

up the evidences and sealed the Messages and Moslems obtained sight from Him. God manifested His Religion through Him, may the salutation of God be upon Him and His Pure Family.

People! turn ye repentantly unto My faction (shi'ah) and adhere to a pledge of fealty to Me. Remain steadfast and persevering in the Faith with the best certainty. Adhere steadfastly to the Successor of your Prophet in Whom resides your salvation and in Whose love on the Day of Resurrection is your safe haven! In Me resides the Hope and I am the One to be hoped for. I am the One that standeth upon the Two Gulfs! (tutunj) I am the One that looketh unto the Twin Rising-Places [or "Oriens"] and the Twin Setting Places [or "Occidents"]. I truly did see with My own eyes [the Bounty of] God and the Paradise! And this was as the seventh Heaven was moving in its orbit and there in the great surging seas were the stars and their own orbits. I saw also the earth rolled up as a short garment would be rolled up and it was within a shell on the right sided Gulf which faces the East and the Twin Gulfs.

Further out there are the Twin Bays (khalij) of water as if they are to the left of the Twin Gulfs and I saw that the Circle that embraces these and the Paradise and all that there is therein were naught but a ring on the finger of Thy Lord. And in truth I saw the Sun when it was setting and it was like unto a bird that seeketh its nest. And if it were not for the friction of the head of Paradise and the mixing up of the Twin Gulfs and the Music of the spheres all that are in heavens and the earth would hear the ebullition of heat caused by the Sun's descent into the Black water - and that is the Warm Fountain. I know of the wonders of God's Work what no one knows but God and I know what has been and what will be and what has been in the First Sprinkling with those who preceded the First Adam. All was disclosed (kushifa) for Me[8] and I knew and all was taught Me and I have learnt.

So hearken and do not raise a clamour. Were it not for My fear that you might say "Ali has become possessed or apostatised from His Faith" I shall disclose unto you what and whereat they are and what you shall encounter on the day of Resurrection. All that knowledge was entrusted unto Me and thus I knew and the knowledge of all this was hidden from all the Prophets except the Lord of this Dispensation (Shari'ah)[9] of yours (Peace be upon Him and His Family). He taught Me His knowledge and I taught Him My knowledge.

Verily We are the Warners from immemorial times and We shall be unto everlasting Warners from God. Through Us will perish He that is going to perish and by Us have obtained salvation all that have obtained salvation and you shall not encompass that ability that is Ours. By the righteousness of Him Whose power causeth the seed to germinate and Who breatheth the spirit of life into all things, by Him Who alone hath power and grandeur! To Me have the winds and the air and the birds of air been conquered; the world and all that is therein was presented to me but I turned away from it. I turned upside down the world and it was tilted away from Me. How can subsequent events overcome Me?

I know all that is above the supreme Paradise and that which is below the seventh Ocean, that which is in the highest heavens and that which is between them and that which is below them. All this knowledge is derived from an all-embracing knowledge and not from chronicled knowledge. I swear by the Lord of the Great throne! If I wished I could inform you of your forefathers and all your predecessors as to where they were, and from whom they were and where they are now and how they came to be where they are! How many of you are eating the property of his brother and is drinking of the fountainhead of his father and yet he longeth for him and wishes that they were with him! O would that you knew! O would that ye knew! When that which is hidden be manifest and that which is in the breasts were attained and conscience were to disclose its hidden things, I swear by God you will have returned to clay, and you will have had your "returns," and how many signs there are between these "returns" how many those that have died or that have been slain. (I know those that are in the craw of birds and those that are in the belly of beasts and all mankind are between those that have already gone and those that are being urged on). And if it were to be revealed to you all that is with Me from time immemorial unto the end that has no end you shall truly see many and wondrous events, many strange handiworks and all that I comprehend.

I am the Master (sahib) of the First Creation before the First Noah, and if you were to know what was between Adam and Noah of wondrous events that I wrought and of nations that I caused to perish. And the true Word of Thy Lord was fulfilled in them and evil is that which they worked" I am the Master of the First Flood! I am the Master of the Second Flood! I am the Master of the Deluge of Iram! I am the Master of the Secret Mysteries! I am the Lord of 'Ad and its gardens! I am the Lord of Thamud and its wondrous signs! I am the One that destroyed it, I am the One that caused the Earthquakes! I am the One that caused their Return and their Perdition! I am the Builder of those civilisations and their Destroyer! I cause their Expiry and I cause them to be quickened! I am the First and the Last! I am the External and Manifest and I am the Internal and Hidden! I am with the Cycle (kawr) before the Cycle began! I am the Companion of the Dispensation (dawr) before the Dispensation started! I was with the Pen before the Pen and I am with the Tablet prior to the Tablet being revealed! I am the Lord of the First Pre-existence! I am the Lord of Jabulqa and of Jabulsa! I am the Master of Highest Stage (rafraf) and of Bahram! I am the One Who organised existence when there was no heaven as you have them now nor earth as you know it now!

The Son of Suwairama said: "Are you, are you indeed that One?!"

'Ali replied: "I am, I am that One! There is no other God But God Who is My Lord and the Lord of all created things. Unto Him belongs the Creation and the World of Revelation (amr). He it is Who has ordained all matters in His Wisdom and heavens and earth are upraised in His Power. Methinks the weak ones amongst you are saying; "Is this not the son of Abu-Talib Whom the forces of Syria had overshadowed yesterday and He would not go out to fight them and sent

them Muhammad and Ibrahim?" But truly and assuredly I shall fight Syria many times and I shall slay them many times. I shall fight their armies at Siffin and I shall bring a new life unto the believer until that thirst for justice in my chest be allayed. I shall fight for 'Ammar Yassir and for Uways of Qaran many times. Let none say when? How? and in what manner? and with whose assistance? How shall it be when you shall see the Master of Syria saweth men with saws and cutteth them with trowels? But I shall make him taste a painful retribution.

But rejoice now for the cause of all creation reverts unto Me on the morrow. Let not this claim appear extravagant inasmuch as We have been vouchsafed the knowledge of all fates and of all tribulations. and the knowledge of interpretation and of the Revelation and the decisive Discourse (Faslu'l-Khitab) and knowledge of all future calamities and catastrophes. There is nothing whose knowledge escapes Us. This is truth and I shall see this One [pointing to Husayn, Peace be upon Him] when His Light shall flow forth of His eyes and I shall be present with Him a lengthy time that shall witness earthquakes and eclipses. They that are believers will revolt in His company from every corner. I swear by God! If I wished I would tell you of their names every one of them and their descent from both parents, until the Day of whose time is promised.

Then 'Ali said: "O Jabir! You are with the Truth now and you shall be with the True One hereafter and in that true Cause you shall die.

O Jabir! When the Bell shall cry loud, when the stupor of the Nightmare shall enshroud men, when the Cow shall speak, on that day there shall happen wondrous, exceedingly wondrous Events, when the Fire shall be ignited in My sight, when the Banner of the House of 'Uthman shall appear in the Black Valley, when Basra shall be thrown into confusion and they shall seek to conquer each other and each party shall seek the other, when the armies of Khurasan shall begin to move, and when Shu'ayb the son of Salih of Tamim shall be followed in Taliqan, and Sa'id of Shusha shall be obeyed in Khuzistan, and the banner shall be raised up by the Amalekites of the Kurds, and the Arabs shall seek victory over Armenia and the Slavs, and Heraclitus shall submit to the patriarchs of Sinan in Constantinople, anticipate ye then the Revelation of the Speaker of Mount Sinai.[10] This will appear with manifest signs visible unto all, clearly perspicuous to them.

O but how many a wondrous sign I seek not to mention and how many indications I have left undivulged! for I cannot find one who can bear them. I am the One Who ordered Satan to bow down Adam![11] I am the One Who raised Idris to a high station. I am the Agent whereby Jesus was enabled to speak in His cradle while yet a Babe! I am the One who flattens the valleys and Who sets the Earth to order and I am the One Who has divided it into five parts, namely, land, sea, mountains, built, and unbuilt. I am the One Who separated the Red Sea from Tarjim, and separated Aqim from Him. I separated all from all! I am Tirathia, Janbutha, Barhilion, Aliuthoutha.[12] I bring out of the Ocean that which is stored in it that

it shall be cleared away by the horses and men. take from it what you desire and leave what you wish to leave. He then gave 'Ammar-ibn-Yassir 12000 men who loved God and His Apostle and each had 12000 battalions of angels to support them saying: Rejoice for you are the best of brethren to each other for after this there shall be a star (tarfatan) through which ye shall know some of the expounded matter. The Mysteries of Evidence shall become clear to you when Bahram and Keyvan (stars) shall rise together and become conjoined with exactness. When shakings and earthquakes shall succeed each other swiftly and banners shall be lifted up from the shores of Oxus to the Desert of Babylon know ye then that I am the One Who causeth the winds the blow, I am the One Who lifts your oppressions!

I am the Master of the Mount Sinai! I am that Manifest Light! I am that Perspicuous and dazzling Evidence (that light of which an infinitesimal part was disclosed unto Moses) and all that was vouchsafed unto Me by God the Lord Of Glory.

I am the Master of the Gardens of eternal delight! I am the One that causeth the Rivers to flow from the Water that emanates from the divine current, and other Rivers which are of milk, and Rivers of pure Honey, and Rivers that flow with wine, a delight unto those who partake. I am the One that hath overshadowed hell when it was made to blaze and have overlooked its several compartments: firstly the Hell of Sa'ir when it blazeth forth then the Hell of Saqar and its fire and lastly the nethermost Hell which has been preserved for the transgressor all of these have been preserved in the Valley of Desolation. Again I swear by the Lord Who bringeth Dawn, He Who is the Lord of all creation! Within it is kept eternally both Jibt and Taghut and their servants and whomsoever disbelieveth in the Lord of this world and the Kingdom on high.

I am the Maker and Sustainer (sani') of all the Regions of this world by the Command of the One Who is the All-Knowing the All-Wise. I am the Word through Which all things are consummated and through which the Universes are brought into being. I am the One Who has made the regions of the earth to be four and the islands to be seven: the Region of the South to be the Depository of all Bounty, the Region of the North to be Powers and Sovereignty, the Region of Sheba to be the Seat of earthquakes, and the Desert Region to be the Seat of many a catastrophe. So Woe unto the cities from those transgressors who will come to destroy and pervert justice. Woe shall be when calamities come to transpire from that Government of eunuchs, imbeciles, and effeminate rulers. On that Day all Regions will bring forth false claimants claiming falsehoods. Oh! On that Day expect eagerly your Supreme salvation and you shall see men accepting it by troops. On that Day God will make of the gravel of Najaf treasures of gold and all of that will be sprinkled where the believer shall step his foot on it and with that same dust of gold the unbeliever and the hypocrite shall be exchanged and bartered. Then shall the value of red ruby be as nothing and similarly other jewels and pearls. This shall be a most evident sign and when it shall transpire the Light of God shall shine and His Glory (BAHÁ') shall be effulgent and all that you wish for shall be

made manifest and all that is your highest desire shall become apparent.

O You who in your desires resemble cattle and the beasts of the field! How shall it be with you when the banners of the sons of Kenan shall come upon you and also that of 'Uthman the son of 'Anbatha in the battle fields of Syria? Know truly that shall never be discerned by one related to Umayya or to 'Ady."

Then He wept loudly (the salutations of God be upon Him!) and later exclaimed; "O alas for the nations! Soon shall some hypocrites say that 'Ali claimed Lordship (rububiyat) for Himself but you should bear witness thus: "'Ali truly is a created Being, a Servant, nourished of divine sustenance and he that denies this let him be accursed of God."

Imam `Ali then descended and said; "I take refuge unto him Who hath the Kingdoms of earth and Heaven! I seek succour from Him Who possesses all Power and Grandeur, all Sovereignty and Authority from all that I fear and pray to avoid!" O people! None shall utter these words but when tribulations and calamities befall him the same will God dissipate through this prayer."

Jabir said: "Only those Words?" and the Imam 'Ali added thereunto another thirteen words and left.

Addendum

Two important quotations from Bursi (the compiler of the above Hadith) which Bahá'u'lláh quotes in the Kitab-i-Iqan and again emphasise the point of the reliability of Bursi as a narrator are the following:

Furthermore, among the "veils of glory" are such terms as the "Seal of the Prophets" and the like, the removal of which is a supreme achievement in the sight of these base-born and erring souls. All, by reason of these mysterious sayings, these grievous "veils of glory," have been hindered from beholding the light of truth. Have they not heard the melody of that bird of Heaven,(1) uttering this mystery: "A thousand Fatimih I have espoused, all of whom were the daughters of Muhammad, Son of Abdu'llah, the 'Seal of the Prophets?'" Behold, how many are the mysteries that lie as yet unravelled within the tabernacle of the knowledge of God, and how numerous the gems of His wisdom that are still concealed in His inviolable treasuries! Shouldest thou ponder this in thine heart, thou wouldst realize that His handiwork knoweth neither beginning nor end. The domain of His decree is too vast for the tongue of mortals to describe, or for the bird of the human mind to traverse; and the dispensations of His providence are too mysterious for the mind of man to comprehend. His creation no end hath overtaken, and it hath ever existed from the "Beginning that hath no beginning"; and the Manifestations of His Beauty no beginning hath beheld, and they will continue to the "End that knoweth no end." Ponder this utterance in thine heart, and reflect how it is applicable unto all these holy Souls.

and

Likewise, strive thou to comprehend the meaning of the melody

of that eternal beauty, Husayn, son of Ali, who, addressing Salman, spoke words such as these: "I was with a thousand Adams, the interval between each and the next Adam was fifty thousand years, and to each one of these I declared the Successorship conferred upon my father." He then recounteth certain details, until he saith: "I have fought one thousand battles in the path of God, the least and most insignificant of which was like the battle of Khaybar, in which battle my father fought and contended against the infidels." Endeavour now to apprehend from these two traditions the mysteries of "end," "return," and "creation without beginning or end." [13]

Both the above quotations indicating utterances of "high Imamology" are from the self-same Bursi in his book *Alfayn* as quoted by the late Ishraq Khavari.

Notes:

* translation of the Sermon of the Gulf ("Al-Khutbah al-Tutunjiyyah") of Imam 'Ali as printed in Hafiz Rajab al-Bursi's *Mashariq Anwar al-Yaqín fi Asrár Amir Mu'minín* (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus 1978 pp 160-170)

[Notes 1-7 are in the introduction.]

[8] Or, in the S.K. version, "All was rendered possible (kuyyifa) for Me."

[9] Muhammad.

[10] Note this key utterance: "...anticipate ye then the Revelation of the Speaker of Mount Sinai."

[11] Or, "I was present when Satan was ordered to bow down to Adam."

[12] This sounds very close to Alitheia, "Truth," in Greek. Other terms seem also to be Greek sounding.

[13] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pages 166-168.

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