

toward anyone but Him. Hasten then unto Him, that mayhap ye will be given to eat of the fruits of the Spirit. This is a station wherein the righteous, and they that circle round the Throne on High, have halted, as ye also bear witness.

As for thee, O Muhammad, perform what the tongue of thy Lord doth counsel thee at this time, and accomplish all that which thou art bidden by God, the Protector, the Almighty, the Beloved. First of all, tear the veils of vain imagination from about thy heart by My mighty, powerful and unquestioned Sovereignty. Then enter the fortress of the All-Merciful in My Name, the Mighty, the Glorified, and pay no heed to all that hath been and shall be. If thou shouldst behold Satan^[2] seated at its gate, forbidding thee to enter therein, close thine eyes to him and take refuge in My Beauty, the Blessed, the Help in Peril, the Adored. Beware lest ye sit with those in whom thou perceivest the evidences of malice, as heat is evident in summer or cold in poison. Flee from them and their ilk, and look not upon them nor that which they possess. Turn thy gaze rather to My Cause, and that which surpasseth in excellence all else, did ye but perceive it.

If thou dost wish to travel in various lands, then do thou spread the dawning lights of thy Lord throughout those realms. Think thou upon the handiwork of thy Lord which thou seest, that thou mayest be of those who consider. Adorn thyself with My character, in such wise that should anyone treat thee unjustly thou wouldst take no heed of him, nor oppose him. Leave him to the judgment of thy Lord, the Powerful, Omnipotent and Self-Subsisting. Be at all times a wronged one, for this is one of My attributes, though none but the sincere are aware of it. Verily, the sighs of patience uttered by one wronged are more precious to God than any other deed, did ye but know. Therefore, be patient in the face of whatever befalleth thee, and set thy trust in thy Lord God in all thine affairs. He, verily, doth suffice thee against all the harm which any created thing can wreak toward thee, and preserveth thee in the shelter of His Cause and the mighty fortress of His guardianship. There is no God but Him. His are the worlds of creation and command, and all seek His aid.

Should anyone slander thee, thou must not retaliate against him in kind lest thou become as he is. Turn aside from him, and set thy face toward the holy tabernacle in this exalted and sacred canopy. Be among men as a sweet-scented knoll, that the fragrance of sanctity may be wafted among them. In such wise, thou mightest succeed in attracting them to the court of the holy and Beloved One. Shouldst thou find a helper among the friends of God, seek his company at eventide and dawn, throughout the months and years. In all matters, emulate God, thy Succorer. Walk among men with His dignity and peace, and teach them the Cause of their Lord to the extent that they are able to hear it.

O hoopoe of Sheba, go thou with My book to the cities of God. Should the other birds ask thee concerning the dove of holiness, say: "When I left her, she was sore-pressed in the talons of denial and the beaks of wickedness. She had no helper save God, Who created her, formed her and made her the lamp of His beauty between the heavens of the earth, if ye be possessed of certainty."

Shouldst thou find one of My lovers, if he asks about Me say: "By God, I went up out of the Prison City (Adrianople) at a time when Husayn was lying upon the ground, while Disgrace knelt upon His breast and desired to behead Him. The spears were standing before His head, and He expected it to be raised aloft upon them. Such was the situation in inmost secrecy, if ye be of them that perceive. I then saw Him move His lips, and gaze toward the heavens with a look such as would rend every heart, and beyond them the heart of God, the Protector, the Mighty, the Self-Subsisting. I moved My head close to His lips, and heard that He was beneath the sword, saying 'O people! By God, I have not spoken to you out of selfish desire! Nay, rather I have given voice to that which the Speaker on Sinai uttered in My most pure and sanctified breast. The verses of God leave no doubt as to what hath been foreordained in the realm of the divine Decree, or as to that which is in this world and the next. O ye who have joined partners with God, inhale the scent of these verses that have descended from the realm of the divine Essence, from the King of names and attributes. Should ye perceive therein the fragrance of the coat of the beloved Joseph, then show mercy toward Him and put Him not to death with the blades of malice, if ye see with the eyes of justice and are equitable in yourselves.

"O people! I bolted up the gates of paradise for twenty years, lest anything issue from My lips which might cause the fire of hatred to blaze forth in your breasts. To this beareth witness the Tongue of Grandeur, then the Pen of Command upon the holy and guarded Tablets. O people, I verily am 'Ali (the Bab), and this is but another Return after the first. I have demonstrated to ye at this time the greatest of the things I manifested aforesaid. I have come from the fountainhead of grandeur and glory, and the treasure hold of exaltation and majesty, with verses of which not a single letter hath heretofore been revealed in this world. This Tablet is My proof among ye, to ye and against ye, if ye be of them that comprehend.

"O people, God is My witness that I remained silent in My house, and gave voice to no melody. However, the Spirit set my limbs quaking, and caused Me to speak forth with the Truth. Its features then appeared in My face, if ye descry My beauty. I barred the doors of utterance for lo, these many years, but the tongue of God hath loosened My tongue, did ye but know. Will ye slay Him by whose Command the heavens were raised aloft, the seas surged forth, the

trees gave fruit, the mysteries were revealed and the beauty of the Chosen One shone forth from behind the veil? Fear God, O people of the Bayan, and be not of those who repudiate the verses of God. I shall never deny these verses, even should ye slay Me and all the swords and spears rain down upon Me at every moment. I shall speak forth in the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and shall never fear anyone. This is My religion, if ye be of them that perceive. This is the religion of all the Messengers, and is that which was revealed to 'Ali (the Bab) in every Tablet. I know not, however, to which religion ye adhere!'

"When the melodies of that Holy One reached this point, He suddenly fell silent by reason of the weakness which had overtaken Him. He remained in this state for some time, and when He regained consciousness He opened His eyes and turned in the sacred direction with a gaze of deep affection, saying,[3]

'Praise be to Thee, O Lord My God, for the wondrous revelations of Thy inscrutable decree and the manifold woes and trials Thou hast destined for Myself. At one time Thou didst deliver Me into the hands of Nimrod; at another Thou hast allowed Pharaoh's rod to persecute Me. Thou, alone, canst estimate, through Thine all-encompassing knowledge and the operation of Thy Will, the incalculable afflictions I have suffered at their hands. Again Thou didst cast Me into the prison-cell of the ungodly, for no reason except that I was moved to whisper into the ears of the well-favored denizens of Thy Kingdom an intimation of the vision with which Thou hadst, through Thy knowledge, inspired Me, and revealed to Me its meaning through the potency of Thy might. And again Thou didst decree that I be beheaded by the sword of the infidel. Again I was crucified for having unveiled to men's eyes the hidden gems of Thy glorious unity, for having revealed to them the wondrous signs of Thy sovereign and everlasting power. How bitter the humiliations heaped upon Me, in a subsequent age, on the plain of Karbila! How lonely did I feel amidst Thy people! To what a state of helplessness was I reduced in that land! Unsatisfied with such indignities, My persecutors decapitated Me, and, carrying aloft My head from land to land paraded it before the gaze of the unbelieving multitude, and deposited it on the seats of the perverse and faithless. In a later age, I was suspended, and My breast was made a target to the darts of the malicious cruelty of My foes. My limbs were riddled with bullets, and My body was torn asunder. Finally, behold how, in this Day, My treacherous enemies have leagued themselves against Me, and are continually plotting to instill the venom of hate and malice into the souls of Thy servants. with all their might they are scheming to accomplish their purpose.[4]

"It is Thou, My God and My adored One, Who hast delivered Me into the hands of the infidels. Behold Me, then, in the dust,

beneath the swords of thine enemies.[5]

Yet, grievous as is My plight, O God, My well-Beloved, I render thanks unto Thee, and My Spirit is grateful for whatsoever hath befallen Me in the path of Thy good-pleasure. I am well pleased with that which Thou didst ordain for Me, and welcome, however calamitous, the pains and sorrows I am made to suffer.[6]

"I plead with Thee, O My God, by Thy hidden names and Thy Beauty, Who, both manifest and concealed, lieth in the dust of degradation, to inculcate Thy love in the hearts of Thy servants, and to seat them upon the carpet of Thy mercy. Give them shade, O My God, beneath the tree of Thy sanctity, and deny them not the breezes of Thy holiness, which waft from the paradise of Thy beauty and from the direction of Thy favors. Thou art, verily, able to accomplish Thy will, and Thou art the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting."

O Muhammad, estimate well the number of gem-like mysteries We have bestowed upon thee, and think upon the wondrous knowledge We have taught thee, knowledge which lay concealed behind veils of light. Thus mayest thou become aware of that which hath befallen Us, and be of those well-acquainted with the mysteries of this Cause. Then say with the tongue of thy spirit in thine inmost soul, "Is there any helper who will come to the aid of the Primal Beauty (the Bab) in His new guise, or any supporter who will arise to serve the Ultimate Point (Quddus) in His Radiance, the Glorious, the Most Glorious?" Mayhap thereby God will be persuaded to dispatch someone to succor this Youth in these days, wherein the denizens of heaven and earth are drunk with heedlessness, save those who have gazed from nigh upon this Beauty.

But O Muhammad, thou wilt encounter the opposition and haughtiness of the perverse, and wilt find them engaged in acts of hatred against this Youth on all sides, except those for whom it hath been decreed otherwise by thy Lord God, the Mighty, the Self-Subsisting. Give ear to that which thou art commanded by the Pen of the Most High in the kingdom of decree, in these heavens that have been sanctified by God from the incarnations of rancor, from the touch of the infidels and from the recognition of the malicious. Rend asunder the veils, then rise up from the dawning-point of this Cause with manifest sovereignty. Call out to the people, telling them of this resplendent, mighty and illumined Beauty. Go to the Name of Ha', and deliver to him that which hath been bestowed upon thee by the Spirit of God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Generous. Perhaps he will feel admonished within himself, will detach himself from all save his Lord and enter the ranks of them that are rightly guided.

Say: "O My servant, We have revealed for thee Tablets and Writings which are known only to God, and therein is that which

would enable thee to dispense with all creation, and all that is in the heavens and on the earth. However, we did not send them to thee, because we failed to perceive from thee the fragrance of the exalted ones in this Arab Youth. By God, all that thou dost possess will pass away, and nothing will remain save what is with thy Lord, behind the pavilions of the Powerful, the Inaccessible. Leave the world and its people, and detach thyself from all that was created therein. Then turn thy face toward the Countenance of God, the Generous, the Uncreated."

Say: "This is 'Ali (the Bab) in very truth, Who hath appeared once more in this most pure, manifest and glorious Beauty. He doth speak forth with the truth in the realm of eternity, and the exalted kingdom, if ye have ears to hear. O people of the Bayan, the spirit of true understanding will never speak in your hearts until after My love hath entered them. This is a fundamental principle of religion, if ye be of those with certitude."

O people of the Qur'an, the Eternal Truth is come unto ye, and that whereby the religions shall be differentiated and truth distinguished from falsehood. Fear God, and be not of those who oppose Him.

O people of the Churches, cease from ringing the bells, for the Most Great Bell hath appeared. It is, verily, this Trump that hath been sent down in the form of these holy verses between the heavens and the earth. He crieth out in truth in this resplendent, manifest and brilliant Name. Say: He it is by Whose command the verses were revealed, and by Whose permission all the scriptures were brought into being. To this attesteth the fragrance that issueth from the Camphor Fountain through this most Ancient and pre-existent Pen. He speaketh forth at all times, uttering verses beyond the comprehension of the minds of the wise, the knowledge of the mystic knowers, and the hearts of them that have attained. This is what ye were promised in the Books of God, did ye but know, and this is that whereby the truth was realized from all eternity and shall be realized to all eternity.

O Muhammad, avert thy gaze from all who are in heaven and on earth, so that thou canst enter into the mighty fortress of thy Lord, the Bestower, the Almighty. Set the trees of existence ablaze with this Fire, that all may speak forth as It did, in the form of light, upon the Sinai of Theophany. Thus doth the Ancient Beauty shower His bounty upon thee, and command thee in this Cause, that thou mayest detach thyself from all things and hold fast to the cord of the Omnipotent, the Unattainable.

Spirit, praises and glory be upon thee, and upon whosoever heareth thy tidings of this Great Announcement.

Notes

Muhammad "Nabil-i A'zam" Zarandi.

The text gives "sultan," but I read it "shaytan." I cannot find a way to make "sultan" meaningful in this passage, since presumably the "king" of the fortress would be God.

Here begins the translation of Shoghi Effendi, Gleanings XXXIX.

Shoghi Effendi's translation omits the following sentence.

Shoghi Effendi's translation resumes.

Shoghi Effendi's translation ends.

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