

Beloved. They have closed their eyes to the world and fixed their gaze upon the beautiful countenance of the Friend, cherishing no desire but the presence of the loved One and seeking no attainment save reunion with Him. They fly with the feathers of trust in God, and soar with the wings of adherence unto His Will. In their estimation a blood-shedding blade is more desirable than finest silk and a piercing dart more acceptable than mother's milk. 'High-spirited souls by the myriad are deemed necessary in this path, To lay down a hundred lives with every fleeting breath.' 3

It behoveth us to kiss the hand of the would-be assassin and to set out, dancing, on our way to the habitation of the Friend. How indescribably pleasant is that hour, how immeasurably sweet that moment when the inmost spirit is intent upon sacrificing itself, when the tabernacle of fidelity is hastening to attain the heights of self-surrender! With necks laid bare, we yearn for the stroke of the ruthless sword wielded by the hand of the Beloved. With breasts aglow with light, we eagerly await the dart of His decree. Contemptuous of name, we have detached ourselves from all else but Him, we shall not run away, we pray for calamity, that thereby we may soar unto the sublime heights of the spirit, seek shelter beneath the shade of the tree of reunion, attain the highest station of love, and drink our fill from the wondrous wine of everlasting communion with Him. Surely we will not forfeit this imperishable dominion, nor will we forgo this incomparable blessing. If hidden beneath the dust, we shall rear our heads from the bosom of the tender mercy of the Lord of mankind. No trial can suppress these companions, no mortal feet can traverse this journey, nor can any veil obscure this countenance.

Yea, it is clear and evident that in view of the multitudes of internal and external opponents who have raised the standards of opposition, who have girded the loins of endeavour to eliminate these poor creatures, it standeth to reason that one should turn away from them and flee from this land, nay, from the face of the earth. However, through the loving-kindness of God and by the aid of His invisible confirmations, we are as radiant as the sun and as shining as the moon. We are established upon the throne of tranquillity and seated upon the couch of fortitude. Of what importance is the shipwreck to the fish of the spirit? What doth a soul care if the physical frame is destroyed? Indeed this body is for it a prison; and the ship but a place of confinement to the fish. What else but a nightingale can understand a Nightingale's melody and who else but the

intimate

friend can recognize the familiar voice of the Friend?

Consider what was revealed in the bygone days unto Him Who is the Seal of the Prophets and the Beginning of His chosen Ones that thou may become weightless as a spirit, and like unto a breath, emerge from the cage of the body. While encompassed

with sever tests and surrounded from all sides by enemies the most holy Bird descended

down and brought forth this verse: “But if their opposition be grievous to Thee—if Thou canst, seek out an opening into the earth or a ladder into heaven.” 4

Oh, that a thousand eyes would shed tears of blood and a hundred thousand lives would groan from the heart. On another occasion He saith: “And when the unbelievers

were devising against thee, to confine thee, or slay thee, or to expel thee, and

were devising, and God was devising; and God is the best of devisers.” 5

Reflect well on these two blessed and holy verses, which have descended from the

Source of Revelation, so that thou may become apprised of the unseen mysteries.

If the discerning eye of the people was open this outward establishment of this Servant upon His seat would have been sufficient enough for them all, that, despite

being surrounded by enemies and having been plagued by numerous calamities, We are incandescent as a candle and radiant as the Beloved of Love in the assemblage

of lovers. We have burnt all the veils and have become ablazed like the fire of love. But, alas, to what use? For all the people’s eyes are shut and all their ears are closed. They traverse the valley of heedlessness and roam the wilderness

of error. “Ye are quit of what I do, and I am quit of what you do.” 6

Thou should be apprised to the fact that one of the divines 7

in this land, who is preoccupied with amassing worldly treasures and who truly has not tasted from the cup of justice and equity, having neither seen this Servant

nor met Him at any gathering—to befriend Him as much as even an hour, has now lifted his pen of tyranny and has passed judgment on shedding the blood of these wronged ones. ‘Willingly will I obey the judge who hath so strangely decreed that my blood be spilt at Hill and at Haram!’ 8

He, moreover, has spread some baseless rumors among a certain group of people and in the course of these days has imparted to the noted individual 9 some expressions of his idle fancies. That individual, in turn, has taken these tales of fiction back to Tihrán. ‘Whatever malice and intrigue he has in his heart; It is manifest as the day before the one true God.’ 10

All these propositions are clear and evident, and the motive behind them has also been exposed and confirmed. Should he succeed to conceal his evil intentions from this Servant, how could he conceal it before the presence of the one true God, ‘the One Whom nothing is concealed from His Knowledge’? I know not at the end to what faith he will prescribe or with what proof he will choose to argue his case? After all it has been some time since this Servant hath secluded Himself from the world, closing His door to friend and stranger alike, and choosing the way of solitude. I know not from where this jealousy hath sprung or from which direction did this antagonism appear? And it is not known whether in the end this would bring him blessing and confirmation and cause his heart to be cheered!

Although, he treads the path of a corrupt inclination and this lowly One hath clung to the cord of the fear of God, and God willing will be led to the light of salvation—I have no ill-feeling towards him and have kept no resentment in My heart. I have left it to God and clung to the sure handle of justice.

After achieving his intentions perhaps he may be led to drink from the boiling waters of Hell and be fed from the fire of the Wrath of God. For a powerful Ruler is presiding and He, indeed, doth not forgive oppression.

. . . . Until the ordained time cometh no one hath power over Us, and when the ordained time hath arrived it will find Our whole being longing for it. It would

not be any sooner or later. ‘Surely we belong to God, and to Him we return.’ 11

‘If God helps you, none can overcome you; but if He forsakes you, who then can help you after Him?’ 12 ‘Peace be upon him who follows the guidance!’ 13

Notes:

1 These two verses are from a lyric poem by the great Persian poet Khájih Shamsu’ d-Dín Muhammad-i-Shírází better known as Háfiz of Shíráz (1320-91 C.E.).

2 The italicized passages are the authorized translation excerpts of this Tablet published by the Universal House of Justice in *The Bahá’í World Volume XVIII* (1979-83) [Haifa: Bahá’í World Centre, 1986], p. 11. All other non-italicized text, except the opening verse of the Háfiz, are translated by Shahrokh Monjazez and must be regarded as a provisional translation pending the publication of an authorized version by the Bahá’í

World Centre.

3 This poetic verse is from the Mathnaví of Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí (1207-73 C.E.).

4 Qur'án 6:35. In the Kitáb-i-Íqán Bahá'u'lláh, expounding on the meaning of this verse, writes: "The implication of this utterance is that His case had no remedy, that they would not withhold their hands from Him unless He should hide Himself beneath the depths of the earth, or take His flight unto heaven." (Kitáb-i-Íqán [U.S. edition], p.110)

5 Qur'án 8:30.

6 Qur'án 10:41.

7 This is a reference to Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Husayn-i-Tihrání who was the arch-nemesis of Bahá'u'lláh, outside of the faith, during the years of Bahá'u'lláh's banishment to Baghdad. He was also know as Shaykhu'l-'Iráqayn. See God Passes By, p. 141.

8 This verse is an Arabic poetic verse by Ibn al-Fárid (1182-1235 C.E.) the famous Arab Sufi teacher and poet who lived in Egypt.

9 This is a reference to Mírzá Búzúrg Khán-i-Qazvíní the notorious accomplice of Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Husayn-i-Tihrání mentioned above. Mírzá Búzúrg Khán was the Persian Consul-General in Baghdad from July 1860 to February 1863.

10 This poetic verse is likely from the Mathnaví of Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí (1207-73 C.E.).

11 Qur'án 2:156.

12 Qur'án 3:160.

13 Qur'án 20:47.

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