not a particular meeting of unity. You must have great consideration of this fact, for while during past cycles such events were, in the beginning, a means for harmony, they became in the end the cause of trouble.

We are all servants of one Threshold, attendants at one Court, waves of one sea, drops of one river, the dust before one door, and plants of one garden. There must arise no trouble to deprive one from that which is the real purpose.

To organize assemblies is praiseworthy and acceptable, but these must be established for certain matters. For example: assemblages for teaching, gatherings for the spread of the fragrances of God, gatherings for the relief of orphans, gatherings for the protection of the poor, assemblages for the spread of learning and, in a word, there must be assemblages for matters which concern the well-being of men, such as organization of a society of commerce, societies for the expansion of agriculture. To be brief, similar societies are very acceptable and praiseworthy, and concern all in general and not a particular number.

In a word: that which is conducive to the development of the people is acceptable, and whatever is the cause of disaffection is blameworthy. I hope all the friends of the East and West shall rest in the same assemblage and adorn one gathering, appearing with all the heavenly attributes and virtues in the world of humanity. <p459>

844. If thou wishest to find the Truth, then compare the days of the Manifestation of the Beauty of Abha with the days of Christ; consider that this day is identically like that, and the same doubts and oppositions are put forth (by the deniers).

845. Thou hast written regarding Buddha and Confucius. Now is not the time when we discuss the stations and positions of those who have passed away. We must concentrate our attention upon the present. What hath transpired in a former time is past. Now is the time when we restrict our discussion to the most great luminary of peace and salvation in this age, to talk of the Blessed Perfection, and to voice His exhortations, behests and teachings. Buddha and Confucius were kings in bygone ages who have disappeared. Their sovereignty in this world is ended and their cycle fulfilled.

846. This world resembles the human body and the Kingdom of God is like the spirit of life. Think how narrow and dark is the material world of man, how afflicted with disease and maladies; but how bright and spacious is his Spiritual World! Through this illustration thou mayest comprehend in what manner is the Spiritual World portrayed in this earthly world and in what degree is its power effected. Though the Spirit is concealed, its power is manifested and clear in the phenomenal world; and so with the Kingdom of God, though it is veiled from the eyes of ignorant people, to men of perception it is discernible and evident. Therefore, thou must become utterly heavenly that thou mayest forget the earthly conditions and be immersed in the perception of Divinity to such a degree that thou wilt be unconscious of the surrounding material existence.

847. Thou hast asked regarding the phrase "He is God!" written above the Tablets. By this Word it is intended that no one hath any access to the Invisible Essence. The way is barred and the road impassable. In this world all men must turn their faces toward "Him-whom-God-shall-Manifest." He is the "Dawning-place of Divinity" and the "manifestation of Deity." He is the "Ultimate Goal," the "Adored One" of all and the "Worshipped One" of all. Otherwise, whatever flashes through the mind is not that Essence of essences and the Reality of realities; nay, rather, is <p460> it pure imagination woven by man and is surrounded, not the surrounding. Consequently, it returns finally to the realm of suppositions and conjectures.

848. Know thou verily:

My throne is my mat.
My glorious crown in my servitude toward God.
My standard is the commemoration of God.
My hosts are the knowledge of my Master.
My sword is the guidance of God.

My dominion is my humility, my submissiveness, my lowliness, my abasement, my supplication and my beseeching unto God -- this is that permanent reign which no one is able to dispute, gainsay or usurp!

849. This day is not a day of seclusion and solitude, but a day of proclaiming the manifestation of the light of the Beauty of thy Supreme Lord.

Therefore, abandon silence and seclusion and solitary nooks, and go forth into the arena of explanation. Convey the Message of thy Lord with clearest speech and most complete elucidation. This is better for thee than solitude.

The season for seclusion in quiet nooks is the season of winter when the cold and the winds increase. But during the spring, the wafting of gentle breezes, the passing of fragrances from the rose, the state of equilibrium in the atmosphere and the green hue of valleys and prairies, it is best for man to leave solitude and enjoy the blessings of the outdoors.

850. Thank thou God that thou hast stepped into the arena of existence in such a blessed Age and hast opened ears and eyes in such a Day of Promise.

851. Although a person of good deeds is acceptable at the Threshold of the Almighty, yet it is first "to know," and then "to do." Although a blind man produceth a most wonderful and exquisite art, yet he is deprived of seeing it. Consider how most animals labor for man, draw loads and facilitate travel; yet, as they are ignorant, they receive no reward for this labor and toil. The cloud raineth, roses and hyacinths grow; the plain and <p461> meadow, the garden and trees become green and blossom; yet they do not realize the results and outcome of all these. The lamp is lighted, but as it hath not a conscious knowledge of itself, none hath become glad because of it. Moreover, a soul of excellent deeds and good manners will undoubtedly advance from whatever horizon he beholdeth the lights radiating. Herein lies the difference: by faith is meant, first, conscious knowledge, and second, the practise of good deeds.

852. The spirits of men are not at all annihilated -- they are immortal. The spirits of heavenly souls will find eternal life, that is, they will attain the highest and most great stations of perfection; but the spirits of the heedless souls, although eternal, are yet in a world of imperfection, concealment and ignorance. For instance: No matter how much the mineral has existence and life, yet is comparison to man, it is entirely non-existent and deprived of life. For where (a heedless) man is translated from life to death, his comparative station will be that of a mineral existence.

853. The Cause of Baha'u'llah is the same as the Cause of Christ. It is the same temple and the same foundation. Both of these are spiritual springtimes and seasons of the soul-refreshing awakening and the cause of the renovation of the life of mankind. The spring of this year is the same as the spring of last year. The origins and the ends are the same. The sun of today is the sun of yesterday. IN the coming of Christ, the divine teachings were given in accordance with the infancy of the human race. The teachings of Baha'u'llah have the same basic principles, but are according to the stage of the maturity of the world and the requirements of this illumined age.

854. One of the requirements of faithfulness is that thou mayest sacrifice thyself and, in the divine path, close thine eye to every pleasure and strive

with all thy soul that thou mayest disappear and be lost, like unto a drop, in the ocean of the love of God.

855. Organize ye spiritual assemblies; lay ye the foundation of union and concord in this world; destroy ye the fabric of strife <p462> and war from the face of the earth; construct ye the temple of harmony and agreement; enkindle ye the light of the realm of the oneness of humanity; open ye your eyes; gaze and behold ye the other world! The kingdom of peace, salvation, uprightness and reconciliation is founded in the invisible world, and it will by degrees become manifest and apparent through the power of the Word of God!

The Spirit of Truth is soaring on the Supreme Apex, like unto a bird, in order that it may discover a severed heart and alight therein and make its nest.

856. There are prophecies concerning this Manifestation in the

Buddhistic books, but they are in symbols and metaphors, and some spiritual conditions are mentioned therein, but the leaders of religion do not understand. They think these prophecies are material things; while those signs are foreshadowing spiritual occurrences.

Unless man maketh spiritual progress in the world of spirit, intellect, and heart, he cannot gather universal results from material advancements. Now you must gird up the loins of endeavor, and reflect duty, so that you may quicken the people of Japan through the Spirit of God.

857. There are two ways of healing sickness, material means and spiritual means. The first is by the use of remedies, of medicines; the second consists in praying to God and in turning to Him. Both means should be used and practised.

Illness caused by physical accident should be treated with medical remedies; those which are due to spiritual causes disappear through spiritual means. Thus an illness caused by affliction, fear, nervous impressions, will be healed by spiritual rather than by physical treatment. Hence, both kinds of remedies should be considered. Moreover, they are not contradictory, and thou shouldst accept the physical remedies as coming from the mercy and favor of God, who hath revealed and made manifest medical science so that His servants should profit from this kind of treatment also. Thou shouldst give equal attention to spiritual treatments, for they produce marvellous effects.

Now, if thou wishest to know the divine remedy which will heal man from all sickness and will give him the health of the divine <p463> Kingdom, know that it is the precepts and teachings of God. Guard them sacredly.

858. The real brotherhood is spiritual, for physical brotherhood is subject to separation. The wars of the outer world of existence separate humankind but in the eternal world of spiritual brotherhood separation is unknown. Material or physical association is based upon earthly interests, but divine fellowship owes its existence to the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual brotherhood may be likened to the light while the souls of mankind are as lamps. The lamps are

many, yet the light is one.

859. The aim of the Theosophists is to attain to Truth, but the Truth is unattainable except through the favor of the Holy Spirit. The light hath a center, and if one desire to seek it otherwise than from the center, he can never attain unto it. In this solar system the source of light is the sun, and ever light is acquired from the sun; even the lamps of the night are ignited through the sun, for if there were no sun the trees would not grow nor the mines develop so that oil be extracted from those trees and mines, and the lamps of the night be lit by it. Is it possible that one attain to the light in the globular sphere without the mediation of the sun? No, by the life of God! To suppose it, is pure imagination. But the Truth is this: The main source of the lights is the Sun and the rays are shed from it upon all the regions.

860. Arise to serve the Cause of God in the vineyard of God, and water the developed and flourishing trees with the waters of the mysteries which are deposited in the innermost parts of the words of the Books; and be assured that the fountain of assurance will gush out in the hearts of the firm and steadfast believers, and the divine graces will strengthen them from all sides, and the Lord will enable them to diffuse the fragrances. And He will make them manifest signs, beaming stars, shining lights, fruitful trees, flowing fountains, perfect words and mature proofs. Then know thou that verily Abdul Baha is between the fangs of the dragon of afflictions and in the grasp of dangers night and day.

861. Know thou, verily, insight seeth that which sight seeth not and apprehendeth that which the body perceive not, inasmuch as <p464> the sight seeth the mirage as water, the images pictured in the mirror as a reality and genuine, and it seeth the earth as stationary, and the great stars as though they were small. But the insight correcteth the mistake of the sight and apprehendeth the reality and seeth that the mirage is not water, that the images pictured in mirrors are naught else save reflections, that the earth is moving and the distant stars are large. Consequently, the truth of insight, its effectiveness and power, is proven, as well as the weakness of sight, its inefficiency and defects.

862. Then know thou that the power of the Word of God is effective both in the spirit and the body, and the influence of the Spirit of God is predominant over the material as well as over the essential and spiritual. And that, verily, God is powerful in all things, and that the signs (or verses) have exoteric and esoteric meaning, and neither their outward preventeth their inward, nor doth their inward prevent their outward meaning.

863. It behooveth him to seek only the divine bounties and subjects which lead to the real knowledge of the invisible, through the mediation of the Holy Spirit. Then he will perceive the reality of the triune powers in man, through his innate perception. For, verily, the signs of these triune powers which exist in mankind are spirit, mind and soul. The spirit is the power of life, the mind is the power which apprehendeth the reality of things, and the soul is

an intermediary between the Supreme Concourse and the lower concourse. The soul hath two phases: the higher aspireth to the Kingdom of El-Baha, and the lights of the mind shine forth from that horizon unto its higher sphere; the other phase inclineth to the lower concourse of the material world and its lowest sphere is enveloped in the darkness of ignorance. But when light is poured upon this phase, and if this phase of the soul is capable of receiving it, then "truth hath come and falsehood vanisheth, for falsehood is of short duration" -- otherwise, darkness will surround it from all directions and it will be deprived of association with the Supreme Concourse and will remain in the lowest depths.

864. As to the manifestation of the Greatest Name (Baha'u'llah): This was the Divine Manifestation which appeared in the earthly world. This is He whom God promised in all His Books and Scriptures, such as the Bible, the Gospels and the Qur'an. All <p465> of these Books indicate this fact, and the least doubt cannot possible occur to the minds concerning this clear fact, as is recorded in detail in the heavenly Books, especially in the brilliant and holy Tablets. But notwithstanding this fact, if there is any one who hesitates therein, do not dispute with him, nay, rather, prove this to him with all joy and fragrance, lest he may be obstinately compelled to rebellion.

865. Shouldst thou come with the whole of thy being to God and be attracted to the lights of the Kingdom of God, and be enkindled by the fire of the love of God, then wilt thou see that which thou canst not see today, wilt comprehend the inner significances of the Word of God and thoroughly understand the mysteries contained in the holy Books.

But as to the Jewish doctors, Christian priests and monks who read those Books, verily, they know the letter only and they utter the words, like parrots, without understanding their inner meanings. They comprehend them not, because they are engrossed in worldly desires and lusts, and their hearts are attached to mundane allurements. Verily, are they not heedless of God, and understand nothing, and find not the right path?

866. Deliver the glad tidings in the following manner: "The Promised One of all the nations of the world hath become apparent and manifest! Each community and religion expecteth the coming of their Promised One, and His Highness Baha'u'llah is the Promised One of all! Therefore, the Cause of Baha'u'llah is conducive to harmony, raiseth the canopy of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity upon the apex of the contingent beings and unfurleth the ensign of universal brotherhood and ideal commonwealth upon the summit of the mountains and hills!"

867. The Temple is the most great foundation of the world of humanity, and it hath many branches. Although the Temple is the place of worship, with it is connected a hospital, pharmacy, pilgrims' house, school for the orphans, and a university for the study of higher sciences. Every Temple is connected with these five things. The Temple is not only a place for worship; nay, it is perfect in every way. <p466>

868. As to human souls: Unless they acquire the light, they are unable to shine upon other individuals. But when a man ariseth to expound the arguments of God and invite people to enter into the religion of God, and when he uttereth those arguments and advanceth consummate proofs concerning the appearance of the great Kingdom, then intense love shall become manifest in his heart. This love causeth the development of his spirit by the grace of the beneficent Lord.

869. Know thou that prayer is indispensable and obligatory, and man under no pretext whatsoever is excused from performing prayer unless he be mentally unsound, or an insurmountable obstacle prevent him. The wisdom of prayer is this: That it causeth a connection between the servant and the True One, because in that state man with all heart and soul turneth his face towards His Highness the Almighty, seeking His association and desiring His love and compassion. The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing; that is why with every soul who is attracted to the Kingdom of God, his greatest hope is to find an opportunity to entreat and supplicate before his Beloved, appeal to His mercy and grace and be immersed in the ocean of His utterance, goodness and generosity.

Besides all this, prayer and fasting are the cause of awakening and mindfulness and conducive to protection and preservation from tests. The obligatory prayer is revealed from the Supreme Pen and is translated in America.

870. Verily, I address thee with all spiritual love and gladness from this my residence at the base of Mount Carmel, which is blessed through all ages by the prophets, as recorded in the ancient Books. And I beseech His Highness the Merciful One to ordain thee a faithful footing in the Kingdom of God and to provide for thee all things by which thy mind may be brightened, thy tongue become eloquent, and that whereby the doors of the meanings hinted at in the sacred Books and Tablets be opened to thy mind. Verily, the people are veiled from comprehending the meanings of the Gospel, the Bible and the Qur'an, and know not the interpretation of the scriptures of God, except those whose eyes are opened <p467> by the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Thou shalt behold men-servants and maid-servants of Baha in those far distant lands and wide countries, speaking the secrets of the Gospel and the mysteries of the Bible and the allusions of the Qur'an and the explanation of the Words of the Merciful One. Those are the servants to whomsoever God hath assigned His mercy which overfloweth existence.

871. If one possesses the love of God, everything that he undertakes is useful, but if the undertaking is without the love of God, then it is hurtful and the cause of veiling one's self from the Lord of the Kingdom. But with the love of God every bitterness is changed into sweetness and every gift becometh precious. For example: a musical and melodious voice imparteth life to an attracted heart but lureth toward lust those souls who are engulfed in passion and desire.

With the love of God, all sciences are accepted and beloved, but without it,

they are fruitless; nay, rather, they are the cause of insanity. Every science is like a tree; if the fruit of it is the love of God, that is a blessed tree. Otherwise it is dried wood and finally food for fire.

872. Every great Cause in this world of existence findeth a visible expression through three means; first, intention; second, confirmation; third, action. Today on this earth there are many souls who are the spreaders of peace and reconciliation and are longing for the realization of the oneness and unity of the world of man; but this intention needs a dynamic power, so that it may become manifest in the world of being. Today the divine instructions and lordly exhortations of Baha'u'llah promulgate this most great aim, and the confirmations of the Kingdom are the supports and defenders of this eminent intention. For the power of the Word of God is penetrative and the existence of the divine Kingdom is uninterrupted. Therefore, ere long it will become evident and clear that the ensign of the Most Great Peace is the teachings of Baha'u'llah. For the intention, the power and the action, all the three essential elements are brought together and the realization of everything in the contingent world dependeth upon these three principles. <p468>

873. Whatsoever question thou hast in thy heart, turn thou thy heart toward the Kingdom of Abha and entreat in the Threshold of the Almighty and reflect upon that problem, then unquestionably the light of truth shall dawn and the reality of that problem will become evident and clear to thee. For the teachings of His Highness Baha'u'llah are the keys to all doors. Every hidden secret will become discovered and every hidden mystery will become manifest and apparent.

874. The various sects who today consider themselves servants of the world of humanity are possessed of good intention, but they are inert, not active; captive, not free; silent, not eloquent; slow, not fast. They have sluggish movement and great intention. These two do not agree.

875. Verily, I say unto thee, that if for the appearance of that Divine Essence thou desirest to have a definite proof, an indisputable testimony and a strong, convincing evidence, thou must prepare thyself to make thy heart empty and thine eye ready to look toward the Kingdom of God. Then, at that time, the radiance of that widespread effulgence shall descend upon thee successively, and that motion rendered thee by the Holy Spirit shall make thee dispense with any other strong evidence that leadeth to the appearance of this Light, because the greatest and strongest proof for showing the abundance of the Spirit to the bodies is the very appearance of its power and influence in those bodies.

Think thou deeply of this in order to know the reality of my explanation and demonstration.

876. I now assure thee, O servant of God, that if thy mind become empty and pure from every mention and thought, and thy heart attracted wholly to the Kingdom of God, forgetting all else beside God and coming in communion with the Spirit of God, then the Holy Spirit will assist thee with a power which will enable thee to penetrate all things, and a dazzling spark which enlightens all sides, a brilliant flame in the zenith of the heavens, will teach thee that

which thou dost not know of the facts of the universe and of the divine doctrine. Verily I say unto thee, every soul which today ariseth to guide others to the path of safety and infuse in them the Spirit of Life, that soul the Holy Spirit will inspire <p469> with evidences, proofs and facts, and the lights will shine upon it from the Kingdom of God. Do not forget what I have conveyed unto thee from the breath of the Spirit.

877. To the sincere ones, tests are as a gift from God, the Exalted, for a heroic person hasteneth, with the utmost joy and gladness, to the tests of a violent battlefield, but the coward is afraid and trembles and utters moaning and lamentation. Likewise, an expert student prepareth and memorizeth his lessons and exercises with the utmost effort, and in the day of examination he appeareth with infinite joy before the master. This test is just as thou hast written: it removeth the rust of egotism from the mirror of the heart until the Sun of Truth may shine therein. For no veil is greater than egotism and no matter how thin that covering may be, yet it will finally veil man entirely and prevent him from receiving a portion from the eternal bounty.

878. Praise be to God! According to the commandments and exhortations of Baha'u'llah, we are the well-wisher of all governments and act toward all the nations of the world in peace and love. We have no intention but that which is good and no desire but the good pleasure of God. We mean well toward every people and seek to have sincerity and good will toward every government. In return for arrows and swords, we present milk and honey, and we heal the deadly poison with the swift healing antidote. Night and day we are in action and exertion, in order to dress the wounds and cure the pain, to care for the afflicted and comfort even the ill-natured ones, so that, through the assistance and favour of God, this darkness of selfish prejudice shall vanish, and the error of folly and ignorance shall be changed into divine guidance.

879. To me, prison is freedom; to me incarceration is an open court; to me humility is identical with glory; to me adversity is a gift and death is life. I hope that thou also wilt take a portion from this sea and seek a reflection from these lights, becoming an ignited lamp so that the winds of contradiction will not blow it out, and day by day more revelation and vision may descend, and thou be enkindled more than before with the fire of the love of God. <p470>

880. All the people have formed a god in the world of thought, and that form of their own imagination they worship; when the fact is that the imagined concept is comprehended by the mind which is the comprehended, for imagination is accidental (effect), while mind is essential (cause). Surely the essential is greater than the accidental.

Therefore consider: All the sects and peoples worship their own thought; they create a god in their minds and proclaim him to be "the creator of all things," while that form is a superstition. Thus people adore and worship illusion.

The Essence of the Divine Entity and the Unseen of the Unseen is holy above imagination and beyond thought. Consciousness doth not reach It. Within the capacity of comprehension of a created reality that Ancient (uncreated) Reality

cannot be contained. It is a different world; from it there is no information; arrival thereat is impossible; attainment thereto is inaccessible and prohibited. This much is known: It exists, and Its existence is certain and proven -- but the condition is unknown.

All the philosophers and sages knew that It is, but they were perplexed in the comprehension of Its existence and were at last discouraged, and left this world in great despair. For the comprehension of the condition and mysteries of that Reality of realities and Mystery of mysteries, there is need for another power and another sense. That power and sense is not possessed by mankind, therefore they have not found any information. For example: If a man possess the power of hearing, the power of tasting, the power of smelling and the power of feeling, but no power of seeing, he cannot see. Hence, through the powers and senses present in man the realization of the Unseen Reality, which is pure and holy above the reach of doubts, is impossible. Other powers are needed and other senses required. If those powers and senses are obtained, then information can be had; otherwise, not.

881. As for the symbol of the cross, appointed in former times: Know verily, that the cross form is a wonderful figure and consists of two right lines placed crosswise -- one perpendicular to the other -- and this figure exists in all things.

Meditate upon these words and pay attention to the tissue in all existing substances, either plant, animal, or man, and thou wilt <p471> see that they all are formed of the cross figure or two crosswise lines. Consider this intently with true meditation. Then thou wilt be taught by the Holy Ghost that it is for this reason that God hath chosen this symbol to be displayed as the token of sacrifice in all periods of the ages.

I will explain to thee, in future time, the mystery of sacrifice. There is nothing more beautiful than this tree united with the cross. Verily, this tree is a type of the Tree of Life in conjunction with the cross; in this, the mystery of sacrifice.

882. As for the crescent: It hath reference to the beginning of the religion of God which shall grow to be a full moon.

883. Know thou, verily, the Kingdom is a magnet of the divine world, and it attracteth the iron of pure hearts which are capable of the bounties of the Lord of Might.

884. O my dear one! This day is the day of purification, the day of sanctification, the day of turning toward God, the day of severance from all save God, the day of lowliness and humiliation, the day of serving the beloved ones of God, the day of becoming utterly destitute of and free from egotism and desire, and the day of purity and sacrifice in the path of God. This is incumbent upon thee, so that thou mayest be accepted in the court of the Almighty and praised in His lofty Threshold of Holiness.

885. Verily, I say unto thee, the Covenant of God and His Alliance is a Lamp

diffusing lights from the Supreme Concourse unto the horizons of earth and heaven. Whosoever hath this Divine Lamp before his face, his forehead shall glisten with manifest light and his speech shall take effect in all minds and spirits, and God shall assist him by the power which penetrateth the essences of things.

886. Why art thou sad and sorrowful, disappointed and grieved! Praise be to God! the eternal bounty is in succession, the divine glory is apparent and manifest, the display of Providence and the light of guidance is glistening and shining from the Kingdom of Abha and the appearance of the Greatest Sun is clear and evident. If thou art outwardly far, yet thou art near in spirit, and if thou art absent in body, thou art present in heart and spirit. <p472>

Arise and wash thy body, wear a pure gown, and, directing thyself to the Kingdom of God, supplicate and pray to Him. Sleep in a clean, well prepared and ventilated place, and ask for appearance in the world of vision. Thou wilt have visions which will cause the door of doubts to be closed, which will give thee new joy, wonderful dilation, brilliant glory. Thou wilt comprehend realities and meanings.

887. Happiness consists of two kinds; physical and spiritual. The physical happiness is limited; its utmost duration is one day, one month, one year. It hath no result. Spiritual happiness is eternal and unfathomable. This kind of happiness appeareth in one's soul with the love of God and suffereth one to attain to the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity. Therefore, endeavor as much as thou canst in order to illumine the lamp of thy heart with the light of love.

888. Know that the pure hearts upon which the mysteries of the Kingdom of God are printed and pictured, are reflectors one to another, and thus the one can discover the secrets of the other, because such hearts are only mirrors confronting each other on which the secrets of unity, affinity and concord are printed and reflected. Accordingly, it would be possible that a certain servant of the servants of the Merciful might discover a treasured mystery or a preserved sign, whatever his shortcomings or defects might be; yet we do indeed rely upon God, the Forgiver.

889. O ye friends! O ye maid-servants of the Merciful! Those Assemblies are the emblems of the Supreme Concourse and the prototypes of the congregations of the spirits in the Kingdom of Abha. Avail yourselves of the opportunities of this time, neither let the occasion slip by unheeded.

890. Concerning the one thousand years as recorded in the Book: It signifieth the beginning of this Manifestation until the end of its predominance throughout the contingent world; because this Cause is great, its powers are growing and its signs are dazzling. It shall continue in elevation, exaltation, growth, promulgation and promotion until it shall reach the apex of its glory in one thousand years -- as the day of this Manifestation is one thousand <p473> years. Thou shalt see its conquering power, its manifest dominion, its eternal might and its everlasting glory.

891. As to the question of "after my departure" to the neighborhood of the mercy of my Lord: Know that there shall appear wonderful traces; the breath of God shall pass by; the fragrance of God shall spread and the Spirit of God shall run in the body of the contingent world both before and after my departure; but I supplicate God that He may grant the greatest spirituality in these days.

892. O ye beloved of God, be not grieved when people stand against you, persecute you, afflict and trouble you and say all manner of evil against you. The darkness will pass away and the light of the manifest signs will appear, the veil will be withdrawn and the Light of Reality will shine forth from the unseen Kingdom of El-Abha. This we inform you before it occurs, so that when the hosts of people arise against you for my love, be not disturbed or troubled; nay, rather, be firm as a mountain, for this persecution and reviling of the people upon you is a pre-ordained matter. Blessed is the soul who is firm in the path!

893. Souls are like unto mirrors, and the bounty of God is like unto the sun. When the mirrors pass beyond (the condition of) all coloring and attain purity and polish, and are confronted with the sun, they will reflect in full perfection its light and glory. In this condition one should not consider the mirror, but the power of the light of the sun, which hath penetrated the mirror, making it a reflector of the heavenly glory.

894. I know, verily, that the universal, never ending, eternal, bright and divine establishments are only the diffusing of the breaths of God, and the spreading of the instructions of God, and all that are beside these, though they be the reigning over all regions of the earth, or the construction of railroads from the earth to the heavens, or means of transportation with the rapidity of rising lightning from the globe of earth to the globe of the sun, all are but mortal, perishing, demolishing and disadvantageous, in comparison with the divine establishments. Because the latter are intrinsic matters, while the former are but metaphorical matters; the latter are truth, while the former are imaginary. <p474>

895. Communication is not confined to writing. This is a trace, while the spiritual message is fruitful and effective. That is the essential, and without it communication is useless.

896. Verily I read thy letter, which expressed thy surprise at some of the commandments of the law of God, such as the concerning the hunting of innocent animals. Be not surprised at this. Ponder over the contingent realities, their mysteries, wisdom, connection and relations. The world is harmonious in all things and the connection therein is mighty and nothing is missing. All things are eaters and eaten in the physical creation. The plant sucks from the mineral, the animal eats and swallows the plant, and the human eats the animal. Then the mineral (in turn) eats the human body. Physical bodies are transferred from death to death and from life to life. Therefore, all things are subject to transformation and change except the Cause of existence, which cannot be

changed or transferred, because it is the foundation for life in all kinds and species and in all possible realities in the world of creation.

If thou observest closely through a microscope the water which man drinks and the air which he breathes, thou wilt see that in every breath which man breathes, that breath contains numerous animals, and in every draught of water great number of animals exist. This could not be prevented, because the contingent beings are eaters and eaten and, by this, existence is caused; otherwise, the relations between existent things would cease. When a thing decomposes and decays, being bereft of life, it becomes promoted to a world of life greater than the former. For instance, it ceases in a mineral life and is elevated to that of the animal; then leaving the animal life it advances to the human, and this is on account of the favor of thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement.

I ask God to strengthen thee in comprehending the mysteries deposited in the reality of existence.

897. The nineteen-day fast is a duty to be observed by all. All should abstain from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset. This fast is conducive to the spiritual development of the individual. The Greatest Name should be read every day. <p475>

898. As to those souls who are preaching the Word of God, it behooveth them to shake the dust of every land through which they have passed from their shoes and to be with God and without need of the rich -- although their bed be the soil, their light be the stars of the sky and their food the herbs of the desert -- because theirs is the wealth of the Kingdom, the honor of the realm of might and the bounty of the divine world; and they are not in need of this world and its cares. Their throne is the mat of humility, their honor is in suffering every lowliness in the path of the Loving Lord, their wealth is being empty-handed of the pomps of the world and its vanities, and their provision is trusting in God and being severed from all that is on the earth and its wealth.

899. It is New Year; that is to say, the rounding of the cycle of the year. A year is the expression of a cycle of the sun; but now is the beginning of a cycle of Reality, a New Cycle, a New Age, a New Century, a New Time and a New Year. Therefore it is very blessed.

I wish this blessing to appear and become manifest in the faces and characteristics of the believers, so that they, too, may become a new people, and having found new life and been baptized with fire and spirit, may make the world a new world, to the end that the old earth may disappear and the new earth appear; old ideas depart and new thoughts come; old garments be cast aside and new garments worn; ancient politics whose foundation is war be discarded and modern politics founded on peace raise the standard of victory.

900. The mystery of sacrifice is that man should sacrifice all his conditions for the divine station of God. The station of God is mercy, kindness, forgiveness, sacrifice, favor, grace and giving life to the spirits and

lighting the fire of His love in the hearts and arteries.

901. The human spirit hath an impression and effect in the world, but the divine spirit giveth life to the souls and conferreth eternal life upon those who are attracted to the fragrances of God. This is the Great Cause from the Kingdom of thy Lord.

902. Know thou, verily, there are many veils in which the Truth <p476> is enveloped: gloomy veils; then delicate and transparent veils; then the envelopment of light, the sight of which dazzles the eyes, as doth the sun which is enveloped only in its own light and, as we look at it, the sight is blinded and the eyes are dazzled.

903. From the spiritual point of view, there is no difference between women and men. "The nearer we draw to God, the nearer He comes to us" without regard to whether the person be a man or a woman.

904. The House of Justice, however, according to the positive commandments of the Doctrine of God, has been specialized to the men, for a reason or exercise of wisdom on the part of God, and this reason will presently appear, even as the sun at midday.

905. Now the day has arrived in which the edifice of God, the divine sanctuary, the spiritual temple, shall be erected in America! I entreat God to assist the confirmed believers in accomplishing this great service and with entire zeal to rear this might structure which shall be renowned throughout the world.

Whosoever arises for the service of this construction shall be assisted with a great power from His Supreme Threshold and upon him spiritual and heavenly blessings shall descend, which shall fill his heart with wonderful consolation and enlighten his eyes by beholding the glorious and eternal God!

906. You have asked me two questions: "That if the same spirit is manifest in all the Manifestations and Prophets, then what is the distinction or difference between Christ (or rather, Jesus) and the other Prophets; also between Father and Son?"

Know that the human spirit is one, but it manifests itself in various members of the body in a certain (measure or) form. The human spirit is existent in the sight; it is also existent in the brain, which is the location of great functions and powers; it is also existent in the heart, which organ is largely connected with the brain or the center of the mind; and the heart, or that center which is connected with the brain, has a distinct and separate function, effect and appearance.

Figuratively speaking, the Father is the center of the brain and the Son is the center of the heart; the rest of the Prophets are members and parts. <p477>

907. When thou desirest and yearnest for meeting in the world of vision; at the time when thou art in perfect fragrance and spirituality, wash thy hands and face, clother thyself in clean robes, turn toward the court of the Peerless One, offer prayer to Him and lay thy head upon the pillow. When sleep cometh,

the doors of revelation shall be opened and all thy desires shall become revealed.

908. Know thou, verily, the brilliant realities and sanctified spirits are likened to a shining crescent. It has one face turned toward the Sun of Truth, and another face opposite to the contingent world. The journey of this crescent in the heaven of the universe ends in becoming a full moon. That is, that face of it which is turned toward the divine world becomes also opposite to the contingent world, and by this, both its merciful and spiritual, as well as contingent, perfections become manifest.

909. Thank God for that He hath awakened thee from thy sleep, found thee after thy being lost and quickened thee after thy death. Verily, I beseech God to confirm thee by a power by which thou mayest be enabled to worship God and to serve His Cause and to be submissive and lowly before the beloved of God.

910. By God, the True One, verily pure hearts are as clear and brilliant mirrors which imprint the one on the other, and hearts discover the secrets of hearts. Therefore, they chant the verses of longing and recite the odes of glorification and praise. Consequently, the recourse is to pages of hearts, not to pages filled with written lines.

911. O thou maid-servant of God! Be tranquil and know, verily, that the Holy Ghost in this glorious age reacheth every soul that is sincerely faithful, firm and drawn to the Kingdom of the Great Lord. Verily, I address thee with a heart overflowing with the love of God.

912. Thou has asked, very humbly, for certain things and all were worthy to be coveted. Especially the rescue from self-love. This is a strange trait and the means of the destruction of many important souls in the world. If man be imbued with all good <p478> qualities but be selfish, all the other virtues will fade or pass away and eventually he will grow worse.

913. Know that the return of Christ for a second time doth not mean what the people believe, but, rather, signifieth the One promised to come after Him. He shall come with the Kingdom of God and His power (or reign) is in the world of hearts and spirits and not in that of matter. For the material world is not comparable to a single fly's wing, rather is less in the sight of thy Lord, wert thou of those who know! Verily Christ came with His Kingdom from the beginning which hath no beginning and will come with His Kingdom to the eternity of eternities, inasmuch as in this sense Christ is an expression of the divine reality, the simple essence and heavenly entity which hath no beginning or ending. It hath appearance, arising and manifestation and setting in each of the cycles.

914. (As to the significance of the inscription upon the Baha'i ring): The Inscription is composed of two "Ba" and of four "Ha." The explanation of "Ha" has been written in the commentary upon "Bism'illah, Errahman, Errahin"; it is very detailed, and not suitable for this letter: you must refer to the commentary.

The repetition of the "Ba" refers to the Invisibility and to the Presence.

With regard to the four "Ha" which are the four columns of the Temple of Unity, their perfect number is ten: one plus one equals two; two plus one equals three; three plus three equals six; six plus four equals ten, and ten with this signification is found in the Qur'an, where it is said: "And we have made it (or him) perfect in the figure ten." Furthermore, "Ha" has the value of five, and there "Ha" is the Divine Essence and Reality. That is clear and visible for the number five, which is the number of the Bab.

It is because of this that upon the stone of the noble ring, the "Ba" has been combined with the "Ha" and in the same way the Greatest Name appears in the inscription, for the number is nine. If you multiply nine, which is the number of Baha, with that of the Bab, which is five, that makes nine times five or forty-five. <p479>

And in the same way if you multiply five, which is the number of the Bab, with nine, which is the number of Baha, that makes forty-five, and this number is equal to the number of Adam. Similarly, if you add together the units of nine, that also makes forty-five. If now you add together the units of the number of the Bab, that makes fifteen, which is equal to the number of Eve, and is in conformity with the Hadiss: "I and Ali, we are the Father and Mother of this people."

"Adam" signifies the overflowing Reality, distributive, active, which represents the appearance of the Names and Qualities of God, the Divine conditions (or stations); whereas Eve is the passive Reality, taking, dependent, receptive, existing through the Divine Names and Qualities. Briefly, such are the least of the mysteries of the composition of the Greatest Name upon the stone of the Divine ring.

Observe also that the three planes represent the world of God, the World of Command, and the World of Creation, which are the sources of the signs. The world of God is the source of Glorious Bounty; the world of Command is the pure and luminous Mirror which depends upon the Sun of Truth; and the world of Creation is the source of the acquisition of Lights which is due to the Supreme Conjunction: To take from God; to give to the creatures.

In brief: the true "Ba," which is the universal Reality, once descended and distributed into the third degree from the Supreme Grade, to the inferior creatures, becomes the collector and creator of all the worlds.

Upon the horizon of Eternal Glory two luminous stars have arisen in brilliance: one to the right and one to the left. This supreme mystery is the two diagrams placed to the right and to the left of the Greatest Name upon the stone of the noble ring: this is the mystery of the appearance of the Beauty of Abha and of the Supreme Highness (the Bab). And though these two diagrams at the right and the left have the form of stars, they also represent the body of man, with the head, the two arms and the two legs, since this diagram has five points.

915. One of the teachings is that love and faithfulness must so prevail in the

hearts that men may see the stranger as a friend, <p480> the sinner as an intimate fellow, may count enemies as allies, regard foes as loving comrades, call their executioner the giver of life, and consider the denier as a believer and the unbeliever as a faithful one -- that is, men must behave in such a manner as may befit the believers, the faithful, the friend and the confidant. If this lamp may shine in a befitting manner in the assemblage of the world you will find that the regions will become fragrant and the world will become a delectable paradise, the surface of the earth will become an excellent garden, the world will become as one home, the different nations will become as one kind, and the peoples and nationalities of the East and West will become as one household. I hope such a day will come and such lights may dawn and such a Countenance may appear in the utmost beauty.

916. Verily, I say unto thee that the gifts of thy Lord are encircling thee in a similar way as the spirit encircles the body at the beginning of the amalgamation of the elements and natures in the womb; the power of the spirit begins then to appear in the body gradually and successively according to the preparation and capacity to receive that everlasting abundance. I ask God to help thee that the spirit will carry out its power in thee as desired and wished.

917. Know thou, verily, man before reaching (spiritual) maturity passes his days and only apprehends trivial things which are clear on account of their exoteric indications, but when he attains full development, then he grasps the realities of things and their esoteric facts. Every day after maturity is equivalent to one year before it, on account of (man's) perception, understanding, apprehension and discoveries.

Now, thou hast reached development and apprehended the degree of maturity: Gaze at the grades of the existence, the realities of things, the allegories in the epistles of God, and the mysteries in the Old and New Testament. By the life of Baha, the covering will be removed from thee, and thou will be informed of that which all the philosophers and wise men are unable to apprehend. Verily, this is a gift which God assigns only to such of His chosen servants as He willeth. Verily, Thy Lord will inspire thee with the mysteries of God, the Protector, the Self-subsistent. <p481>

918. Observe the pages of the universe and discover the traces which appeared! Hast thou seen or heard in any of the previous centuries or generations that which is manifested in this Glorious Age? If the writings of the previous centuries, the middle centuries and the later centuries, be compared with that which is manifested in this one century, they will not weight against it! Nay, rather, they are as drops of water in comparison with the ocean. Magnified is He, who hath crowned this century with the appearances of His Kingdom!

919. Consider the past, so that thou mayest become informed of the mysteries which shall be disclosed in the future. When the disciples were calling in the name of Christ, the Jews scoffed, scorned and laughed at them. They were saying: "They are taken with madness, and madness is made an art." They even

beat them with whips, threw stones at them, prevented the people from approaching them, and were saying: "This man (Christ) is naught but a sorcerer, he blasphemeth God and is possessed of a devil."

Then observe how that persecution and scorn were changed to glory, honor and reverence. Ultimately, the Jews honored their sublime stations and acknowledged their loftiness, which was exalted, promoted and glorified in the center of the horizons until it reached the degree of exaggeration in deeds. They made for them likenesses and pictures, decorated with jewels shining in the eyes; they placed these likenesses or pictures in the temples, churches and monasteries built on the tops of the mountains, and worshipped them with respect, glory, majesty and reverence. This is the condition of the neglectful ones who are deprived of the Truth (the Manifestations of God) at the day of their existence among them. After the ascension of their (prophets') spirits unto the Center of purity and pity, then the negligent ones repent and return, making likenessess and pictures according to their own ideas, which do not bear resemblance (to the Reality), and they worship the same. This is the station of the ignorant ones who are as animals, following every croaker and shaken by every wind. "Forsake them to play in their shallow waters."

920. There is many a young child who is mature and grown, and many an aged one who is ignorant and stupid. Growth and <p482> maturity are in intellect and understanding, and not in age and duration of life.

921. Thou hast written concerning the impersonality of the Divinity. Personality is in the manifestation of the Divinity, not in the essence of the Divinity. The reality of the divine world is purified and sanctified from limits and restriction. But the pure Mirror, which is the manifestor of the Sun of Truth and in which the Sun of Truth is manifest in full appearance -- that Mirror is restricted, and not the Lights. The soul pervadeth throughout the entire body, and its commands are effective in all the parts and limbs of man. Notwithstanding its utmost sanctification (or abstraction) this soul is manifest and evident in all its grades, in this material form. By "seeing God" is meant beholding the Manifestation of Himself; for witnessing the sun in its entire splendor, in a clear glassy surface, is identical with witnessing the essence of the sun itself.

When the souls of the sincere depart, then their unreal vision is changed into a vision of reality. Even as man, when in the age of childhood and imperfection, though he seeth things, yet that vision is superficial and external. But when he reacheth the world of perfection and becometh endowed with reasoning faculty and discrimination and comprehension, then that vision of his is a vision of reality and not appearance.

It is evident that the divine nearness is an unlimited nearness, be it in this world or the next one. This is a nearness which is sanctified from the comprehension of minds. The more a man seeketh light from the Sun of Truth, the nearer he will draw. For instance, a clear body is near unto the sun, and a black stone is far from the sun. This nearness dependeth upon clearness, purity

and perfection, and that remoteness is due to density, dullness and imperfection.

922. As to the question whether souls will recognize each other in the spiritual world: This fact is certain; for the Kingdom is the world of vision, where all the concealed realities will become disclosed. How much more the intimate souls will become manifest. The mysteries of which man is heedless in this earthly world, those will he discover in the heavenly world, and there will <p483> he be informed of the secret of truth; how much more will he recognize or discover persons with whom he has associated. Undoubtedly, the holy souls who find a pure eye and are favored with insight will, in the kingdom of lights, be acquainted with all mysteries, and will seek the bounty of witnessing the reality of every great soul. They will even manifestly behold the Beauty of God in that world. Likewise will they find all the friends of God, both those of former and recent times, present in the heavenly assemblage.

As to the difference and distinction between Lazarus and that "rich man": The first was spiritual, while the second was material. One was in the highest degree of knowledge and the other in the lowest depths of ignorance. The difference and distinction will naturally become realized between all men after their departure from this mortal world. But this distinction is not in respect to place, but it is in respect to the soul and conscience. For the Kingdom of God is sanctified (free) from time and place; it is another world and another universe. But the holy souls are promised the gift of intercession. And know thou for a certainty, that in the divine worlds, the spiritual beloved ones will recognize each other, and will seek union, but a spiritual union. Likewise a love that one may have entertained for another will not be forgotten in the world of the Kingdom. Likewise, thou wilt not forget the life that thou hast had in the material world.

O thou maid-servant of God! Hold fast to the most strong handle, and be thoroughly attracted to the Kingdom of Abha, until thou mayest at every instant find a new confirmation and attain to a wonderful gift and become a cause for the guidance of souls.

923. If thou art desirous of health, wish thou health for serving the Kingdom. I hope thou mayest attain a perfect insight, an inflexible resolution, a complete health and spiritual and physical strength in order that thou mayest drink from the fountain of eternal life and be assisted by the spirit of divine confirmation.

Engage thou in commemorating God at every morn and turn unto the Horizon of Mercifulness.

Take some honey, recite Ya Baha-ul-Abha, and eat a little thereof for several days. For these thy prevailing disease are not <p484> on account of sins, but they are to make thee despise this world and know that there is no rest and composure in this temporal life.

924. That substance which is the cause of the moderation and perfection of the

body is that perfect moderate temperament which is produced by the organization and admixture of constituent elements; that substance is material, not spiritual. But reason, which comprehends the realities of things, is a spiritual reality, not material. Therefore the animal is deprived of reason, and it is specialized to mankind.

925. No one hath any way to the Reality of Deity except through the instrumentality of the Manifestation. To suppose otherwise is theory and not fact.

926. Leave thou the "New Thought" and seek after the New Kingdom. The "New Thought" is a part of the New Kingdom. When thou hast found the latter, thou hast found the former; nay, rather, thou hast found all things.

927. The end of every (material) work is without result, because it is perishable and inconstant, but the first (real) work is attraction to the fragrances of God, enkindlement with the fire of the love of God, reading the verses of unity and beholding the lights from the dawningplace of mystery. After that cometh the training of the soul, purification of character and service to humanity. If thou art able to accomplish any one of these, the result is eternal and the fruit everlasting.

928. Know thou, verily, all the doors are closed except the door of the Kingdom of God! All the trees are without fruit except the tree of life planted in the paradise of God! All the winds are disquieting to the soul except the breeze of God! All the cups are bitter except the cup of the love of God! Every benefit vanisheth except the food of heaven. It is encumbent upon thee to partake thereof.

929. O maid-servant of God! The Spirit knoweth the spirit, the Spirit addresseth the spirit and the Spirit associateth with the spirit. <p485>

930. Thou hast asked: "Is it possible that this new and living Cause is to take the place of the dead religion of England when there hath been organized certain sects who have arrived at high stations of spiritual knowledge and to exalted degrees of merciful powers, and have become distinguished in virtue over all predecessors: notwithstanding this, is it possible that this new Cause will attract the attention of such people to such a degree as to unite their hearts and gather them under its overshadowing protection?"

O thou dear friend! Know thou that the distinguished individual of ever age is according to the virtues of that age. The distinguished personage who was in the former age, but in this brilliant age and divine cycle, the noble personage, the radiant star, the distinguished one, will manifest with virtues which will eventually amaze the peoples, for He is in spiritual virtues and divine perfections loftier than all the individuals; nay, rather, He is the source of divine benediction and the center of the Radiant Circle. He is certainly comprehensive. There is no doubt that He will reveal Himself to such a degree as to bring all under His overshadowing care.

When thou considerest carefully thou wilt find this order and system to be

established in all things. The whole attracteth the part, and the center of the circle is the axis of the compass. Consider His Holiness the Spirit (Christ): Since He was the center of spiritual power and the origin of divine benediction, although in the beginning He gathered but few under His power, yet later, through that conquering power, He ushered all sects under the shadow of the Christian tabernacle. Compare the present with the past, see the great difference. By this thou canst measure and reach the reality, and know for a certainty that the difference among the sects of the world is due to the difference of comprehensions. As long as the perceptive powers differ, surely the opinions and thought differ also. But if one great perceptive Power which comprehendeth all, cometh to the center, the differing opinions become united, and ideal unity and oneness are revealed.

931. As to the question of translating the Books and Tablets of the Blessed Beauty: it will soon be done in all languages with the utmost of eloquence and excellence. When the Tablets of His Holiness (Baha'u'llah) are translated in accordance with the original, <p486> with excellence and eloquence, then the lights and significances will dawn and brighten every eye. Endeavor thou with all thy power to make the translation as the original.

932. Know thou that the Kingdom of God hath pitched its tents, hoisted its banner and uplifted its pavilions in this extensive space. The hosts of the angels of God have come down with standards of signs; marched off towards all horizons; opened the cities of the hearts by the power of thy Lord, the Generous; and have blown the great trumpet. The Holy Spirit hath freely given eternal life to every pure heart, and the souls become attracted through the effulgence of the beauty of the glorious Kingdom and through the brilliancy of the light of truth over all regions. The clamor of the spiritual people hath risen with praise and glory to God, the All-glorious!

933. By the life of God! Verily, the gift of guidance, during this great century and this age of lights, is greater than reigning over the earth and all that is therein.

934. The wisdom of all these tribulations that poured successively upon thee was this -- that thou shouldst be prepared and made ready for this Cause, that thou mightest expect the attainment to the greatest guidance, for all these trials were but a preparation for thine entrance into the most exalted paradise and the beginning of obtaining this most great benefit.

935. The prophets also acknowledge this opinion, to-wit: That education hath a great effect upon the human race, but they declare that minds and comprehensions are originally different. And this matter is self-evident; it cannot be refuted. We see that certain children of the same age, nativity and race, nay, from the same household, under the tutorship of one teacher, differ in their minds and comprehensions.

No matter how much the shell is polished, it can never become the radiant pearl. The black stone will not become the world illumining gem. The calocynth and the thorny cactus can never by training and development become the blessed

tree. That is to say, training doth not change the human substance, but it produceth <p487> a marvelous effect. By this effective power all that is registered, in latency, of virtues and capacities in the human reality will be revealed.

It is for this reason that, in this new cycle, education and training are recorded in the Book of God as obligatory and not voluntary.

936. Tell them they should do as they think best in these matters. Should they marry, divorce, leave their homes, move to other places, etc., -- all these matters pertaining to their material affairs -- Abdul Baha says:

"They must do as they wish; they must solve their own problems; they are grown-ups. We do not like to tell people what they should do in these matters. My work is universal; my time and thoughts are for the whole world on the most important problems relating to affairs that concern the spiritual welfare of nations and individuals. When the believers are insistent, Abdul Baha must give them answers, and it is their wish always that Abdul Baha grants them. He knows what their wish in reality is. They must make mistakes to learn, and to unfold the higher which is within themselves. The initial wish does not come from Abdul Baha. It comes from them. It is generally clothed with such words as these: 'We only wish to do that which Abdul Baha wishes us to do.' And they are sincere in this, for they do not know the subtlety of the ego of man. It is the Tempter (the subtle serpent of the mind), and the poor soul not entirely emancipated from its suggestions is deceived until entirely severed from all save God."

937. If thou wishest the divine knowledge and recognition, purify thy heart from all beside God, be wholly attracted to the ideal, beloved One; search for and choose Him and apply thyself to rational and authoritative arguments. For arguments are a guide to the path and by this the heart will be turned to the Sun of Truth. And when the heart is turned unto the Sun, then the eye will be opened and will recognize the Sun through the Sun itself. Then one will be in no need of arguments, for the Sun is altogether independent, and absolute independence is in need of nothing, and proofs are one of the things. <p488>

938. Hypnotism hath a weak influence over the bodies, but hath no result. But the power of the Kingdom of God is great. If thou canst, endeavor to obtain a share of that power.

939. O ye cohorts of God! Today in the world of existence, each community is wandering in a wilderness, moving in accord with some passion and desire, and running to and fro in pursuance of its own imagination. Among the communities of the world, this community of the "Greatest Name" is free from every thought, keeping aloof from every project and scheme, arising with the purest designs and intentions, and striving and endeavoring with the utmost hope to live in accordance with the divine teachings in order that the face of the earth become the delectable paradise, the nether world become the mirror of the Kingdom, the universe become another universe, and the human race attain to higher morals, conduct and manners.

Through the protection and help of the Blessed Perfection -- may my life be a sacrifice to His beloved! -- you must conduct and deport yourselves in such a manner that you may stand out among other souls distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun. If any of you enters a city he must become the center of attraction because of the sincerity, faithfulness, love, honesty, fidelity, truthfulness and loving-kindness of his disposition and nature toward all the inhabitants of the world, that the people of the city may all cry out: "This person is unquestionably a Baha'i; for his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature and his disposition are of the attributes of the Baha'is." Until you do attain this station, you have not fulfilled the Covenant and the Testament of God. For according to the irrefutable texts, He has taken from us a firm covenant that we may live and act in accord with the divine exhortations, commands and lordly teachings.

O ye cohorts of God! Now is the time when the signs and perfections of the "Greatest Name" become manifest and clear in this golden cycle in order that it may become demonstrated and established beyond doubt that this period is the period of the Blessed Perfection, and this cycle is distinguished from all other cycles and epochs.

O ye cohorts of God! In the moment of catastrophe, find ye patience, resignation and submission.

The more the calamities are intensified the less become ye disturbed. <p489> Withstand ye, with perfect assurance, the flood of trials and calamities, through the power of His Highness, the Almighty.

940. Thou hast asked in regard to the 10th verse of the 21st chapter of Revelation, and to the 17th verse:

Know that the firmament of the bright sun of the world of possibilities is divided into twelve sections (according to mathematical principles) which are called the twelve constellations; likewise the Sun of Truth manifests and pours forth His bounty in twelve constellations of holiness. By these constellations are meant holy souls who are the manifestations of purity and the dawning points of the lights of Unity. Observe that in the day of His Holiness the Interlocutor of God (Moses), there were twelve holy souls who were the leaders of the Truth. In like manner, in the cycle of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ), note that there were twelve apostles under the shadow of the light of the Most High, and the Sun of Truth was manifested through those bright dawningplaces like unto the phenomenal sun. Likewise, in the time of His Holiness Muhammad, consider that there were twelve dawning points of holiness who were the manifestations of confirmation. Such is the case.

Accordingly, St. John, the divine, declared in his vision regarding the twelve doors and the twelve foundations. By the great and holy city of Jerusalem, which is descended from heaven, is meant the sacred law of God. This subject has been repeatedly explained in many Tablets and in the Scriptures of the ancient Prophets. For example, it is said in one place: "I beheld Jerusalem marching on to the wilderness." The purport is that this heavenly Jerusalem has

twelve doors through which the advancing souls enter into the City of God. These doors are the souls who are the stars of guidance and doors unto bounty and knowledge. "At the gates twelve angels stood." By "angel" is meant the power of the confirmation of God; that the candle of the power of the divine confirmation shines forth and is illumined in those souls. That is to say, that each one of those souls will be confirmed by the mightiest power. Those twelve gates surround the whole universe. This signifies that all existence is under the shadow of those souls; also, that these doors are the foundation of the city of God, the divine Jerusalem; that upon each of these foundations the name of one of the Apostles of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ) <p490> is written. That is to say, the manifestation of the perfections, glad tidings, virtues and high attributes of that holy soul.

In brief, it is said that: "And he that talked with me had a golden rod to measure the city and the gates thereof and the walls thereof." The purport is this, that certain souls guided with a rod of the plant, that is, a reed wherewith he shepherded the sheep, like unto the rod of Moses; others trained with a rod of iron and drove them, as in the time of Muhammad. In this Greatest Day the rod of the plant and the rod of iron are changed into a rod which is of pure gold and is from the endless treasuries of the Kingdom of God.

By the instrumentality of this, all people shall be trained. Observe the difference: in a certain time the teachings of God were like unto the twigs of a tree, and by them the signs of God were spread, the law of God promulgated and the religion of God founded. Later a time came when the rod of the divine Shepherd was like iron; and now in this blessed and glorious cycle that rod is become like unto pure gold. What a great difference exists between them! Therefore know that the law of God and the divine teachings show a great advance in this day. They have reached a degree of supremacy, compared with former ages. Nay, rather, this is pure gold, while that was iron and wood.

941. Praise be to God that thou hast found guidance, sought illumination and turned thy face toward the Kingdom of the True One.

This turning the face toward God is the healing of the body, the mind and the soul. When this advancement toward God has become complete, one is able to overcome passion and desire, become protected from sin and transgression and be delivered from heedlessness. It will bestow eternal life and grant the imperishable gift.

Therefore sacrifice all thy talents at the feet of that heart-enkindling Beloved, and characterize thyself with such deeds and words that thou mayest become the cause of the guidance of others, and remain steadfast and firm in the Testament and Covenant.

942. The Hosts of the Kingdom of Abha are drawn up and filed <p491> in battle array on the plain of the Supreme Apex and are expecting that a band of volunteers will step upon the field of action with the intention of service, so that they may assist that band and make it victorious and triumphant.

943. A fire from the Kingdom hath been kindled in the heart of the world, -- in the Blessed Tree, whose flame shall ere long set aglow the pillars of the world and its rays illumine the horizons of nations. All the signs have appeared, all the prophetic references become clear, all that was revealed in Books and Scriptures hath become fully manifest. There is no ground for any one to hesitate in regard thereto. Some people of former times and sects avoided certain others as strangers. But now the glorious Beloved One hath ridden upon His swift coursing steed, circling about in the arena of truth, and all that was hidden hath become manifest. Let there be no more silence or reticence, taciturnity or negligence. The Candle is lighted -- yet the moths continue motionless and melancholy behind the veils. ... The time is too short, and the Divine Courser moves swiftly on.

944. Unless the Holy Spirit become intermediary, one cannot attain directly to the bounties of God. Do not overlook the obvious truths. For it is a self-evident fact that a child cannot be instructed without a teacher, and knowledge is a bounty from the bounties of God. The soil is not covered with grass and green without the rain of the cloud, therefore the cloud is the intermediary between the divine bounties and the soil. A body does not develop and grow without the soul, therefore the soul is the medium of the spiritual life.

I hope that through the breath of the Holy Spirit the mysteries may become disclosed to thee, for without this channel it is impossible and unattainable.

945. It is becoming of a weak one to supplicate to the Strong One and it behooveth a seeker of bounty to beseech the Glorious Bountiful One. When one supplicates to his Lord, turns to Him and seeks bounty from His Ocean, this supplication is itself a light to his heart, an illumination to his sight, a life to his soul and an exaltation to his being. By these attractions one's ability <p492> and capacity increase. When the vessel is deepened the water increaseth, and when the thirst groweth the bounty of the clouds becometh agreeable to the taste of man.

This is the mystery of supplication and the wisdom of stating one's wants.

946. You had asked concerning the disclosure of spirits after the dissolution of bodies. Undoubtedly the other world is a world of disclosure and vision, for there the veil will be removed and the human spirit will witness the souls above it, beneath it, or of an equal rank with it. ... The spirits of the believers at the time of their appearance in the world of bodies are equal, and are all pure and unsullied. But in this world they will find distinction. Some attain to a lofty station, some seek an intermediate grade, some stagnate in the early stages. This equality is in the original state of their being, and this distinction is after their ascension from this earthly life.

947. The Supreme One hath said "He loveth them and they will love Him." If God had not filled His Servant with His love, love would never have been realized in this creation.

All is then from Him, and is His -- man in himself possesses absolutely nothing.

The rays of love having shone from the True One unto the creation, the great signs thereof are imprinted upon clear and luminous hearts, and as these mirror-hearts meet, reflecting this sublime light, love, it becomes manifest from creature to creature. "God hath put harmony in their hearts."

948. In this prohibition (from visiting Haifa) there is a providence which will become manifest before long. But know ye with the utmost certainty that this disappointment is regarded in the Threshold of the Manifest Light as greater than a visit to that magnificent station. For the substance of the grief is the essence of the visit, and the burning of the fire of zeal is the sweet water of the union. This distance is the nearness itself, this separation the reality of union.

949. In this day if any one lives in accordance with the heavenly teachings and instructions, he shall become a spiritual physician <p493> to the world of humanity and the trumpet of Israfel to quicken the dead. For the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha are uninterrupted, and the victory of the Supreme Concourse is the associate of every one who is pure in heart.

950. It is known and clear that today the unseen divine assistance encompasses those who deliver the message. And if the work of delivering the message be neglected, the assistance shall be entirely cut off. Under all conditions the message must be delivered, but with wisdom. The friends should be engaged in educating the souls and should become instruments in aiding the world of humanity to acquire spiritual joy and fragrance. If every one of the friends were to establish relations of friendship and right dealing with one of the negligent souls, associate and live with him with perfect kindliness, and meanwhile, through good conduct and moral behavior, lead him to divine instruction, to heavenly advice and teachings, surely he would gradually arouse that negligent person and would change his ignorance into knowledge. Souls are liable to estrangement. Such methods should be adopted that the estrangement be first removed; then the Word will have effect.

If, by this method, every one of the friends of God were to try to lead one soul to the right path, the number of the believers would be doubled every year.

951. With regard to the formation of benevolent associations; surely this subject should receive due attention. The disciples of His Holiness Christ (may My life be a sacrifice unto Him!) were only eleven persons, and they had established a benevolent fund. So the establishment of the fun had that degree of importance.

952. O ye friends of the Beauty of Abha! O ye firm ones in the Testament of the Covenant of Baha!

O ye servants of the Holy Threshold of His Highness the Eternal One! Praise ye the Greatest Name and the Self-subsistent, Eternal and Pre-existent Beauty for

that He hath, through His great kindness, made ye true friends, steadfast in the Covenant and firm in the Testament of God. He made you brilliant lamps and sufficient stars, signs of oneness and standards of singleness, trees of the paradise of the Covenant, and lights of the sanctity of God. <p494>

Therefore in thanksgiving for the great favor, ye should endeavor to promote peace, union, harmony. Ye are immersed in one sea and receive radiance from one sun. Ye are drawing from one horizon, radiating from one source, and receiving bounties from one point. Ye are soaring in one Atmosphere and looking to one center. This is the essence of oneness and the reality of singleness.

Whosoever proves firm, his breath is the Breath of God. Whosoever slightly doubts and wavers, his whisperings are contaminated, no matter who he may be.

953. What is the Truth? Truth is the Word of God which gives life to humanity. It restores sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf; it makes eloquent those who are dumb, and living beings out of dead beings; it illumines the world of the heart and soul; it reduces into nothingness the iniquities of the neglectful and erring ones. Beauty, perfection, brilliancy and spirituality in this existence comes from or through the Word of God. For all it is the supreme goal, the greatest desire, the cause of life, light, instruction. The road to attain to this Truth is the love of God. When the light of the love of God is burning in the mirror of the heart, that flame shows the way, and guides to the Kingdom of the Word of God.

As to that which causes the growth of the love of God -- know that it is to turn one's self towards God.

954.

As to progress after death: know that after death it is the divine world.

Progress is possible, but it depends upon the generosity of God, and not upon the efforts and struggles of man.

In other words, progress becomes possible only through grace, because the progress from one rank to another depends entirely upon divine generosity, whereas on the contrary, progress toward perfection is obtainable through man's effort.

For example, the progress of a mineral reality to the rank of a vegetable is to be obtained only through generosity; likewise the passage of a vegetable reality to the rank of animal reality to the rank of the human is also due to mercy and generosity; likewise the passage of a human reality to the world of the Kingdom depends entirely upon generosity.

What I mean to say is this: that the passage from one rank to another depends wholly upon grace, whereas the acquiring of perfections <p495> is dependent upon man's efforts and struggles.

Take mankind:

God created man from the mineral enabled him to attain to his present station;

now by his efforts and struggles, he can acquire human perfections and seek to increase in virtue and purity.

It is therefore clear that the passage from one rank to a higher rank depends entirely on generosity, whereas the acquiring of virtues is possible through effort and will-power.

In consequence, after the passage through this corporeal world into the divine world, the traversing of ranks is possible, but only through the grace and bounty of God.

955. As to the significance of the Cause of Baha'u'llah: know that everything which belongs to the universal welfare is divine, and all that which is divine is certainly for universal good. If it is the truth, it is for all, otherwise it is for no one. Therefore, a divine cause for universal good cannot be limited to the Orient or to the Occident; because the flame of the Sun of Truth illumines the East and the West, and its heat is felt in the South as well as the North, -- there is no difference between the two poles. In the time of the Manifestation of Christ, the Romans and Greeks thought that the Cause was especially for the Israelites; they thought they themselves had no need of it, because they saw that according to appearances, they possessed a perfect civilization, wherefore they did not need the instructions of Christ. This false supposition was the cause of depriving many people of its grace. Also know that the principles of Christianity and the commandments of Baha'u'llah are identical, and that the roads are the same. But every day there is progress. There was a time when the divine institution was in an embryonic condition; then it became a newly-born infant, then a child, afterward an intelligent adult. Today it has reached maturity; its capacities, its body, is ever the same identity -- but today it is resplendent with the greatest beauty and brilliancy.

This explanation is clear and sufficient. Happy is he who penetrates the mysteries, and who takes his share from the world of Light. The sun could shine a hundred thousand years and shower its heat upon a stone or hard piece of earth; they will not become luminous gems, a ruby or a pearl.

956. Perchance, God willing, ye may be helped and confirmed to <p496> arise and serve in a befitting and worthy manner, and be assisted to do that which is required; and associate with the people with sanctity, purity, virtue and holiness, so that every one who is near may inhale the fragrance of the delectable Paradise, every intimate one may behold the traits of the most wonderful creation, and all people testify that the Baha'is are the shining lamps of the regions and the rays of the dawningplace and effulgence; recognizing a Baha'i through the quality and not the name, knowing him through the amiable nature and not the physical body. Should we become as such, the manifest light will shine in our brow. Otherwise, woe unto us, for that which we have neglected as duties enjoined upon us by God!

957. Know that the blessings of the Kingdom of Abha are not dependent upon the capacity and the worthiness of any one; the blessings themselves are the

worthiness. As the action itself, when it reaches the thing acted upon, makes that thing the action, -- so the blessings themselves then become identical with worthiness. In like manner, when the action itself descends upon the recipient, the recipient becomes the action. For example, when an object becomes broken, the action becomes realized in it. Under such circumstances, the recipient and that which is received -- or capacity and blessings -- are one. Therefore the blessings of the Kingdom of Abha are not enchained by any fetters. The Kingdom gives the drop the influence of the sea, and the mote that of the sun. As thou hast already beheld, God has arisen, and some souls who were less than drops become like the waves of the great sea and manifested a storm equal to that of the ocean: in such cases worthiness is of no importance.

958. Every one of the friends of God has two stations; on the station of mankind and the other the station of spirituality. The spiritual station is unseen, while the material station, the personal station, is seen. It is like the horizon and the sun; the Sun of Truth shines forth from the horizon; and now the Sun of Truth has shone with perfection from the horizon. We call these effulgences the descending grace. The horizon receives all divine protection through the outpouring of that bounty, and the bounties which the horizon receives from the unseen Light, He gives to mankind and to creation. The station by which the horizon gives those bounties to mankind, which He has taken from the <p497> Sun of Truth -- the station of giving those bounties to mankind is called the station of sacrifice. I will tell you an example to distinguish between the giver of the bounties of mankind: suppose the grain which you put in the earth -- when the grain desires to be changed into a tree, of course it sacrifices all of itself to the tree in order that the tree may be produced. Christ said: I have given my life in order that ye may live. When Christ came into the world He gave all His bounties to mankind in order that they might see their bounties therein; and this was the way He sacrificed His life to the world.

When we want to know and judge whether such a matter is complete in this world, we must distinguish between its outward grace and its inward grace. If we find these two graces equal to each other, we will know that this matter has been accomplished. What a man lives in his heart, he must be appearance live; and if he live a something in his heart and does not show it in his life, then we will judge that his life is not complete.

It is the same with the Cause of God. If we would know whether this Cause is complete and in full perfection, we must see whether all its conditions or grades are complete and consistent. All Divine Manifestations give up all personal conditions, considerations and grades in the Cause of God to such an extent that there is nothing judged of their personality; that is, they sacrifice their personality entirely in the world; their life is only the life of God, their thought is the thought of God and their grades are those chosen by God. They have nothing. They sacrifice everything in the way of God. They suffer every sort of affliction and calamity in the world -- that is, the afflictions and calamities in addition to those suffered spiritually -- in

order to show that the spiritual equals the material in consecration and sacrifice. They sacrifice spiritually in the way of God, and so they sacrifice all apparent and outward conditions in order to show the perfection and completeness of the truth of their manifestation.

This is the station of simple radiance which shines forth and makes them separate from all worldly things, and this leads them to such a condition that while they are walking on the earth, they are moving in the supreme Horizon. They have cut themselves off entirely from worldly conditions, and while they are on the earth they never see it, but look to the Horizon. They close <p498> their eyes to their material ease and to all else, and hasten with all joy and fragrance to martyrdom in the Cause of God.

As long as one has not taken a portion of the mystery of sacrifice, it is impossible for him to attain to the Kingdom of God. So long as you do not have the cup free from every sort of liquor, is it possible that you can put good and pure water therein?

The most earnest hope and desire of those who have drawn nigh to God is this -- to receive a cup from this ocean. I hope that in the service of God I may gain such a station as to put those who are in the way of God in the way of attaining the grace of self-sacrifice, that they may wholly forget their own personality and their ego. So long as the surface of the mirror is not clean from rust and dust, the radiance and effulgence of the sun shall never be imprinted on it. The more the body is lightened, the sooner it ascends.

959. Those who looked at the material body of Christ and saw Him enduring all the hardships and trials, marveled that He was the Messiah because He was in this lowly condition. As they were considering His physical being, they failed to see the light shining within it. But those who looked to the spiritual and the real existence of the Spirit in Christ, they firmly believed in Him. We must not look at the lantern, but at the light -- the candle inside the lantern. We must not look at the worldly condition, but at the truth within it -- the divine truth -- because if we look only at the outward form of man, how can we distinguish man from animal, because we find them eating and doing the same things; but when we consider the spirit in man, we find it to be far different from the animal. When you look at water, salt and sweet, you cannot tell the difference, but when you taste the water, then you can distinguish.

This is one of the tests of God. That is why Jesus told all people to supplicate and beseech God not to let them fall into these tests. For God does not tempt us -- God tests us. Temptation is from the satanic, or negative, quality of man.

960. By the term "angels" spiritual powers is sometimes meant, and other times you will find that the term means pure and holy souls. Where it is said "I will give My angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways," it means pure souls and true believers. In one station "angel" means those spiritual and divine <p499> powers given by God to the body of man which change mankind toward good. These are the "angels" which confirm man.

Sometimes we understand by "angel" those beings and souls who are sanctified from all earthly stations -- that is, who have cut themselves from all worldly things and drawn nigh unto God with all resignation and devotion. If we find a man who has cut himself from all animal and worldly stations and approached nigh to the heavenly conditions, we will say "This being is an angel," because he has nothing to do with earthly things.

All beings of the contingent world have to undergo change: the only thing which is unchangeable is the identity of God. The angel is one of the created beings of God and must undergo changes. Were these beings not to change, they would possess the unity or nature of God. When we want to judge something which is contingent, we look at its changes and understand its nature.

Man is not a pre-existent being, but a newly produced and created being, consisting of two aspects or portions, the spiritual and material, which may be likened to hell and paradise; and he does not know whether he will be in hell or paradise. For instance, man is composed of evil as well as good, of darkness as well as light, of guidance as well as misleading; the most evil character is to be found in man, while the greatest and most excellent character is also found in him. We must see that the good qualities gain victory over the bad. If so, the man will become an "angel," but if the bad qualities conquer the good ones, then he will become a "devil." If the light conquers the darkness in man, of course he will be true light, and if the darkness conquers the light, he will be of the material.

961. He who knows nothing of the wind, when he sees trees shaken does not know it is the wind which causes them to shake. Since the beginning of the Cause, there have been at least ten thousand men who went with gladness to suffer martyrdom, and people who saw them suffering this martyrdom thought it was through their own power, and did not know that a breeze had shaken them. In the days of other Prophets there were people who suffered martyrdom in the Cause of God, but in this day there are more, and these have been more sincere. The histories of this time will record their witness to the things which have happened <p500> in this day -- to those who have suffered martyrdom. How many mothers have been happy to see their children suffer martyrdom! How many wives have rejoiced when their husbands suffered martyrdom; how many sisters have wept with joy when their brothers died in the Cause of God! Now, it is not possible for one to have joy under these circumstances unless he is shaken by a breeze from the garden of God.

962. The station of the Prophets is as a lighted lamp; all the Prophets offered themselves as lamps. Those men around them who heard their voice were such as were capable and desirous of hearing them.

If you speak with a magician about the Zodiac, he understands you because he is a learned man, but if you speak of it to a carpenter he will say it is nonsense -- "How is it, a live man in the skies, or a ship!"

With this man the interpretation of the Bible will be the same -- if you repeat all these spiritual things to him, he will think it nonsense. For instance,

when you read the Revelation of St. John to the unlearned in spiritual matters, they do not understand it, and it is only because you tell them it is the Bible that they do not call it nonsense. There are many meanings in each word of the Apocalypse.

Iron attracts iron, and as you approach the Kingdom of God, you will be attracted by the things of the Kingdom. Worldly people are not of the kind to be affected by the magnet of the divine.

963. Everything in existence is good, and only the lack of goodness make a thing evil. The being is created good, but when the lack of good is to be seen in it, then it becomes bad. Evil is not created by God. For example, light is created by God, but when you put away the light from a room, the room becomes dark. Darkness is not created by God -- the lack of light is called darkness. God has created guidance; misleading is lack of guidance. When you turn yourself from guidance, you place yourself in misleading. There is no existence in evil. Nothing proceeds from the True One but good, and everything belonging to the beings of existence is animated by their God. I will give you an example: the Governor sent here from Constantinople possesses full authority <p501> and power from the authority and power of the Sultan. But this man is capable of doing both justice and injustice by this power given him by the Sultan. If he exercises injustice and oppression in the city and the Sultan punishes him, can he answer that he has done these evil things through the power given from the Sultan? The Sultan will tell him that he has given him power to use in a good way and not for oppression.

There is no difference in the bounties of God; a profusion of bounties are outpoured continually upon all sorts of land, but when the precious shower falls on a barren land, it causes weeds and thorns to grow. The same bounty and the same shower causes a good, fertile land to bear roses and grass and useful fruits.

964. The more you love, the nearer you will be to God. Love is one of the bounties of God. Therefore to love one another is good.

The bounties of God are: to love each other, to speak the truth, to sever our hearts from the world, to be reverent, to be humble, to be hospitable. By these things you know the faithful servant of God. How do we know the light? By its rays. So when you see these qualities, you will know that the servant of God has received the regeneration. You must be thus reborn. You must pray and supplicate, and the more you pray and supplicate, the nearer you will be to God.

When a dead body is thrown into the ocean, the waves will throw it back upon the shore. So it is with the Ocean of Truth -- it will not accept a dead body; and if a believer has not these bounties of God, the sea will roll until he is finally cast out.

The people of God have no dependence upon the conditions of this world; they neither become bittered with the bitterness of the cup, nor do they become

intoxicated if the cup be sweet.

The people of God are like the birds, who satisfy themselves with a few crumbs, and sit the whole time on the branches of the tree singing the praises of God.

965. The greatest gift of man is universal love, for this love is the magnet which renders existence eternal, attracts reality, and diffuses life with infinite joy. If this love penetrates the heart of man, all the forces of the universe will be realized in him, for it is a divine power which transports him to a divine station; <p502> and man will make no real progress until illumined by this power of love. Strive to increase the love-force of reality, to make your hearts greater centers of attraction, to create new ideals and relationships.

Alas! Alas! The world has not discovered the reality of religion hidden beneath the symbolic forms!

966. Advance always in the Kingdom of Baha'u'llah; occupy thy heart always by the mentioning of Baha'u'llah; take heed that only in your eyes is Baha'u'llah, in your heart is Baha'u'llah -- in your inmost heart is Baha'u'llah! If you fall into trouble, say, "Ya Baha ul Abha!" If any one oppose you, say, "Ya Baha ul Abha!" Even while at your work, mention "Ya Baha ul Abha!" Thou wilt be blamed for My sake; people will attribute to thee infidelity for My sake; thou wilt bear trouble for My sake. Be encouraged, and do not fear. It happened like this also in the time of Jesus Christ.

Know the greatness of these days!

967. All the meetings must be for teaching the Cause and spreading the message, and suffering the souls to enter into the Kingdom of Baha'u'llah. Look at me. All my thoughts are centered around the proclamation of the Kingdom.

I have a lamp in my hand searching through the lands and seas to find souls who can become heralds of the Cause. Day and night I am engaged in this work. Any other deliberations in the meetings are futile and fruitless. Convey the message! Attract the hearts! Sow the seeds! Teach the Cause to those who do not know.

I enter all meetings, all churches, so that the Cause may be spread. When the most important work is before our sight, we must let go the important one.

If the meetings or Spiritual Assembly has any other occupation, the time is spent in futility. All the deliberations, all consultation, all the talks and addresses must revolve around one focal center and that is: Teach the Cause! Teach! Teach! Convey the message! Awaken the souls!

Now is the time of laying the foundation. Now we must gather brick, stone, wood, iron and other building materials! This is not the time of decoration. We must strive day and night and <p503> think and work. What can I say that may become effective? What can I do that may bring results? What can I write that may bring forth fruits?

Nothing else will be useful today. The interests of such a glorious Cause will not advance without undivided attention. While we are carrying this load we cannot carry any other load!

968. Will is the center or focus of human understanding. We must will to know God, just as we must will in order to possess the life He has given us. The human will must be subdued and trained into the will of God. It is a great power to have a strong will, but a greater power to give that will to God. The will is what we do, the understanding is what we know. Will and understanding must be one in the Cause of God.

969. Now the time has come when we must part, but the separation is only of our bodies; in spirit we are united. Ye are the lights which shall be diffused; ye are the waves of that sea which shall spread and overflow the world. Each wave is precious to me, and my nostrils shall be gladdened by your remembrance. Another commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another even as I love you. Great mercy and blessings are promised to the people of your land, but on one condition; that their hearts be filled with the fire of love, that they live in perfect harmony and kindness like one soul in different bodies, like one soul in different bodies. Never forget this; look at one another with the eye of perfection; look at me, follow me, be as I am; take no thought for yourselves or your lives, whether ye eat or whether ye sleep, whether ye are comfortable, whether ye are well or ill, whether ye are with friends or foes, whether ye receive praise or blame; for all these things ye must care not at all. Look at me and be as I am; ye must die to yourselves and to the world, so ye shall be born again and enter the kingdom of heaven. Behold the candle, how it gives light. It weeps its life away drop by drop in order to give forth its flame of light. The time has come when we must part, but the separation is only of our bodies; in spirit we are united forever.

970. I say unto you that any one who will rise up in the Cause of God at this time shall be filled with the spirit of God, and that <p504> He will send His hosts from heaven to help you, and that nothing shall be impossible to you if you have faith. And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a Covenant between you and me: that ye have faith; that you faith be steadfast as a rock that no storms can move, that nothing can disturb, and that it endure through all things even to the end; even should ye hear that your Lord has been crucified, be not shaken in your faith; for I am with you always, whether living or dead; I am with you to the end. As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the standard -- this is the standard -- this is the standard. <p505>

CHAPTER NINE

DIVINE CIVILIZATION

971. The past age was an age of wondrous achievements. All the inventions were perfected; new discoveries created; new fields of human activity developed; new undertakings gave deeper significance to the law of co-operation; new arts helped to make life more beautiful; and new international laws are now in

process of formation to bind all nations of the earth together. The international tribunal of justice will soon be organized in accordance with the principles of Baha'u'llah, and then all the differences will be adjusted before the members of that impartial tribunal.

Therefore, as a result of these changes in the outer world, it has become part of the heavenly wisdom in the inner world to create a new spiritual plan for the propagation of the religion of God. Thus the divine believers may obtain a new joy and a new happiness and display an extraordinary effort in the promotion of the reality of the religions of God, to deliver the nations from old, superannuated prejudices and diffuse the fragrances of the flowers of the primal Truth; to unfurl the flag of love, amity, unity and oneness of the world of humanity and remove the international misunderstandings from amongst the nations of the world.

972. To the friends and maid-servants of God in the Northeastern states:

Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye heavenly heralds!
These are the days of Naurooz. I am always thinking of those kind friends! I beg for each and all of you confirmations and assistance from the threshold of Oneness, so that those gatherings may become ignited like unto candles, in the Republics of America, enkindling the light of the love of God in the hearts; thus the rays of the heavenly teachings may begem and brighten the <p506> states of America like the infinitude of immensity with the stars of the most great guidance.

The Northeastern states on the shores of the Atlantic -- Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York -- in some of these believers are found, but in some of the cities of these states up to this date people are not yet illumined with the lights of the Kingdom and are not aware of the heavenly teachings; therefore, whenever it is possible for each one of you, hasten ye to those cities and shine forth like unto the stars with the light of the most great guidance.

God says in the glorious Qur'an: "The soil was black and dried.

Then we cause the rain to descend upon it and immediately it became green, verdant, and every kind of plant sprouted up luxuriantly."

In other words, he says the earth and the soil is black, but when the spring showers descend upon it that black soil is quickened, and variegated flowers are pushed forth.

This means the souls of humanity belonging to the world of nature are black like unto the soil.

But when the heavenly outpourings descend and the radiant effulgences appear, the hearts are resuscitated, are liberated from the darkness of nature and the flowers of the divine mysteries grow and become luxuriant.

Consequently man must become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity and propagate the holy teachings revealed in the sacred books through divine inspiration.

It is stated in the blessed Gospel:

Travel ye toward the East and toward the West and enlighten the people with the light of the most great guidance, so that they may take a portion and share of the eternal life.

Praise be to God, that the Northeastern states are in the utmost capacity.

Because the ground is rich, the rain of the divine outpouring is descending.

Now you must become heavenly farmers and scatter pure seeds in the prepared soil.

The harvest of every other seed is limited, but the bounty and the blessing of the seed of the divine teachings is unlimited.

Throughout the coming centuries and cycles many harvests will be gathered.

Consider the work of former generations.

During the lifetime of His Holiness Christ the believing, firm souls were few and numbered, but the heavenly benedictions descended so plentifully that in a number of years countless souls entered under the shade of the Gospel.

God has said in the Qur'an: "One grain will bring forth seven sheaves, and every sheaf shall contain <p507> one hundred grains."

In other words, one grain will become seven hundred; and if God so will he will double these also.

It has often happened that one blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation.

Now we must not look at our own ability and capacity; nay, rather, we must behold the favors and bounties of God in these days, who has made the drop to find the expression of the sea and the atom the importance of the sun.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Haifa, Palestine, March 26, 1916.

973. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Northeastern states of the United States of America. Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York:

He is God!

O ye real friends!
All the regions in the estimation of the True One are one region and all the cities and villages are ideally equal and similar to each other. Neither holds distinction over another. All of them are the fields of God and the habitation

of the souls of men. But through faith and assurance and the precedence of one part over another the dweller imparts holiness and sanctification to the dwelling and some of the countries becoming exceptional, attain to the most great distinction.

For example, notwithstanding that some of the countries of Europe and America are distinguished for the purity of the air, the wholesomeness of the water, and the charm of the mountains, plains and prairies and are preferred above all the rest, yet Palestine became an honor to all other regions of the world: Because all the holy divine Manifestations from the time of His Holiness Abraham to the time of the appearance of the Seal of the Prophets, have been either living in this region or emigrated to or travelled through here.

Likewise Yathroh and Batha attained to the most great bounty and the light of the Prophets has shone from that horizon. For this reason Palestine and Hedjaz are distinguished above all other regions.

Likewise as the Continent of America in the estimation of the <p508> True One is the field of the effulgence of light, the Kingdom of the manifestation of mysteries, the home of the righteous ones and the gathering place of the free, therefore every section thereof is blessed; but because these nine states have been favored in faith and assurance, hence through this precedence they have obtained spiritual privilege. They must realize the value of this bounty; because they have obtained such a favor and in order to render thanksgiving for this most great bestowal, they must arise in the diffusion of divine fragrances; so that the blessed verse of the Qur'an:

"God is the light of heaven and earth: the similitude of his light is a niche in a wall, wherein a lamp is placed, and the lamp enclosed in a case of glass; the glass appears as if it were a shining star. It is lighted with the oil of a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West; it waneth little but that the oil thereof would give light, although no fire touched it. This is the light added unto light. God will direct unto his light whom he pleaseth." -- may be realized.

He says: "The world of nature is the world of darkness, because it is the origin of a thousand depravities, nay rather, it is darkness upon darkness." The illumination of the world of nature is dependent upon the splendor of the Sun of Reality. The grace of guidance is like unto the candle which is enkindled in the glass of knowledge and wisdom and that glass of knowledge and wisdom is the mirror of the heart of humanity. The oil of that luminous lamp is from the fruits of the Blessed Tree and that oil is so refined that it will burn without light. When the intensity of the light and the translucency of the glass and the purity of the mirror are brought together, it will become light upon light.

In brief, in these nine blessed States Abdul Baha journeyed and travelled from place to place, explained the wisdom of the heavenly books and diffused the fragrances. In most of these States he founded the Divine Edifice and opened the door of teaching. In those States he sowed pure seeds and planted blessed

trees.

Now the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful must irrigate these fields and with the utmost power engage themselves in the cultivation of these heavenly plantations so that <p509> the seeds may grow and develop, prosperity and blessing be realized and many rich and great harvests be gathered in.

The Kingdom of God is like unto a farmer who comes into possession of a piece of pure and virgin soil. Heavenly seeds are scattered therein, the clouds of divine providence pour down and the rays of the Sun of Reality shine forth.

Now all these bounties exist and appear in full in these nine States. The divine Gardener passed by that holy ground and scattered pure seeds from the lordly teachings in that field, the rain of the bounties of God poured down and the heat of the Sun of Reality, that is: -- The merciful confirmations -- shone with the utmost splendor. It is my hope that each one of those blessed souls may become a peerless and unique irrigator and the East and the West of America may become like unto a delectable paradise -- so that all of you may hear from the Supreme Concourse the cry of "Blessed are ye, and again blessed are ye!"

Upon you be greeting and praise!

The following supplication is to be read by the teachers and friends daily:

O Thou Kind Lord! Praise be unto Thee that Thou hast shown unto us the highway of guidance, opened the doors of the Kingdom and manifested Thyself through the Sun of Reality. To the blind Thou hast given sight; to the deaf Thou hast granted hearing; Thou hast resuscitated the dead; Thou hast shown the way to those who have gone astray; Thou hast led those with parched lips to the fountain of guidance; Thou hast suffered the thirsty fish to reach the ocean of reality and Thou hast invited the wandering birds to the rose garden of grace.

O Thou Almighty! We people are Thy servants and Thy poor ones! We are remote, we yearn for Thy presence; we are thirsty for the water of Thy fountain; we are ill, longing for Thy medicine. We are walking in Thy path and have no aim or hope save the diffusion of Thy fragrances -- so that the souls may raise the cry of: "O God! Guide us to the straight path!" May they open their eyes by beholding the lights and become freed from the darkness of ignorance! May they walk around the lamp of guidance! May the portionless receive a share! and may the deprived ones become the confidants of the mysteries!

O Almighty! Look upon us with the glance of mercifulness! <p510> Grant us heavenly confirmation! Bestow upon us the breaths of the Holy Spirit! So that we may become assisted in service and like unto brilliant stars we may shine in these regions with the light of guidance! Verily! Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and Thou art the Wise and the Seeing!

Haifa, Palestine, February 2, 1917.

974. To the friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Southern States:

Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye heralds of the Kingdom of God!
A few days ago an epistle was written to those divine believers, but because these days are the days of Nourouz, therefore you have come to my mind and I am sending you this greeting for this glorious feast. All the days are blessed, but this feast is the national fete of Persia. The Persians have been holding it for several thousand years past. In reality every day which man passes in the mention of God, the diffusion of the fragrances of God and calling the people to the Kingdom of God, that day is his feast. Praise be to God that you are occupied in the service of the Kingdom of God by day and by night. Therefore all you days are feast days. There is no doubt that the assistance and the bestowal of God shall descend upon you.

In the Southern States of the United States, the friends are few, that is, in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Consequently you must either go yourselves or send a number of blessed souls to those States, so that they may guide the people to the Kingdom of Heaven. One of the Holy Manifestations, addressing a believing soul, says: "If a person become the cause of the illumination of one soul, it is better than a boundless treasury." Again He says: "O Ali! If God guide, through thee, one soul, it is better for thee than all the riches!"
Again He says: "Direct us to the straight path!" that is, Show us the right road. It is also mentioned in the Gospel: "Travel ye to all parts of the world and give ye the glad tidings of the appearance of the Kingdom of God." <p511>

In brief, I hope you will display in this respect the greatest effort and magnanimity. It is assured that you will become assisted, and confirmed. A person declaring the glad tidings of the appearance of the realities and significances of the Kingdom is like unto a farmer who scatters pure seeds in the rich soil. The spring cloud will pour upon them the rain of bounty, and unquestionably the station of the farmer will be raised in the estimation of the lord of the village, and many harvests will be gathered.

Therefore, ye friends of God! Appreciate ye the value of this time and be ye engaged in the sowing of the seeds, so that ye may find the heavenly blessing and the lordly bestowal. Upon you be Baha El-Abha!

Haifa, Palestine, March 27, 1916.

975. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Southern States.

Upon them be Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

O ye blessed, respected souls!
The philosophers of the ancients, the thinkers of the Middle Ages and the scientists of this and the former centuries have all agreed upon the fact that

the best and most ideal region for the habitation of man is the temperate zone, for in this belt the intellects and thoughts rise to the highest stage of maturity and the capability and ability of civilization manifest themselves in full efflorescence. When you read history critically and with a penetrating eye, it becomes evident that the majority of the famous men have been born, reared and have done their work in the temperate zone, while very very few have appeared from the torrid and frigid zones.

Now these sixteen Southern States of the United States are situated in the temperate zone, and in these regions the perfections of the world of nature have been fully revealed. For the moderation of the weather, the beauty of the scenery and the geographical configuration of the country display a great effect in the world of minds and thoughts. This fact is well demonstrated through observation and experience.

Even the holy, divine Manifestations have had a nature in the <p512> utmost equilibrium, the health and wholesomeness of their bodies most perfect, their constitutions endowed with physical vigor, their powers functioning in perfect order, and the outward sensations linked with the inward perceptions, working together with extraordinary momentum and co-ordination.

Therefore in these sixteen States, because they are contiguous to other States and their climate being in the utmost of moderation, unquestionably the divine teachings must reveal themselves with a brighter effulgence, the breaths of the Holy Spirit must display a penetrating intensity, the ocean of the love of God must be stirred with higher waves, the breezes of the rose garden of the divine love be wafted with higher velocity, and the fragrances of Holiness be diffused with swiftness and rapidity.

Praise be to God that the divine outpourings are infinite, the melody of the lordly principles is in the utmost efficacy, the most great Orb shining with perfect splendor, the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse are attacking with invincible power, the tongues are sharper than the swords, the hearts are more brilliant than the light of electricity, the magnanimity of the friends precedes all the magnanimities of the former and subsequent generations, the souls are divinely attracted, and the fire of the love of God is enkindled.

At this time and at this period we must avail ourselves of this most great opportunity. We must not sit inactive for one moment; we must sever ourselves from composure, rest, tranquillity, goods, property, life and attachment to material things. We must sacrifice everything to His Highness the Possessor of existence; so that the powers of the Kingdom may show greater penetration and the brilliant effulgence in this New Cycle may illumine the worlds of minds and ideals.

It is about 23 years that the fragrances of God have been diffused in America, but no adequate and befitting motion has been realized, and no great acclamation and acceleration has been witnessed. Now it is my hope that through the heavenly power, the fragrances of the Merciful, the attraction of consciousness, the celestial outpourings, the heavenly cohorts and the gushing

forth of the fountain of divine love, the believers of God may arise and in a short time the great good may unveil her countenance, the Sun of Reality may shine forth with such intensity that the darkness of the world of nature may become entirely dispelled <p513> and driven away; from every corner a most wonderful melody may be raised, the morning birds may break into such a song that the world of humanity may be quickened and moved, the solid bodies may become liquefied and the souls who are like unto adamantine rocks may open their wings and through the heat of the love of god fly heavenward.

Nearly 2,000 years ago, Armenia was enveloped with impenetrable darkness. One blessed soul from among the disciples of Christ hastened to that part, and through his effort, ere long that province became illumined. Thus it has become evident how the power of the Kingdom works!

Therefore, rest ye assured in the confirmations of the Merciful and the assistances of the Most High, become ye sanctified above and purified from this world and the inhabitants thereof, suffer your intention to become for the good of all, cut your attachment to the earth and like unto the essence of the spirit become ye light and delicate. Then with a firm resolution, a pure heart, a rejoiced spirit, and an eloquent tongue, engage your time in the promulgation of the divine principles; so that the oneness of the world of humanity may pitch her canopy in the apex of America and all the nations of the world may follow the divine policy. This is certain, that the divine policy is justice and kindness toward all mankind. For all the nations of the world are the sheep of God, and God is the kind shepherd. He has created these sheep. He has protected them, sustained and trained them. What greater kindness than this? And every moment we must render a hundred thousand thanksgivings that, praise be to God, we are freed from all the ignorant prejudices, are kind to all the sheep of God, and our utmost hope is to serve each and all, and like unto a benevolent father educate every one. Upon you be greeting and praise!

Every soul who travels through these cities, villages and hamlets of these States and is engaged in the diffusion of the fragrances of God, must peruse this commune every morning:

O God! O God! Behold me! Notwithstanding my lowliness and my lack of capacity and ability, I am bent upon the accomplishment of the greatest works, aiming to promote Thy Word amongst the republics and resolved to spread Thy teachings amongst all mankind. Far be it from me to become confirmed in this work save Thou mayest assist me with the breaths of the Holy <p514> Spirit! Make me victorious through the armies of Thy Supreme Kingdom and encircle me with Thy confirmations, which shall make the moth the eagle, the drop the river and the seas, and the scintillas the suns and the moons!

O Lord! Confirm me with Thy insuperable power and Thy penetrating potency, so that my tongue may speak out Thy praises and glorifications amongst Thy creatures, and my heart become overflowed with the wine of Thy love and knowledge. Verily, Thou art the powerful to do that which Thou willest, and Thou art might over all things!

Haifa, Palestine, February 3, 1917.

976. To the friends of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Central States:

O ye heavenly souls, O ye spiritual assemblies, O ye lordly meetings!

For some time past correspondence has been delayed, and this has been on account of the difficulty of mailing and receiving letters. But because at present a number of facilities are obtainable, therefore, I am engaged in writing you this brief epistle so that my heart and soul may obtain joy and fragrance through the remembrance of the friends. Continually this wanderer supplicates and entreats at the threshold of His Holiness the One and begs assistance, bounty and heavenly confirmations in behalf of the believers. You are always in my thought. You are not nor shall you ever be forgotten. I hope by the favor of His Holiness the Almighty that day by day you may add to your faith, assurance, firmness and steadfastness, and become instruments for the promotion of the holy fragrances. In the great book, the divine Qur'an, God, addressing His Messenger, His Holiness Muhammad (upon him be greeting and praise!) says: "Verily thou dost guide the people to the straight path." In other words; Thou dost show mankind the direct road. Consider how guidance is a matter of infinite importance; for it points to the loftiness of the station of His Holiness the Messenger.

Although in the States of Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota -- praise be to God -- believers are found, who are associating with each other in the utmost firmness and steadfastness -- day and night they have no other intention save the <p515> diffusion of the fragrances of God, they have no other hope except the promotion of the heavenly teachings, like the candles they are burning with the light of the love of God, and like thankful birds are singing songs, spirit-imparting, joy-creating, in the rose garden of the knowledge of God, -- yet in the States of Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas few of the believers exist.

So far the summons of the Kingdom of God and the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity has not been made in these States systematically and enthusiastically.

Blessed souls and detached teachers have not travelled through these parts repeatedly; therefore these States are still in a state of heedlessness.

Through the efforts of the friends of God souls must be likewise enkindled, in these States, with the fire of the love of God and attracted to the Kingdom of God, so that section may also become illumined and the soul-imparting breeze of the rose garden of the Kingdom may perfume the nostrils of the inhabitants.

Therefore, if it is possible, send to those parts teachers who are severed from all else save God, sanctified and pure.

If these teachers be in the utmost state of attraction, in a short time great results will be forthcoming.

The sons and daughters of the kingdom are like unto the real farmers.

Through whichever state or country they pass they display self-sacrifice and sow divine seeds.

From that seed harvests are produced.

On this subject it is revealed in the glorious Gospel:

When the pure seeds are scattered in the good ground heavenly blessing and benediction is obtained.

I hope that you may become assisted and confirmed, and never lose courage in the promotion of the divine teachings.

Day by day may you add to your effort, exertion and magnanimity.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Haifa, Palestine, March 29, 1916.

977. To the believers and the maid-servants of God in the Central States: Upon them be Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

God says in the great Qur'an: "He specializes for His Mercy whomsoever He willeth."

O ye old believers and intimate friends! These twelve central States of the United States are like unto <p516> the heart of America, and the heart is connected with all the organs and parts of man. If the heart is strengthened, all the organs of the body are reinforced, and if the heart is weak all the physical elements are subjected to feebleness.

Now praise be to God that Chicago and its environs from the beginning of the diffusion of the fragrances of God have been a strong heart. Therefore, through divine bounty and providence it has become confirmed in certain great matters.

First: The Call of the Kingdom was in the very beginning raised from Chicago. This is indeed a great privilege, for in future centuries and cycles, it will be as an axis around which the honor of Chicago will revolve.

Second: A number of souls with the utmost firmness and steadfastness arose in that blessed spot in the promotion of the Word of God and even to the present moment, having purified and sanctified the heart from every thought, they are occupied with the promulgation of the teachings of God. Hence the call of praise is raise uninterruptedly from the Supreme Concourse.

Thirdly: During the American journey Abdul Baha several times passed through Chicago and associated with the friends of God. For some time he sojourned in that city. Day and night he was occupied with the mention of the True One and summoned the people to the Kingdom of God.

Fourthly: Up to the present time, every movement initiated in Chicago, its

effect was spread to all parts and to all directions; just as everything that appears in and manifests from the heart influences all the organs and limbs of the body.

Fifthly: The first Mashrekol-Azkar in America was instituted in Chicago, and this honor and distinction is infinite in value. Undoubtedly out of this Mashrekol-Azkar thousands of other Mashrekol-Azkars will be born.

Likewise the general Annual Conventions, the foundation of the Star of the West, the Publishing Society for the publication of books and Tablets and their circulation in all parts of America, and the preparations now under way for the celebration of the Golden Centenary Anniversary of the Kingdom of God. I hope that this Jubilee and this Exhibition may be celebrated in the utmost perfection; so that the call to the world of unity: "There is no God but One God, and all the Messengers, from the beginning to the Seal of the Prophets (Muhammad) were sent on the part <p517> of the True One!" may be raised; the flag of the oneness of the world of humanity be unfurled, the melody of Universal Peace may reach the ears of the East and the West; all the paths may be cleared and straightened, all the hearts may be attracted to the Kingdom of God, the tabernacle of unity be pitched on the apex of America, the song of the love of God may exhilarate and rejoice all the nations and peoples, the surface of the earth may become the eternal paradise, the dark clouds may be dispelled and the Sun of Truth may shine forth with the utmost intensity.

O ye friends of God! Exert ye with heart and soul, so that association, love, unity and agreement be obtained between the hearts, all the aims may be merged into one aim, all the songs become one song and the power of the Holy Spirit may become so overwhelmingly victorious as to overcome all the forces of the world of nature. Work! This is the great Work, should ye become assisted therein: Thus America may become the fulcrum of merciful susceptibilities, and the throne of the Kingdom of God be established upon earth with the greatest joy and majesty.

This phenomenal world will not remain in an unchanging condition even for a short while. Second after second it undergoes change and transformation. Every foundation will finally become collapsed; every glory and splendor will at last vanish and disappear, but the Kingdom of God is eternal and the heavenly sovereignty and majesty will stand firm everlasting. Hence in the estimation of a wise man the mat of the Kingdom of God is preferable to the throne of the government of the world.

Continually my ear and eye are turned toward the Central States; perchance a melody from some blessed souls may reach my ears, souls who are the dawningplaces of the love of God, the stars of the horizon of sanctification and holiness -- souls who will illumine this dark universe and quicken to life this dead world. The joy of Abdul Baha depends upon this! I hope that you may become confirmed therein.

Consequently, those souls who are in a condition of the utmost severance, purified from the defects of the world of nature, sanctified from attachment to

this earth, vivified with the breaths of eternal life -- with luminous hearts, with heavenly spirit, with attraction of consciousness, with celestial magnanimity, with eloquent tongues and with clear explanations -- such souls must hasten and travel through all parts of the Central States. In <p518> every city and village they must occupy themselves with the diffusion of the divine exhortations and advices, guide the souls and promote the oneness of the world of humanity. They must play the melody of international conciliation with such power that every deaf one may attain hearing, every extinct person may be set aglow, every dead one may obtain new life and every indifferent soul may find ecstacy. It is certain that such will be the consummation.

The spreaders of the fragrances of God may peruse this commune every morning:

O Lord! O Lord! Praise and thanksgiving be unto Thee for Thou hast guided me to the highway of the Kingdom, suffered me to walk in this straight and far-stretching path, illumined my eye by beholding the lights, made me listen to the melodies of the birds of holiness from the Kingdom of Mysteries and attracted my heart with Thy love among the righteous ones.

O Lord! Confirm me with the Holy Spirit, so that I may call in Thy Name amongst the nations and give the glad tidings to the manifestation of Thy Kingdom amongst mankind.

O Lord! I am weak, strengthen me with Thy power and potency. My tongue falters, suffer me to utter Thy commemoration and praise. I am lonely, console me through my entrance in Thy Kingdom. I am remote, cause me to approach to the threshold of Thy Mercifulness.

O Lord! Make me a brilliant lamp, a shining star and a blessed tree, adorned with fruits, its branches overshadowing all these regions! Verily Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful and Unconstrained!

Haifa, Palestine, February 8, 1917.

978. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Western States:

He is God!

O ye sons and daughters of the Kingdom!
Day and night I have no other occupation than the remembrance of the friends, praying from the depth of my heart in their behalf, begging for them confirmation from the Kingdom of God and supplicating the direct effect of the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

I am <p519> hopeful from the favors of His Highness the Lord of Bestowals, that the friends of God during such a time may become the secret cause of the illumination of the hearts of humanity, breathing the breath of life upon the spirits -- whose praiseworthy results may become conducive to the glory and exaltation of humankind throughout all eternity.

Although in some of the Western States, like California, Oregon, Washington and

Colorado, the fragrances of holiness are diffused, numerous souls have taken a share and a portion from the fountain of everlasting life, they have obtained heavenly benediction, have drunk an overflowing cup from the wine of the love of God and have hearkened to the melody of the Supreme Concourse -- yet in the States of New Mexico, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Arizona and Nevada, the lamp of the love of God is not ignited in a befitting and behooving manner, and the call of the Kingdom of God has not been raised.

Now, if it is possible, show ye an effort in this direction.

Either travel yourselves, personally, throughout those States or choose others and send them, so that they may teach the souls.

For the present those States are like unto dead bodies: they must breathe into them the breath of life and bestow upon them a heavenly spirit.

Like unto the stars they must shine in that horizon and thus the rays of the Sun of Reality may also illumine those States.

God says in the great Qur'an "Verily God is the helper of those who have believed. He will lead them from darkness into light." This means: God loves the believers, consequently He will deliver them from darkness and bring them into the world of light.

It is also recorded in the blessed Gospel: Travel ye throughout the world and call ye the people to the Kingdom of God. Now this is the time that you may arise and perform this most great service and become the cause of the guidance of innumerable souls. Thus through this superhuman service the rays of peace and conciliation may illumine and enlighten all the regions and the world of humanity may find peace and composure.

During my stay in America I cried out in every meeting and summoned the people to the propagation of the ideals of universal peace. I said plainly that the continent of Europe had become like unto an arsenal and its conflagration was dependent upon one spark, and that in the coming years or within two years, all that which is recorded in the Revelation of John and the Book of Daniel would become fulfilled and come to pass. This matter, in <p520> all probability, was published in the San Francisco Bulletin, October 12, 1912. You may refer to it, so that the truth may become clear and manifest; thus ye may fully realize that this is the time for the diffusion of the fragrances.

The magnanimity of man must be heavenly -- or, in other words, it must be assisted by the divine confirmation, so that he may become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity.

Upon you be greeting and praise.

Haifa, Palestine, April 1, 1916.

979. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Western States of the United States: New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, California, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Utah. Upon them be

Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

O ye friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful, the chosen ones of the Kingdom!

The blessed State of California bears the utmost similarity to the Holy Land -- that is, the country of Palestine. The air is of the utmost temperance, the plain very spacious, and the fruits of Palestine are seen in that State in the utmost freshness and delicacy. When Abdul Baha was travelling and journeying through those States, he found himself in Palestine, for from every standpoint there was a perfect likeness between this region and that State. Even the shores of the Pacific Ocean, in some instances, show perfect resemblance to the shores of the Holy Land -- and even the flora of the Holy Land have grown on those shores -- the study of which has led to much speculation and wonder.

Likewise in the State of California and other Western States, wonderful scenes of the world of nature, which bewilder the minds of men, are manifest. Lofty mountains, deep canyons, great and majestic waterfalls, and giant trees are witnessed on all sides, while its soil is in the utmost fertility and richness. That blessed state is similar to the Holy Land and that region and that country like unto a delectable paradise, in many ways identical with Palestine. Now just as there are natural resemblances, heavenly resemblances must also be acquired.

The lights of the divine traces are manifest in Palestine. The <p521> majority of the Israelitish Prophets raised the call of the Kingdom of God in this holy ground. Having spread the spiritual teachings, the nostrils of the spiritually-minded ones became fragrant, the eyes of the illumined souls became brightened, the ears were thrilled through this song, the hearts obtained eternal life from the soul-refreshing breeze of the Kingdom of God and gained supreme illumination from the splendor of the Sun of Reality. Then from this region the light was spread to Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Australia.

Now California and the other Western States must earn an ideal similarity with the Holy Land, and from that state and that region the breaths of the Holy Spirit be diffused to all parts of America and Europe, that the call of the Kingdom of God may exhilarate and rejoice all the ears, the divine principles bestow a new life, the different parties may become one party, the divergent ideas may disappear and revolve around one unique center, the East and the West of America may embrace each other, the anthem of the oneness of the world of humanity may confer a new life upon all the children of men, and the tabernacle of Universal Peace be pitched on the apex of America; -- thus Europe and Africa may become vivified with the breaths of the Holy Spirit, this world may become another world, the body politic may attain to a new exhilaration, and just as in the state of California and other Western States the marvellous scenes of the world of nature are evident and manifest, the great signs of the Kingdom of God may also be unveiled; -- so that the body may correspond with the spirit, the outward world may become a symbol of the inward world, and the mirror of

the earth may become the mirror of the Kingdom, reflecting the ideal virtues of heaven.

During my journey and travelling in those parts, I beheld wonderful scenes and beautiful panoramas of nature, orchards and rivers; national parks and general conclaves; deserts, plains, meadows and prairies, and the grains and fruits of that region greatly attracted my attention; even to the present moment they are in my mind.

Particularly was I greatly pleased with the meetings in San Francisco and Oakland, the gatherings in Los Angeles, and the believers who came from the cities of other states. Whenever their faces cross my memory, immediately infinite happiness is realized.

Therefore I hope that the divine teachings like unto the rays of <p522> the sun may be diffused in all the Western States, and the blessed Verse of the Qur'an: "It is a good City and the Lord is the Forgiver!" may become realized. Likewise, the significance of another Qur'anic Verse: "Do ye not travel through the land and behold the traces of the Mercy of God?" become revealed in the utmost effulgence.

Praise be to God that through the divine bounty and providence, in that region the field of service is vast, the minds are in the utmost degree of intelligence and progress, sciences and arts are being promoted, the hearts like unto mirrors are in the utmost state of purity and translucency, and the friends of God are in perfect attraction. Therefore it is hoped that meetings of teaching will be organized and instituted, and for the diffusion of the fragrances of God wise teachers may be sent to cities, even to villages.

The teachers of the Cause must be heavenly, lordly and radiant. They must be embodied spirit, personified intellect, and arise in service with the utmost firmness, steadfastness and self-sacrifice. In their journeys they must not be attached to food and clothing. They must concentrate their thoughts on the outpourings of the Kingdom of God and beg for the confirmations of the Holy Spirit. With a divine power, with an attraction of consciousness, with heavenly glad tidings and celestial holiness they must perfume the nostrils with the fragrances of the Paradise of Abha.

The following Commune is to be read by them every day:

O God! O God! This is a broken-winged bird and his flight is very slow -- assist him so that he may fly toward the apex of prosperity and salvation, wing his way with the utmost joy and happiness throughout the illimitable space, raise his melody in Thy Supreme Name in all the regions, exhilarate the ears with this call, and brighten the eyes by beholding the signs of guidance!

O Lord! I am single, alone and lowly. For me there is no support save Thee, no helper except Thee and no sustainer beside Thee. Confirm me in Thy service, assist me with the cohorts of Thy angels, make me victorious in the promotion of Thy Word and suffer me to speak out Thy wisdom amongst Thy creatures. Verily, Thou art the custodian of the poor and the defender of the little ones,

and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Unconstrained!

Haifa, Palestine, February 15, 1917. <p523>

He is God!

980. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada:

O ye daughters and sons of the Kingdom!
Although in most of the states and cities in the United States -- praise be to God -- the fragrances of God are diffused and innumerable souls are turning their faces and advancing toward the Kingdom of God, yet in some of the states the flag of oneness is not upraised as it ought to be and must be, and the mysteries of the Holy Books, like the Bible, the Gospel and the Qur'an, are not promulgated.

Through the unanimous effort of the friends, the banner of oneness must be unfurled in those states, and the divine teachings be promoted, so that they may also receive a portion and a share of the heavenly bestowals and the most great guidance.

Likewise in the Provinces of Canada, such as Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ungava, Keewatin, Mackenzie, Yukon and the Franklin Islands in the Arctic Circle -- the believers of God must become self-sacrificing and like unto the candles of guidance become ignited in the Provinces of Canada.

Should they show forth such a magnanimity, it is assured that they will obtain universal divine confirmations, the heavenly cohorts will reinforce them uninterruptedly, and a most great victory will be obtained.

Perchance, God willing, the call of the Kingdom may reach the ears of the Eskimos, the inhabitants of the Islands of Franklin in the north of Canada, as well as Greenland.

Should in Greenland the fire of the love of God be ignited, all the ices of that continent will be melted and its frigid climate will be changed into a temperate climate -- that is, if the hearts will obtain the heat of the love of God, that country and continent will become a divine garden and a lordly orchard, and the souls, like unto the fruitful trees, will obtain the utmost freshness and delicacy.

Magnanimity is necessary, heavenly exertion is called for.

Should you display an effort, so that the fragrances of God be diffused amongst the Eskimos, its effect will be very great and far-reaching.

God says in the great Qur'an: "A day will come wherein the lights of unity will enlighten all the world.

The earth will be irradiated with the light of its Lord." <p524> In other

words: "The earth will become illumined with the light of God.

That light is the light of unity." "There is no God but God."

The continent and the islands of Eskimos are also parts of this earth.

They must similarly receive a portion of the bestowals of the most great guidance.

Upon you be greeting and praise.

Haifa, Palestine, April 5, 1916.

981. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, Mackenzie, Keewatin, Ungava, Franklin Islands and Greenland:

Upon them be Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

O ye kind friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful!
In the great Qur'an, God says: "Thou shalt see no difference in the creatures of God." In other words, He says: From the ideal standpoint, there is no variation between the creatures of God, because they are all created by Him. From the above premise, a conclusion is drawn, that there is even no difference between the various countries; nevertheless the future of the Dominion of Canada is very great, and its historical events infinitely glorious. Thus it shall become the object of the glance of providence and the manifestation of the favors of the Supreme Lord.

Abdul Baha during his journey and sojourn through that Dominion obtained the utmost joy. Before my departure, many souls warned me not to travel to Montreal, saying, the majority of the inhabitants are Catholics, and are in the utmost fanaticism, that they are submerged in the sea of imitations, that they have not the capability to hearken to the call of the Kingdom of God, that the veil of bigotry has so covered the eyes that they have deprived themselves from beholding the signs of the most great guidance, and that the dogmas have taken possession of the hearts entirely, leaving no trace of reality. They asserted that should the Sun of Reality shine with perfect splendor throughout that Dominion, the dark, impenetrable clouds of superstitions have <p525> so enveloped the horizon that it would be utterly impossible for any one to behold its rays.

But these stories did not have any effect on the resolution of

Abdul Baha. He, trusting in God, turned his face toward Montreal. When he entered that city he observed all the doors open, he found the hearts in the utmost receptivity and the ideal power of the Kingdom of God removing every obstacle and obstruction. In the churches and meetings of that Dominion he called men to the Kingdom of God with the utmost joy, and scattered such seeds which will be irrigated with the hand of Divine Power. Undoubtedly those seeds

will grow, becoming green and verdant, and many rich harvests will be gathered. In the promotion of the divine principles he found no antagonist and no adversary. The believers he met in that city were in the utmost spirituality, and attracted with the fragrances of God. He found that through the effort of the maid-servant of God, Mrs. Maxwell, a number of the sons and daughter of the Kingdom in that Dominion were gathered together and associated with each other, increasing this joyous exhilaration day by day. The time of sojourn was limited to a number of days, but the results in the future are inexhaustible. When a farmer comes into the possession of a virgin soil, in a short time he will bring under cultivation a large field. Therefore I hope that in the future Montreal may become so stirred, that the melody of the Kingdom may travel to all parts of the world from that Dominion and the breaths of the Holy Spirit may spread from that center to the East and the West of America.

O ye believers of God! Do ye not look upon the smallness of your number and the multitudes of the nations. Five grains of wheat will be endued with heavenly blessing, whereas a thousand tons of tares will yield no results or effect. One fruitful tree will be conducive to the life of society, whereas a thousand forests of wild trees offer no fruits. The plain is covered with pebbles, but precious stones are rare. One pearl is better than a thousand wildernesses of sand; especially this pearl of great price, which is endowed with divine blessing. Ere long thousands of other pearls will be born from It. When that pearl associates and becomes the intimate of the pebbles, they also all change into pearls.

Therefore, again I repeat, that the future of Canada, whether <p526> from the standpoint of civilization or from the viewpoint of the virtues of the Kingdom is very great. Day by day civilization and freedom shall increase. Likewise the cloud of the Kingdom will water the seeds of guidance sown in that Dominion. Consequently, rest ye not, seek ye no composure, attach not yourselves to the luxuries of this ephemeral world, free yourselves from every attachment, and strive with heart and soul to become fully established in the Kingdom of God. Gain ye the heavenly treasures. Day by day become ye more illumined. Draw ye nearer and nearer unto the threshold of oneness. Become ye the manifestors of spiritual favors and the dawningplaces of infinite lights! If it is possible, send ye teachers to other portions of Canada, likewise dispatch ye teachers to Greenland and the home of the Eskimos.

As regards the teachers, they must completely divest themselves from the old garments and be invested with a new garment. According to the statement of Christ, they must attain to the station of rebirth: -- that is, whereas in the first instance they were born from the womb of the mother, this time they must be born from the womb of the world of nature. Just as they are now totally unaware of the experiences of the foetal world, they must also forget entirely the defects of the world of nature. They must be baptized with the water of life, the fire of the love of God and the breaths of the Holy Spirit; be satisfied with little food, but take a large portion from the heavenly table. They must disengage themselves from temptation and covetousness, and be filled

with the spirit. Through the effect of their pure breath, they must change the stone into the brilliant ruby and the shell into pearl. Like unto the cloud of vernal shower, they must transform the black soil into the rose garden and orchard. They must make the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the extinguished one enkindled and set aglow, and the dead quickened.

Upon you be Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

The spreaders of the fragrances of God should peruse every morning the following supplication:

Praise be to Thee, O God! Verily these are Thy servants, who are attracted by the fragrances of Thy Mercifulness, enkindled by the ignited fire in the tree of Thy Singleness and their eyes are brightened by beholding the effulgences of the light in the Sinai of Thy Oneness! <p527>

O Lord! Loosen their tongues in Thy commemoration amongst Thy people; suffer them to speak Thy Praise through Thy Favor and Grace, assist them with the cohorts of Thy Angels, strengthen their loins in Thy service and make them the signs of Thy Guidance amongst Thy creatures!

Verily Thou art the Powerful, the Exalted, the Pardoner and the Merciful!

O God! O God! Thou beholdest this weak one begging the strength of Thy Kingdom! This poor one supplicating the treasures of Thy heaven! This thirsty one longing for Thy Fountain of the water of eternal life! This sick one invoking Thy perfect recovery through Thy boundless Mercy, which Thou hast specialized for Thy chosen servants in Thy Supreme Kingdom!

O Lord! I have no other helper save Thee; no other comforter beside Thee, and no other sustainer except Thee! Assist me with Thy Angels in the diffusion of Thy holy fragrances and the dissemination of Thy teachings amongst Thy elected people!

O Lord! Suffer me to sever myself from aught else save Thee, holding fast to the hem of Thy Garment; make me sincere in Thy religion, firm in Thy love and living in accordance with that which Thou hast commanded me in Thy Book.

Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Omnipotent!

Haifa, Palestine, February 21, 1917.

982. To the Assemblies and Meetings of the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the United States and Canada!

Upon them be Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

O ye blessed souls!
I desire for you eternal success and prosperity and beg perfect confirmation for each one in the divine world. My hope for you is that each one may shine forth like unto the morning star from the horizon of the world and in this Garden of God become a blessed tree, producing everlasting fruits and results.

Therefore I direct you to that which is conducive to your heavenly confirmation and illumination in the Kingdom of God!

It is this: Alaska is a vast country; although one of the maid-servants <p528> of the Merciful has hastened to those parts, serving as a librarian in the Public Library, and according to her ability is not failing in teaching the Cause; yet the call of the Kingdom of God is not yet raised through that spacious territory.

His Holiness Christ says: Travel ye to the East and to the West of the world and summon the people to the Kingdom of God. Hence the mercy of God must encompass all humanity. Therefore do ye not think it permissible to leave that region deprived of the breezes of the Morn of Guidance. Consequently, strive as far as ye are able to send to those parts fluent speakers, who are detached from aught else save God, attracted with the fragrances of God, and sanctified and purified from all desires and temptations. Their sustenance and food must consist of the teachings of God. First they must themselves live in accordance with those principles, then guide the people. Perchance, God willing, the lights of the most great guidance may illumine that country and the breezes of the rose garden of the love of God may perfume the nostrils of the inhabitants of Alaska. Should ye become confirmed in thus rendering such a service, rest ye assured that ye shall crown your heads with the diadem of everlasting sovereignty, and at the threshold of oneness you will become the favored and accepted servants.

Likewise the Republic of Mexico is very important. The majority of the inhabitants of that country are devoted Catholics. They are totally unaware of the reality of the Bible, the Gospel and the new divine teachings. They do not know that the basis of the religions of God is one and that the Holy Manifestations are like unto the Sun of Truth, rising from the different dawningplaces. Those souls are submerged in the sea of dogmas. If one breath of life be blown over them, great results will issue therefrom. But it is better for those who intend to go to Mexico to teach, to be familiar with the Spanish language.

Similarly, the six Central American Republics, situated south of Mexico -- Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the seventh country Belize or British Honduras. The teachers going to those parts must also be familiar with the Spanish language.

You must give great importance to teaching the Indians, i e., the aborigines of America. For these souls are like the ancient inhabitants of Peninsular Arabia, who previous to the Manifestation <p529> of His Holiness Muhammad were treated as savages. But when the Muhammadic light shone forth in their midst, they became so illumined that they brightened the world. Likewise, should these Indians and aborigines be educated and obtain guidance, there is no doubt that through the divine teachings, they will become so enlightened as in turn to shed light to all regions.

All the above countries have importance, but especially the Republic of Panama,

wherein the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans come together through the Panama Canal. It is the center for travel and passage from America to other continents of the world, and in the future it will gain most great importance.

Likewise the Islands of the West Indies, such as Cuba, Haiti, Porto Rico, Jamaica, the Islands of the Lesser Antilles, Bahama Islands, even the small Watling Island, have great importance; especially the two black Republics, Haiti and Santo Domingo, situated in the cluster of the Greater Antilles. Likewise the cluster of the Islands of Bermuda and the Atlantic Ocean have importance.

In a similar way, the Republics on the Continent of South America, -- Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, British Guiana, Dutch Guiana, French Guiana, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Venezuela; also the Islands in the North, East and West of South America, such as Falkland Island, Galapago, Juan Fernandez, Tobago and Trinidad. Likewise the city of Bahia, situated on the eastern shore of Brazil. Because it is some time that it has become known by this name, its efficacy will be most potent.

In short, O ye believers of God! Exalt your effort and magnify your aims. His Holiness Christ says: Blessed are the poor, for theirs shall be the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words: Blessed are the nameless and traceless poor, for they are the leaders of mankind. Likewise it is said in the Qur'an: "We desire to bestow our gifts upon those who have become weak on the face of the earth, and make them a nation and the heirs (of spiritual truth)." Or, we wish to grant a favor to the impotent souls and suffer them to become the inheritors of the Messengers and Prophets.

Therefore, now is the time that you may divest yourselves from the garment of attachment to this phenomenal realm, be wholly severed from the physical world, become angels of heaven and travel and teach through all these regions. <p530>

I declare by Him, beside whom there is no one, that each one of you shall become the Israfel of Life, blowing the breath of life in the souls of others.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Supplication

O Thou Incomparable God! O Thou Lord of the Kingdom! These souls are Thy heavenly army. Assist them and with the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse, make them victorious; so that each one of them may become like unto a regiment and conquer these countries through the love of God and the illumination of divine teachings.

O God! Be Thou their supporter and their helper, and in the wilderness, the mountain, the valley, the forests, the prairies and the seas, be Thou their confidant -- so that they may cry out through the power of the Kingdom and the breath of the Holy Spirit!

Verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Omnipotent, and Thou art the Wise, the Hearing and the Seeing.

Haifa, Palestine, April 8, 1916.

983. To the Assemblies and meetings of the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the United States and Canada:

Upon them be Baha'u'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

O ye heavenly souls, sons and daughters of the Kingdom!
God says in the Qur'an: "Take ye hold of the Cord of God, all of you, and become ye not disunited."

In the contingent world there are many collective centers which are conducive to association and unity between the children of men.

For example, patriotism is a collective center; nationalism is a collective center; the union of ideals is a collective center, and the prosperity of the world of humanity is dependent upon the organization and promotion of the collective centers.

Nevertheless, all the above institutions are in reality, the matter and not the substance, accidental and not eternal -- temporary and not everlasting.

With the appearance of great revolutions and upheavals, all these collective centers are swept <p531> away.

But the Collective Center of the Kingdom, embodying the Institutes and Divine Teachings, is the eternal Collective Center.

It establishes relationship between the East and the West, organizes the oneness of the world of humanity, and destroys the foundation of differences.

It overcomes and includes all the other collective centers.

Like unto the ray of the sun, it dispels entirely the darkness, encompassing all the regions, bestows ideal life, and causes the effulgence of divine illumination.

Through the breaths of the Holy Spirit it performs miracles; the Orient and the Occident embrace each other, the North and South become intimates and associates; conflicting and contending opinions disappear; antagonistic aims are brushed aside, the law of the struggle for existence is abrogated, and the canopy of the oneness of the world of humanity is raised on the apex of the globe, casting its shade over all the races of men.

Consequently, the real Collective Center is the body of the divine teachings, which include all the degrees and embrace all the universal relations and necessary laws of humanity.

Consider! The people of the East and the West were in the utmost strangeness. Now to what a high degree they are acquainted with each other and united together! How far are the inhabitants of Persia from the remotest countries of America! And now observe how great has been the influence of the heavenly

power, for the distance of thousands of miles has becomes identical with one step! How various nations that have had no relations or similarity with each other are now united and agreed through this divine potency! Indeed to God belongs power in the past and in the future! And verily God is powerful over all things!

Consider! When the rain, the heat, the sun and the gentle zephyrs co-operate with each other, what beautiful gardens are produced! How the various kinds of hyacinths, flowers, trees and plants associate with each other and are conducive to the adornment and charm of one another! Hence the oneness of the bounty of the sun, the oneness of rain and the oneness of the breeze have so overcome all other considerations that the variety of hues, fragrances and tastes have increased the adornment, the attraction and sweetness of the whole. In a similar manner, when the divine collective center and the outpouring of the Sun of Reality and the breaths of the Holy Spirit are brought together, the variety of races and the differences existing between countries <p532> will become the cause of the embellishment, decoration and elegance of the world of humanity.

Therefore, the believers of God throughout all the Republics of America, through the divine power, must become the cause of the promotion of heavenly teachings and the establishment of the oneness of humanity. Every one of the important souls must arise, blowing over all parts of America the breath of life, conferring upon the people a new spirit, baptizing them with the fire of the love of God, the water of life, and the breaths of the Holy Spirit -- so that the second birth may become realized. For it is written in the Gospel: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit."

Therefore, O ye believers of God in the United States and Canada! Select ye important personages, or that they by themselves becoming severed from rest and composure of the world, may arise and travel throughout Alaska, the Republic of Mexico, and south of Mexico, in the Central American Republics, such as Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Belize; and through the great South American Republics, such as Argentine, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, French Guiana, Dutch Guiana, British Guiana, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile; also in the group of the West Indies Islands, such as Cuba, Haiti, Porto Rico, Jamaica and Santo Domingo, and the group of Islands of the Lesser Antilles, the Islands of Bahama and the Islands of Bermuda; likewise to the Islands of the East, West and South of South America, such as Trinidad, Falkland Islands, Galapago Islands, Juan Fernandez and Tobago. Visit ye especially the city of Bahia, on the eastern shore of Brazil. Because in the past years this city was christened with the name, BAHIA, there is no doubt that it has been through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Consequently, the believers of God must display the utmost effort, upraise the divine melody throughout those regions, promulgate the heavenly teachings and waft over all, the spirit of eternal life; so that those Republics may become so illumined with the splendors and the effulgences of the Sun of Reality that

they may become the objects of the praise and commendation of all other countries. Likewise, ye must give great attention to the Republic of Panama, for in that point the Occident and the Orient find each other united through the Panama Canal, and it is also situated between the two great oceans. That place will becomes <p533> very important in the future. The Teachings once established there, they will unite the East and the West, the North and the South.

Hence the intention must be purified, the effort ennobled and exalted, so that ye may establish affinity between the hearts of the world of humanity. This glorious aim will not become realized save through the promotion of divine teachings which are the foundations of the holy religions.

Consider how the religions of God served the world of humanity! How the religion of Torah became conducive to the glory and honor and progress of the Israelitish nation! How the breaths of the Holy Spirit of His Holiness Christ created affinity and unity between divergent communities and quarreling families! How the sacred power of His Holiness Muhammad became the means of unity and harmonizing the contentious tribes and the different clans of Peninsular Arabia -- to such an extent that one thousand tribes were welded into one tribe, strife and discord was done away with, all of them unitedly and with one accord strove in advancing the cause of culture and civilization, and thus were freed from the lowest degree of degradation, soaring toward the height of everlasting glory! Is it possible to find a great Collective Center in the phenomenal world than this? In comparison to this Divine Collective Center, the national collective center, the patriotic collective center, the political collective center and the cultural and intellectual collective center are like child's play!

Now strive ye that the Collective Center of the sacred religions, for the inculcation of which all the Prophets were manifested and which is no other than the spirit of the Divine Teachings, -- be spread in all part of America; -- so that each one of you may shine forth from the horizon of Reality like unto the morning star, divine illumination may overcome the darkness of nature, and the world of humanity may become enlightened. This is the most great work! Should ye become confirmed therein, this world will become another world, the surface of the earth will become the delectable Paradise, and eternal Institutions be founded.

Let whosoever travels to different parts to teach, peruse over mountain, desert, land and sea this supplication!

O God! O God! Thou seest my weakness, lowliness and humility amongst Thy creatures; nevertheless I have trusted on Thee <p534> and have arisen in the promotion of Thy Teachings amongst Thy strong servants, relying on Thy power and might!

O Lord! I am a broken-winged bird and desire to soar in this Thy space to which there is no limit. How is it possible for me to do this save through Thy providence and grace, Thy confirmation and assistance!

O Lord! Have pity on my weakness and strengthen me with Thy power!

O Lord! Have pity on my impotency and assist me with Thy might and majesty!

O Lord! Should the breaths of the Holy Spirit confirm the weakest of creatures, he shall attain to the highest station of greatness and shall possess anything he desireth. Indeed Thou hast assisted Thy servants in the past, and they were the weakest of Thy creatures, the lowliest of Thy servants and the most insignificant of those who lived upon the earth; but through Thy sanction and potency they took precedence over the most glorious of Thy people and the most noble of Thy mankind. Whereas formerly they were as moths, they became royal falcons and whereas before they were as bubbles they became seas. Through Thy bestowal, Thy mercy and Thy most great favor they became stars shining in the horizon of guidance, birds singing in the rose-gardens of immortality, lions roaring in the forest of knowledge and wisdom and whales swimming in the oceans of life.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Most Merciful of the Merciful!

Haifa, Palestine, March 8, 1917.

984. To the believers and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Baha'i Assemblies and meetings in the United States and Canada!

He is God!

O ye real Baha'is of America!
Praise be to His Highness the Desired One that ye have become confirmed in the promotion of divine teachings in that vast Continent, raised the call of the Kingdom of God in that region and announced the Glad tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts and His Highness the Promised One. Thanks be unto the Lord that ye have become assisted and confirmed in this aim. <p535> This is purely through the confirmations of the Lord of Hosts and the breaths of the Holy Spirit. At present your confirmation is not known and understood. Ere long ye shall observe that each one of you like unto a brilliant and shining star will diffuse the light of guidance from the horizon and that ye have become the cause of eternal life to the inhabitants of America.

Consider! The station and the confirmation of the apostles in the time of Christ was not known, and no one looked on them with the feeling of importance -- nay, rather, they persecuted and ridiculed them. Later on it became evident what crowns studded with the brilliant jewels of guidance were placed on the heads of the apostles, Mary Magdalene and May the mother of John.

Likewise your confirmation is not known at the present time. I hope that ere long it may throw a mighty reverberation through the pillars of the earth. Therefore it is the hope of Abdul Baha that just as ye are confirmed and assisted on the continent of America, ye may also be confirmed and assisted in other continents of the globe: -- that is, ye may carry the fame of the Cause of God to the East and to the West and spread the Glad tidings of the

appearance of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts throughout the five continents of the world.

When this divine call travels from the continent of America to Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and the Islands of the Pacific, the American believers shall be established on the throne of everlasting Glory, the fame of their illumination and guidance shall reach to all regions and the renown of their greatness become world-wide. Therefore, a party, speaking the languages, severed, holy, sanctified and filled with the love of God, must turn their faces to and travel through the three great island groups of the Pacific Ocean, -- Polynesia, Micronesia and Mylanesia, and the islands attached to these groups, such as New Guinea, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Philippine Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji Islands, New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, Bismarck Archipelago, Ceram, Celebes, Friendly Islands, Samoa Islands, Society Islands, Caroline Islands, Low Archipelago, Marquesas, Hawaiian Islands, Gilbert Islands, Moluccas, Marshall Islands, Timor and the other Islands. With hearts overflowing with the love of God, with tongues commemorating the mention of God, with eyes turned to the Kingdom of God, they must deliver the Glad tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts to all the people. Know ye <p536> of a certainty that in whatever meeting ye may enter, in the apex of that meeting the Holy Spirit shall be waving and the heavenly confirmations of the Blessed Perfection shall encompass all.

Consider ye, that Miss Agnes Alexander, the daughter of the Kingdom, the beloved maid-servant of the Blessed Perfection, travelled alone to Hawaii and the Island of Honolulu, and now she is gaining spiritual victories in Japan! She became the cause of the guidance of a gathering of people.

Likewise Miss Knobloch travelled alone to Germany. To what a great extent she became confirmed! Therefore, know ye of a certainty that whosoever arises in this day to diffuse the divine fragrances, the cohorts of the Kingdom of God shall confirm him and the bestowals and the favors of the Blessed Perfection shall encircle him.

O how I long that it could be made possible for me to travel through these parts, even if necessary on foot and with the utmost poverty, and while passing through the cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, cry at the top of my voice: "Ya Baha El Abha!" and promote the divine teachings. But now this is not feasible for me, therefore I live in great regret; perchance, God willing, ye may become assisted therein.

At this time, in the Islands of Hawaii, through the efforts of Miss Alexander, a number of souls have reached the shore of the sea of faith! Consider ye, what happiness, what joy is this! I declare by the Lord of Hosts that had this respected daughter founded an empire, that empire would not have been so great! For this sovereignty is eternal sovereignty and this glory is everlasting glory.

Likewise, if some teachers go to other islands and other parts, such as the continent of Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, also to Japan, Asiatic Russia,

Korea, French Indo-China, Siam, Straits Settlements, India, Ceylon and Afghanistan, most great results will be forthcoming. How good would it be were there any possibility of a commission composed of men and women, to travel together through China and Japan, -- so that this bond of love may become strengthened, and through this going and coming they may establish the oneness of the world of humanity, summon the people to the Kingdom of God and spread the teachings.

Similarly, if possible, they should travel to the continent of <p537> Africa, Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, Madeira Islands, Reunion Islands, St. Helena, Zanzibar, Mauritius, etc., and in those countries summon the people to the Kingdom of God and raise the cry of: "Ya Baha El Abha!" They must also upraise the flag of the oneness of the world of humanity in the island of Madagascar.

Books and pamphlets must be either translated or composed in the languages of these countries and Islands, to be circulated in every part and in all directions.

It is said that in South Africa, a diamond mine is discovered. Although this mine is most valuable, yet after all it is stone. Perchance, God willing, the mine of humanity may be discovered and the brilliant pearls of the Kingdom be found.

In brief, this world-consuming war has set such a conflagration to the hearts that no word can describe it. In all the countries of the world the longing for Universal Peace is taking possession of the consciousness of men. There is not a soul who does not yearn for concord and peace. A most wonderful state of receptivity is being realized. This is through the consummate wisdom of God, so that capacity may be created, the standard of the oneness of the world of humanity be upraised, and the fundamentals of Universal Peace and the divine principles be promoted in the East and the West.

Therefore, O ye believers of God! Show ye an effort and after this war spread ye the synopsis of the divine teachings in the British Isles, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, Portugal, Roumania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, Andora, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, San Marino, Balearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, Malta, Iceland, Faroe Islands, Shetland Islands, Hebrides and Orkney Islands.

In all these countries, like unto the morning stars shine ye forth from the horizon of guidance. Up to this time you have displayed great magnanimity, but after this, ye must add a thousand times to your effort and throughout the above countries, capitals, islands, meetings and churches, invite mankind to the Kingdom of Abha! The circle of your exertion must become widened. The more it is broadened and extended, the greater will be your confirmation.

Ye have observed that while Abdul Baha was in the utmost <p538> bodily weakness and feebleness, while he was indisposed, and had not the power to move -- notwithstanding this physical state he travelled through many countries, in

Europe and America, and in churches, meetings and conventions was occupied with the promotion of the divine principles and summoned the people to the manifestation of the Kingdom of Abha. Ye have also observed how the confirmations of the Blessed Perfection encompassed all. What result is forthcoming from material rest, tranquillity, luxury and attachment to this corporeal world! It is evident that the man who pursues these things will in the end become afflicted with regret and loss.

Consequently, one must close his eyes wholly to these thoughts, long for eternal life, the sublimity of the world of humanity, the celestial developments, the Holy Spirit, the promotion of the Word of God, the guidance of the inhabitants of the globe, the promulgation of the Universal Peace and the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity! This is the work! Otherwise like unto other animals and birds one must occupy himself with the requirements of this physical life, the satisfaction of which is the highest aspiration of the animal kingdom, and one must stalk across the earth like unto the quadrupeds.

Consider ye! No matter how much man gains wealth, riches and opulence in this world, he will not become as independent as a cow. For these fattened cows roam freely over the vast tableland. All the prairies and meadows are theirs for grazing, and all the springs and rivers are theirs for drinking! No matter how much they graze, the fields will not be exhausted! It is evident that they have earned these material bounties with the utmost facility.

Still more ideal than this life is the life of the bird. A bird, on the summit of a mountain, on the high, waving branches, has built for itself a nest more beautiful than the palaces of the kings! The air is in the utmost purity, the water cool and clear as crystal, the panorama charming and enchanting. In such glorious surroundings, he expends his numbered days. All the harvests of the plain are his possessions, having earned all this wealth without the least labor. Hence, no matter how much man may advance in this world, he shall not attain to the station of this bird! Thus it becomes evident that in the matters of this world, however much man may strive and work to the point of death, <p539> he will be unable to earn the abundance, the freedom and the independent life of a small bird. This proves and establishes the fact that man is not created for the life of this ephemeral world: -- nay, rather, is he created for the acquirement of infinite perfections, for the attainment to the sublimity of the world of humanity, to be drawn nigh unto the divine threshold, and to sit on the throne of everlasting sovereignty!

Upon you be Baha El-Abha!

Supplication.

Any soul starting on a trip of teaching to various parts, and while sojourning in strange countries, may peruse the following supplication: -- day and night.

O God! O God! Thou seest me enamored and attracted toward Thy Kingdom, the El Abha, enkindled with the fire of Thy love amongst mankind, a herald of Thy

Kingdom in these vast and spacious countries, severed from aught else save Thee, relying on Thee, abandoning rest and comfort, remote from my native home, a wanderer in these regions, a stranger fallen on the ground, humble before Thy exalted threshold, submissive toward Thy most high realm, supplicating Thee in the middle of nights and in the heart of evenings, entreating and invoking Thee in the morn and eve; -- so that Thou mayest assist me in the service of Thy Cause, the promotion of Thy Teachings and the exaltation of Thy Word in the Easts of the earth and the Wests thereof.

O Lord! Strengthen my back and confirm me in Thy servitude with all my powers, and do not leave me alone and by myself in these countries.

O Lord! Associate with me in my loneliness and accompany me in my journeys through these foreign lands.

Verily, Thou art the confirmer of whomsoever Thou willest in that which Thou desirest, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Omnipotent:

Haifa, Palestine, April 11, 1916.

985. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Baha'i Assemblies in the United States of America and Canada!

Upon them be Baha'u'llah El-Abha! <p540>

He is God!

O ye apostles of Baha'u'llah -- May my life be a ransom to you!
The blessed Person of the Promised One is interpreted in the Holy Book as the Lord of Hosts, i. e., the heavenly armies: By heavenly armies those souls are intended who are entirely freed from the human world, transformed into celestial spirits and have become divine angels. Such souls are the rays of the Sun of Reality who will illumine all the continents. Each one is holding in his hand a trumpet, blowing the breath of life over all the regions. They are delivered from human qualities and the defects of the world of nature, are characterized with the characteristics of God, and are attracted with the fragrances of the Merciful. Like unto the apostles of Christ, who were filled with Him, these souls also have become filled with His Holiness Baha'u'llah, i. e., the love of Baha'u'llah has so mastered every organ, part and limb of their bodies, as to leave no effect by the promptings of the human world.

These souls are the armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West. Should one of them turn his face toward some direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support and reinforcement. He will behold all the doors open and all the strong fortifications and impregnable castles razed to the ground. Singly and alone he will attack the armies of the world, defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries, break through the lines of the legions of all the nations and carry his attack to the very center of the power of the earth. This is the meaning of the Hosts of God.

Any soul from among the believers of Baha'u'llah who attains to this station,

will become known as the Apostle of Baha'u'llah. Therefore strive ye with heart and soul -- so that ye may reach this lofty and exalted position, be established on the throne of everlasting glory, and crown your heads with the shining diadem of the Kingdom, whose brilliant jewels may irradiate upon centuries and cycles.

O ye kind friends! Uplift your magnanimity and soar high toward the apex of heaven -- so that your blessed hearts may become illumined more and more, day by day, through the Rays of the Sun of Reality, i. e., His Holiness Baha'u'llah; at every moment <p541> the spirits may obtain a new life, and the darkness of the world of nature may be entirely dispelled -- thus ye may become incarnate light and personified spirit, become entirely unaware of the sordid matters of this world and in touch with the affairs of the divine world.

Consider ye what doors His Holiness Baha'u'llah has opened before you, and what a high and exalted station He has destine for you, and what bounties He has prepared for you! Should we become intoxicated with this cup, the sovereignty of this globe of earth will become lower in our estimation than the children's plays. Should they place in the arena the crown of the government of the world, and invite each one of us to accept it, undoubtedly we shall not condescend, and shall refuse to accept it.

To attain to this supreme station is, however, dependent on the realization of certain conditions:

The first condition is firmness in the Covenant of God.

For the power of the Covenant will protect the Cause of Baha'u'llah from the doubts of the people of error.

It is the fortified fortress of the Cause of God and the firm pillar of the religion of God.

Today no power can conserve the oneness of the Baha'i world save the Covenant of God; otherwise differences like unto a most great tempest will encompass the Baha'i world.

It is evident that the axis of the oneness of the world of humanity is the power of the Covenant and nothing else.

Had the Covenant not come to pass, had it not been revealed from the Supreme Pen and had not the Book of the Covenant, like unto the ray of the Sun of Reality, illuminated the world the forces of the Cause of God would have been utterly scattered and certain souls who were the prisoners of their own passions and lusts would have taken into their hands an axe, cutting the root of this Blessed Tree.

Every person would have pushed forward his own desire and every individual aired his own opinion!

Notwithstanding this great Covenant, a few negligent souls galloped with their chargers into the battlefield, thinking perchance they might be able to weaken

the foundation of the Cause of God: but praise be to God all of them were afflicted with regret and loss, and ere long they shall see themselves in poignant despair.

Therefore, in the beginning one must make his steps firm in the Covenant -- so that the confirmations of Baha'u'llah may encircle from all sides, the cohorts of the Supreme <p542> Concourse may become the supporters and the helpers, and the exhortations and advices of Abdul Baha, like unto the pictures engraved on stone, may remain permanent and ineffaceable in the tablets of the hearts.

The second condition: Fellowship and love amongst the believers. The divine friends must be attracted to and enamored of each other and ever be ready and willing to sacrifice their own lives for each other. Should one soul from amongst the believers meet another, it must be as though a thirst one with parched lips has reached to the fountain of the water of life, or a lover has met his true beloved. For one of the greatest divine wisdoms regarding the appearance of the Holy Manifestations is this: The souls may come to know each other and become intimate with each other; the power of the love of God may make all of them the waves of one sea, the flowers of one rose garden, and the stars of one heaven. This is the wisdom for the appearance of the Holy Manifestations! When the most great bestowal reveals itself in the hearts of the believers, the world of nature will be transformed, the darkness of the contingent being will vanish, and heavenly illumination will be obtained. Then the whole world will become the Paradise of Abha, every one of the believers of God will become a blessed tree, producing wonderful fruits.

O ye friends! Fellowship, fellowship! Love, love! Unity, unity! -- So that the power of the Baha'i Cause may appear and become manifest in the world of existence. Just at this moment I am engaged in your commemoration and this heart is in the utmost glow and excitement! Were ye to realize how this conscience is attracted with the love of the friends, unquestionably ye would obtain such a degree of joy and fragrance that ye would all become enamored with each other!

The third condition: Teachers must continually travel to all parts of the continent, nay, rather, to all parts of the world, but they must travel like Abdul Baha, who journeyed throughout the cities of America. He was sanctified and free from every attachment and in the utmost severance. Just as His Holiness Christ says: "Shake off the very dust from your feet."

Ye have observed that while in America many souls in the utmost of supplication and entreaty desired to offer some gifts, but this servant, in accord with the exhortations and behests of the Blessed Perfection, never accepted a thing, although on certain <p543> occasions we were in most straitened circumstances. But on the other hand, if a soul for the sake of God, voluntarily and out of his pure desire, wishes to offer a contribution (toward the expenses of a teacher) in order to make the contributor happy, the teacher may accept a small sum, but must live with the utmost contentment.

The aim is this: The intention of the teacher must be pure, his heart

independent, his spirit attracted, his thought at peace, his resolution firm, his magnanimity exalted and in the love of God a shining torch. Should he become as such, his sanctified breath will even affect the rock; otherwise there will be no result whatsoever. As long as a soul is not perfected, how can he efface the defects of others. Unless he is detached from aught save God, how can he teach severance to others!

In short, O ye believers of God! Endeavor ye; so that ye may take hold of every means in the promulgation of the religion of God and the diffusion of the fragrances of God.

Amongst other things is the holding of the meetings for teaching -- so that blessed souls and the old ones from amongst the believers may gather together the youths of the love of God in schools of instruction and teach them all the divine proofs and irrefragible arguments, explain and elucidate the history of the Cause, and interpret also the prophecies and proofs which are recorded and are extant in the divine Books and Epistles regarding the Manifestation of the Promised One, so that the young ones may go in perfect knowledge in all these degrees.

Likewise, whenever it is possible a committee must be organized for the translation of the Tablets. Wise souls who have mastered and studied perfectly the Persian, Arabic and foreign languages, or know one of the foreign languages -- must commence translating Tablets and books containing the proofs of this Revelation, and publishing those books, circulate them throughout the five continents of the globe.

Similarly, the Magazine, the Star of the West, must be edited in the utmost regularity, but its contents must be the promulgator of the Cause of God -- so that both in the East and the West, they may become informed of the most important events.

In short, in all the meetings, whether public or private, nothing should be discussed save that which is under consideration, and all the articles be centered around the Cause of God. Promiscuous <p544> talks must not be dragged in and contention is absolutely forbidden.

The teachers travelling in different directions must know the language of the country in which they appear. For example, a person being proficient in the Japanese language may travel to Japan, or a person knowing the Chinese language may hasten to China, and so forth.

In short, after this universal war, the people have obtained extraordinary capacity to hearken to the divine teachings, for the wisdom of this war is this: That it may become proven to all that the fire of war is world-consuming, whereas the rays of peace are world-enlightening. One is death, the other is life; this is extinction, that is immortality; one is the most great calamity, the other is the most great bounty; this is darkness, that is light; this is eternal humiliation and that is everlasting glory; one is the destroyer of the foundation of man, the other is the founder of the prosperity of the human

race.

Consequently, a number of souls may arise and act in accordance with the aforesaid conditions, and hasten to all parts of the world, especially from America to Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia, and travel through Japan and China; in brief, they may travel though all the continents and islands of the globe. Thus is a short space of time, most wonderful results will be produced, the banner of Universal Peace will be waving on the apex of the world and the lights of the oneness of the world of humanity may illumine the universe.

In brief, O ye believers of God! The text of the Divine Book is this: If two souls quarrel and contend about a question of the Divine questions, differing and disputing, both are wrong. The wisdom of this incontrovertible law of God is this: That between two souls from amongst the believers of God, no contention and dispute might arise; that they should speak with each other with infinite amity and love. Should there appear the least trace of controversy, they must remain silent, and both parties must continue their discussions no longer, but ask the reality of the question from the Interpreter. This is the irrefutable command!

Upon you be Baha El-Abha! <p545>

Supplication.

O God! O God! Thou seest that black darkness hath encompassed all the regions, all the countries are burning with the conflagration of dissension and the fire of war and carnage is ignited in the Easts of the earth and the Wests thereof. The blood is being shed, the corpses are out-stretched and the heads are decapitated and thrown on the ground in the battlefield.

Lord! Lord! Have pity on these ignorant ones, look upon them with the eye of forgiveness and pardon. Extinguish this fire -- so that these gloomy clouds covering the horizon may be scattered; the Sun of Reality may shine forth with the rays of conciliation; this darkness be rent asunder and all the countries be illumined with the lights of peace.

Lord! Awaken them from the depths of the sea of animosity, deliver them from these impenetrable darknesses, establish affinity between their hearts and enlighten their eyes with the light of peace and reconciliation.

Lord! Rescue them from the fathomless depths of war and bloodshed! Arouse them out of the gloom of error, render asunder the veil from their eyes, brighten their hearts with the light of guidance, deal with them through Thy favor and mercy and do not treat them according to Thy justice and wrath through which the backs of the mighty ones are shaken!

Lord! Verily the wars have prolonged, the calamities have increased, and every building hath turned into ruin.

Lord! Verily the beasts are agitated and the souls are convulsed. Have mercy on these poor ones and do not leave them to do with themselves that which they desire!

Lord! Send forth throughout Thy countries humble and submissive souls, their faces illumined with the rays of guidance, severed from the world, speaking Thy remembrance and praise and diffusing Thy holy fragrances amongst mankind!

Lord! Strengthen their backs, reinforce their loins and dilate their breasts with the signs of Thy most great love.

Lord! Verily they are weak and Thou art the Powerful and the Mighty, and they are impotent and Thou art the Helper and the Merciful!

Lord! Verily the sea of transgression is waving high and these <p546> hurricanes will not be calmed down save through Thy boundless grace which hath embraced all the regions!

Lord! Verily the souls are in the deep valleys of lust and nothing will awaken them save Thy most wonderful bounties.

Lord! Dispel these darknesses of temptations and illumine the hearts with the lamp of Thy love, through which all the countries will be enlightened. Confirm those believers who, leaving their countries, their families and their children, travel throughout the regions for the sake of the love of Thy beauty, the diffusion of Thy fragrances and the promulgation of Thy teachings. Be thou their companion in their loneliness, their helper in a strange land, the remover of their sorrow, the comforter in their calamity, their deliverer in their hardship, the satisfier of their thirst, the healer of their malady and the allayer of the fire of their longing.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Possessor of Mercy, and Verily Thou art the Compassionate and the Merciful.

Haifa, Palestine, April 19, 20 and 22, 1917.

986. Just as the earth attracts everything to the center of gravity, and every object thrown upward into space will come down, so also material ideas and worldly thoughts attract man to the center of self. Anger, passion, ignorance, prejudice, greed, envy, covetousness, jealousy and suspicion prevent man from ascending to the realms of holiness, imprisoning him in the claws of self and the cage of egotism. The physical man, unassisted by the divine power, trying to escape from one of these invisible enemies, will unconsciously fall into the hands of another. No sooner does he attempt to soar upward than the density of the love of self, like the power of gravity, draws him to the earth. The only power that is capable of delivering man from this captivity is the power of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. The attraction of the power of the Holy Spirit is so effective that it keeps man ever on the path of upward ascension. The malevolent forces of no enemy will touch those sanctified souls who have made this universal power their guide. With tranquil heart and assured spirit they are flying upward day and night, journeying through the illimitable space of the teachings of Baha'u'llah.

987. The Baha'is are ordered to establish the oneness of mankind; <p547> if they cannot unite around one point how will they be able to bring about the

unity of mankind? The purpose of the Blessed Beauty in entering into this Covenant and Testament was to gather all the existing beings around one point so that the thoughtless souls, who in every cycle and generation have been the cause of dissension, may not undermine the Cause. He has, therefore, commanded that whatever emanates from the Center of the Covenant is right, and under His protection and favor, while everything else is error.

988. All previous Books are subordinate to this Book of the Covenant, for it has been revealed subsequent to all the previous ones. He has named it the "Book of the Covenant," therefore consider that if the friends remain firm in the Covenant will there be any misunderstandings among them? No, by God! Except those souls who have an evil intention and are thinking of leadership and of forming a party; those souls, although they have written epistles with their own pen and have execrated the violaters, denouncing them as having destroyed the foundation of the monument erected by His Holiness Baha'u'llah, and have written that He has written this Covenant with His own pen and that whoever deviated the least from the Center of the Covenant is of the people of treachery and well deserves the wrath of God -- these souls are themselves at present among the pioneers of violation. This is because of their personal motives, for they had thought of securing leadership and wealth, but when they considered that in remaining firm in the Covenant their purpose would not be realized, they deviated from it. ... Their lie is now manifest. Notwithstanding this, some souls who are not aware of this fact waver when those people cast the seeds of suspicion. ... The Covenant of God is like unto a vast and fathomless ocean. A billow shall rise and surge therefrom, and all accumulated foam it shall cast ashore.

989. When the foundation of the Mashrekol-Azkar is laid in America, and that divine edifice is completed, a most wonderful and thrilling motion will appear in the world of existence. The Mashrekol-Azkar will become the center around which all these universal Baha'i activities will be clustered. From that point of light, the spirit of teaching, spreading the Cause of God and promoting the teachings of God, will permeate to all parts of the world. <p548>

990. The darkness of this gloomy night shall pass away. Again the Sun of Reality will dawn from the horizon of the hearts. Have patience, wait but do not sit idle; work while you are waiting; smile when you are wearied with monotony; be firm while everything around you is being shaken; be joyous while the ugly face of despair grins at you; speak aloud while the malevolent forces of the nether world try to crush your mind; be valiant and courageous while men all around you are cringing with fear and cowardice. Do not yield to the overwhelming power of tyranny and despotism. Serve the cause of democracy and freedom. Continue your journey to the end. The bright day is coming. The nucleus of the new race is forming. The harbinger of the new ideals of international justice is appearing. The trees of hope will become verdant; the copper of scorn and derision will be transmuted into the gold of honor and praise; the arid desert of ignorance will be transformed into the luxuriant garden of knowledge; the threatening clouds shall be dispelled and the stars of

faith and charity will again twinkle in the clear heaven of consciousness.

991. All the believers, both men and women, in the West and in the East, must consider themselves the spreaders of the contents of these Epistles; so that the rays of the Sun of Truth may ere long illumine all the continents and islands of the globe, and the dark clouds of prejudice and ignorance be dispelled.

992. I desire that every one of the believers may become an ignited candle in the assemblage of the world of humanity, and conducive to others' eternal life. Today the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha are with those who renounce themselves, forget their own opinions, cast aside personalities and are thinking of the welfare of others. Whosoever has lost himself, has found the universe and the inhabitants thereof! Whosoever is occupied with himself is wandering in the desert of heedlessness and regret! The master-key of self-mastery is self-forgetfulness. The road to the palace of life is through the path of renunciation.

993. To the beloved of the Lord, the friends in truth, and the signs of the All-Merciful throughout the East, throughout the West.

May the Glory of the Lord All-glorious rest upon them all! <p549>

HE IS GOD!

O ye faithful friends!
O ye sincere servants of Baha'u'llah!
Now, in the midwatches of the night -- when eyes are closed in slumber and men have laid their heads upon the couch of rest and soundly sleep -- is Abdul Baha, within the precincts of the hallowed shrine, wakeful; and in the ardor of his invocation utters this, his prayer:

O Thou Kind and Loving Providence! Astir is the East, and the West surgeth even as the eternal billows of the sea. The gentle gales of Holiness are diffused and, from the Unseen Kingdom, shine forth resplendent the rays of the Orb of Truth. The anthems of Divine Unity are chanted, and the ensigns of Celestial Might are waving. The angelic Voice is raised and, even as the roaring of leviathan, is the call to selflessness and evanescence. The triumphal cry: O Thou the Glory of Glories! resounds on every side, and the call: O Thou Most High! rings throughout all regions. No stir save the Glory of the One Heart-Ravisher is raised in the world, and no tumult is there save the surging of the love of Him, the Incomparable, the Well-Beloved!

The beloved of the Lord, with their musk-scented breath, burn brightly as a candle in every clime; and the friends of Him, the All-Merciful, are in all regions even as the unfolding flowers. Not for a moment do they rest; they breathe not, but in remembrance of Thee; and crave not, but to serve Thy Cause. In the meadows of Truth they are as the nightingales of sweet melodies, and in the flower garden of Guidance they are even as the brightly colored bloom. With mystic flowers they adorn the garden walks of Reality; as the swaying cypress they bedeck the riverbanks of Divine Will. Above the Horizon of Being they

shine as radiant stars. In the firmament of the world they gleam as resplendent orbs. The manifestations are they of Celestial Grace, and daysprings of the Light of Divine Assistance.

Grant, O thou Loving Lord, that all may stand firm and steadfast and shine with everlasting splendor, that thereby the gentle gales at every breath may blow from the bowers of Thy Loving-kindness, and from the ocean of Thy Grace an emanation may arise, that the kindly showers of Thy Love may bestow freshness, <p550> and the zephyr waft to us its perfume from the rose garden of Divine Unity.

Vouchsafe, O Best-Beloved of the world! a ray from Thy Splendor. O Well-Beloved of mankind, shed upon us the Light of Thy Countenance!

O God Omnipotent, do Thou shield us and be our refuge, and, O Lord of Being, show forth Thy Might and Thy Dominion!

O Thou Loving Lord! The movers of sedition are, in some regions, astir and active, and by night and day are inflicting a grievous wrong.

Even as wolves, despots are lying in wait, and the wronged, innocent fold has neither held nor succor. Bloodhounds are on the trail of the gazelles of the fields of Divine Unity, and the Pheasant in the mounts of Heavenly Guidance by the ravens of envy is pursued.

O Thou Divine Providence! Preserve Thou and protect us! O Thou who art our Shield, save us and defend us! Keep us beneath Thy Shelter, and by Thy Help save us from all ill. Thou art indeed the True Protector, the Unseen Guardian, the Celestial Watcher, and the Heavenly Loving Lord!

O ye beloved of the Lord!
On one side is the Standard of the One True God unfurled and the Voice of the Kingdom raised, the Cause of God is spreading, and manifest in splendor are the wonders from on high; illumined is the East and perfumed is the West, fragrant with ambergris is the North and musk-scented is the South.

On the other side, they that are faithless wax in their hate and rancor, and even stir up grievous sedition and mischief. No day passeth but some man raiseth the standard of revolt and spurs his charger into the arena of discord. At every hour the vile adder beareth its fangs and scattereth its deadly venom.

The beloved of the Lord are wrapped in utter sincerity and devotion, unmindful of this rancor and malice. Smooth and insidious are these snakes, these whisperers of evil, artful in their craft and guile. Be ye on your guard, and ever wakeful! Quick-witted and keen of intellect are the faithful, and firm and steadfast are the assured! Act ye with all circumspection!

"Fear ye the sagacity of the faithful, for he seeth with the Light Divine!" (Qur'an) <p551>

Beware lest any soul should privily cause disruption or stir up strife. In the Cause of the Impregnable Stronghold be ye brave warriors; and, for the Goodly

Mansion, a valiant host. Exercise the utmost care, and day and night be on your guard, that thereby the tyrant may not inflict harm.

Study the Tablet of "The Holy Mariner"[1] that ye may know the Truth, and consider that the Blessed Beauty hath fully foretold future events. Let them who perceive, take warning!
[1 Chapter V.]

Like dust at the Sacred Threshold, in utter humility and lowliness, Abdul Baha is engaged in the promulgation of his Signs through the daytime and the night season; whensoever he findeth time he prayeth ardently, and inspireth, saying:

O Thou Divine Providence! Pitiful are we, grant us Thy Succor; homeless and wanderers, give us Thy Shelter; scattered, do Thou unite us; astray, join us to the Fold; bereft, do Thou bestow upon us a portion and a share; athirst, lead us to the wellspring of Life; frail, strengthen us that we may arise to exalt Thy Cause and present ourselves a living sacrifice in the pathway of Guidance.

The faithless, however, by day and night, openly and privily exert their utmost to shake the foundations of the Cause, to root out the Blessed Tree, to deprive this servant from service, to kindle secretly sedition and strife, and to annihilate Abdul Baha! Outwardly they appear as sheep, yet inwardly are naught but ravening wolves. Sweet in words, yet at heart a deadly poison.

O ye beloved ones! Guard the Cause of God! Let no sweetness of tongue beguile you -- nay, rather consider the motive of every soul, and ponder the thought he cherisheth. Be ye straightway mindful and on your guard.

Avoid, yet be not aggressive!
Turn away from censure and from slander!
Leave him in the Hand of God!
Upon you rest the Glory of Glories!

994. Consider! The Divine Gardener cuts off the dry or weak branch from the good tree and grafts to it a branch from another tree. He both separates and unites. This is that which His <p552> Holiness Christ says: that from all the world they come and enter the Kingdom, and the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out.

FROM THE WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ABDUL BAHA

O ye beloved of the Lord! In this sacred Dispensation, conflict and contention are in nowise permitted. Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace. It is incumbent upon ever one to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and sincere kindliness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, whether they be friends or strangers. So intense must be the spirit of love and loving-kindness that the stranger may find himself regarded as a friend, and the enemy as a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them. For universality is of God and all limitations are earthly.

Thus man must strive that his reality may manifest virtues and perfections, the light whereof may shine upon all. The light of the sun shineth upon the whole

world and the merciful showers of the Divine Providence fall upon all peoples. The vivifying breeze inspireth every living creature, and all beings endowed with life obtain their share and portion at His heavenly board. In like manner, the affections and loving-kindness of the servants of the One True God must be bountifully and universally extended to all mankind. Regarding this, restrictions and limitations are is no wise permitted.

Wherefore, O my loving friend! Consort with all the peoples, kindred and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindliness, goodwill and friendliness; that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstacy of the grace of Baha; that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancor may vanish from the world, and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of earth may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you, show fidelity unto them; should they be unjust towards you, show justice towards them; should they hold aloof from you, attract them to yourselves; should they disclose enmity, be friendly to them; should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls; should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their hurts. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful! <p553>

O ye beloved of the Lord! Strive with all your heart to shield the Cause of God from the onslaught of the insincere, for such souls as these cause the straight to become crooked and all benevolent efforts to produce contrary results.

O God! my God! Thou seest this wronged servant of thine held fast in the claws of ferocious lions, of ravening wolves, bloodthirsty beasts. Graciously assist me, through my love for Thee that I may drink deep of the chalice that brimmeth over with faithfulness to Thee and is filled with Thy bountiful Grace; so that, fallen upon the dust, I may sink prostrate and senseless whilst my vesture is dyed crimson with my blood. This is my wish, my heart's desire, my hope, my pride, my glory. Grant, O Lord, my God and my Refuge, that in my last hour, my end may even as musk shed its fragrance of glory! I call Thee to witness that no day passeth but that I quaff my fill from this cup, so grievous are the misdeeds wrought by them that have broken the Covenant, kindled discord, showed their malice, stirred sedition in the land and dishonored Thee amidst Thy servants. Lord, shield Thou from these Covenant-breakers the mighty stronghold of Thy Faith, and protect Thy secret Sanctuary from the onslaught of the ungodly.

Thou art in truth the Mighty, the Powerful, the Gracious, the Supreme!

O ye that stand fast in the Covenant!

When the hour cometh that this wronged and broken-winged bird shall have taken its flight unto the Celestial Concourse; when it shall have hastened to the realm of the Unseen, and its mortal frame shall have been either lost or hidden beneath the dust; it is incumbent upon the Branches that are steadfast in the Covenant of God and have branched from the Tree of Holiness; the Hands of the Cause of God (the Glory of the Lord rest upon them); and all the friends and loved ones, one and all, to bestir themselves and arise with heart and soul and

in one accord to diffuse the sweet savors of God, to teach His Cause and to promote His Faith.

It behooveth them not to rest for a moment, nor to seek repose.

They must disperse themselves in every land, pass by every clime, and travel throughout all regions.

Bestirred, without rest, and steadfast to the end, they must raise in every land the triumphal cry "Ya Baha'ul-Abha!" (O Thou the Glory of Glories!) must achieve renown in the world wherever they go, must burn brightly even as a torch in every meeting, and must kindle the flame of Divine <p554> Love in every assembly; that the Light of Truth may rise resplendent in the midmost heart of the world, that throughout the East and throughout the West a vast concourse may gather under the shadow of the Word of God; that the sweet savors of holiness may be diffused; that faces may radiantly shine; that hearts may be filled with the Divine Spirit, and souls may attain the life of heaven.

The disciples of Christ forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion, and with absolute detachment scattered far and wide, calling the peoples of the world to the Divine Guidance, until at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth, and even to their last hour, proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of the Beloved One of God. Finally in various lands they suffered glorious martyrdom. Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps.

This is the foundation of the faith of the people of Baha, may my life be offered up for them! His Holiness the Exalted, the Bab, is the Manifestation of the Unity and Oneness of God and the Forerunner of the Ancient Beauty: the Abha Beauty (may my life be a sacrifice for His steadfast friends!) is the Supreme Manifestation of God and the Dayspring of His Most Divine Essence. All others are servants unto Him and do His bidding. Unto the Most Holy Book every one must turn, and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice. That which this body, whether unanimously or by a majority, doth carry, that is verily the truth and the purpose of God Himself. Whoso deviates therefrom is verily of those that love discord, hath shown forth malice and turned away from the Lord of the Covenant.

O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon you to be submissive to all monarchs that are just, and show your fidelity to every righteous king. Serve ye the sovereigns of the world with utmost truthfulness and loyalty. Show obedience unto them and be their well wishers. Without their leave and permission do not meddle with political affairs; for disloyalty to the just sovereign is disloyalty to God Himself. This is my counsel and the commandment of God unto you. Well is it with them that act accordingly.

O God, my God! I call Thee, Thy Prophets and Thy Messengers, <p555> Thy Saints and Thy Holy Ones, to witness that I have declared conclusively Thy proofs unto Thy loved ones, and set forth clearly all things unto them, that they may watch

over Thy Faith, guard Thy straight path and protect Thy resplendent Law. Thou art, verily, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise!

— Bahai Scriptures