

Sadrat'ul-Muntahá: The Tree beyond which there is no p

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Advance, O people, with snow-white faces and radiant hearts, unto the blest and crimson Spot, wherein the Sadrat'ul-Muntahá is calling: "Verily, there is none other God beside Me, the Omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting!"

"Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p.198

Beside this passage, there is yet another verse in the Gospel wherein He saith: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away." Thus it is that the adherents of Jesus maintained that the law of the Gospel shall never be annulled, and that whensoever the promised Beauty is made manifest and all the signs are revealed, He must needs re-affirm and establish the law proclaimed in the Gospel, so that there may remain in the world no faith but His faith. This is their fundamental belief. And their conviction is such that were a person to be made manifest with all the promised signs and to promulgate that which is contrary to the letter of the law of the Gospel, they must assuredly renounce him, refuse to submit to his law, declare him an infidel, and laugh him to scorn. This is proved by that which came to pass when the sun of the Muhammadan Revelation was revealed. Had they sought with a humble mind from the Manifestations of God in every Dispensation the true meaning of these words revealed in the sacred books -- words the misapprehension of which hath caused men to be deprived of the recognition of the Sadratu'l-Muntaha, the ultimate Purpose -- they surely would have been guided to the light of the Sun of Truth, and would have discovered the mysteries of divine knowledge and wisdom.

"Kitab-i-Iqan", pp. 27-28

"In the ages to come, though the Cause of God may rise and grow a hundredfold and the shade of the Sadratu'l-Muntaha shelter all mankind, yet this present century shall stand unrivalled, for it hath witnessed the breaking of that Morn and the rising of that Sun. This century is, verily, the source of His Light and the dayspring of His Revelation. Future ages and generations shall behold the diffusion of its radiance and the manifestations of its signs".

"Wherefore, exert yourselves, haply ye may obtain your full share and portion of His bestowals".

"Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá," pp. 67

Salutation and praise, blessing and glory rest upon that primal branch of the Divine and Sacred Lote-Tree, grown out, blest, tender, verdant and flourishing from the Twin Holy Trees; the most wondrous, unique and priceless pearl that doth gleam from out the twin surging seas; upon the offshoots of the Tree of Holiness, the twigs of the Celestial Tree, they that in the Day of the Great Dividing have stood fast and firm in the Covenant; upon the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God that have diffused widely the Divine Fragrances, declared His Proofs, proclaimed His Faith, published abroad His Law, detached themselves from all things but Him, stood for righteousness in this world, and kindled the

Fire of the Love of God in the very hearts and souls of His servants; upon them that have believed, rested assured, stood steadfast in His Covenant and followed the Light that after my passing shineth from the Dayspring of Divine Guidance -- for behold! he is the blest and sacred bough that hath branched out from the Twin Holy Trees. Well is it with him that seeketh the shelter of his shade that shadoweth all mankind.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 439)

O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsan (Branches), the Afnan (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abha Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi -- the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness, -- as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsan, the Afnan, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the expounder of the words of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendants.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 442)

O ye the faithful loved ones of Abdu'l-Bahá! It is incumbent upon you to take the greatest care of Shoghi Effendi, the twig that hath branched from and the fruit given forth by the two hallowed and Divine Lote-Trees, that no dust of despondency and sorrow may stain his radiant nature, that day by day he may wax greater in happiness, in joy and spirituality, and may grow to become even as a fruitful tree.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 449)

The Sadratu'l-Muntaha, translated inter alia as the Sidrah Tree which marks the boundary, and the Lote-Tree of the extremity. Cf. Qur'an 53:14. It is said to stand at the loftiest point in Paradise, and to mark the place beyond which neither men nor angels can pass. In Bahá'í terminology it refers to the Manifestation of God.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 175)

And further he -- peace be upon him -- said: "Therefore it is the Most Sublime Essence of God, the Tree of Blessedness, the Lote-Tree beyond which there is no passing, the Garden of Repose."

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 112)

O foolish one! Know thou that he is truly learned who hath acknowledged My Revelation, and drunk from the Ocean of My knowledge, and soared in the atmosphere of My love, and cast away all else besides Me, and taken firm hold on that which hath been sent down from the Kingdom of My wondrous utterance. He, verily, is even as an eye unto mankind, and as the spirit of life unto the body of all creation. Glorified be the All-Merciful Who hath enlightened him, and caused him to arise and serve His great and mighty Cause. Verily, such a man is blessed by the Concourse on high, and by them who dwell within the Tabernacle of Grandeur, who have quaffed My sealed Wine in My Name, the

Omnipotent, the All-Powerful. O Baqir! If thou be of them that occupy such a sublime station, produce then a sign from God, the Creator of the heavens. And shouldst thou recognize thy powerlessness, do thou rein in thy passions, and return unto thy Lord, that perchance He may forgive thee thy sins which have caused the leaves of the Divine Lote-Tree to be burnt up, and the Rock to cry out, and the eyes of men of understanding to weep. Because of thee the Veil of Divinity was rent asunder, and the Ark foundered, and the She-Camel was hamstrung, and the Spirit [1] groaned in His sublime retreat. Disputest thou with Him Who hath come unto thee with the testimonies of God and His signs which thou possessest and which are in the possession of them that dwell on earth? Open thine eyes that thou mayest behold this Wronged One shining forth above the horizon of the will of God, the Sovereign, the Truth, the Resplendent. Unstop, then, the ear of thine heart that thou mayest hearken unto the speech of the Divine Lote-Tree that hath been raised up in truth by God, the Almighty, the Beneficent. Verily, this Tree, notwithstanding the things that befell it by reason of thy cruelty and of the transgressions of such as are like thee, calleth aloud and summoneth all men unto the Sadratu'l-Muntaha [2] and the Supreme Horizon. Blessed is the soul that hath gazed on the Most Mighty Sign, and the ear that hath heard His most sweet Voice, and woe to whosoever hath turned aside and done wickedly.

[1 Jesus.]

[2 The Sacred Lote-Tree, the Tree beyond which there is no passing (See Qur'an 53:8-18). A symbol of the Manifestation of God. (See God Passes By p. 94.)

O thou who hast turned away from God! Wert thou to look with the eye of fairness upon the Divine Lote-Tree, thou wouldst perceive the marks of thy sword on its boughs, and its branches, and its leaves, notwithstanding that God created thee for the purpose of recognizing and of serving it. Reflect, that haply thou mayest recognize thine iniquity and be numbered with such as have repented. Thinkest thou that We fear thy cruelty? Know thou and be well assured that from the first day whereon the voice of the Most Sublime Pen was raised betwixt earth and heaven We offered up Our souls, and Our bodies, and Our sons, and Our possessions in the path of God, the Exalted, the Great, and We glory therein amongst all created things and the Concurrence on high. Unto this testify the things which have befallen Us in this straight Path. By God! Our hearts were consumed, and Our bodies were crucified, and Our blood was spilt, while Our eyes were fixed on the horizon of the loving-kindness of their Lord, the Witness, the All-Seeing. The more grievous their woes, the greater waxed the love of the people of Baha. Unto their sincerity hath borne witness what the All-Merciful hath sent down in the Qur'an. He saith: 'Wish ye, then, for death, if ye are sincere.' [1] Who is to be preferred, he that hath sheltered himself behind curtains, or he that hath offered himself in the path of God? Judge thou fairly, and be not of them that rove distraught in the wilderness of falsehood. So carried away have they been by the living waters of the love of the Most Merciful, that neither the arms of the world nor the swords of the nations have deterred them from setting their faces towards the ocean of the bounty of their Lord, the Giver, the Generous.

[1 Qur'an 2:88.] (Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 207)

128. the Sadratu'l-Muntaha # 100

Literally "the furthestmost Lote-Tree", translated by Shoghi Effendi as "the Tree beyond which there is no passing". This is used as a symbol in Islam, for example in the accounts of Muhammad's Night Journey, to mark the point in the heavens beyond which neither men nor angels can pass in their approach to God, and thus to delimit the bounds of divine knowledge as revealed to mankind. Hence it is often used in the Bahá'í Writings to designate the Manifestation of God Himself.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 220)

164. the sacred Lote-Tree # 148

The "sacred Lote-Tree" is a reference to the Sadratu'l-Muntaha, the "Tree beyond which there is no passing" (see note 128). It is used here symbolically to designate Bahá'u'lláh.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 236)

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 your 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 gave you tidings, and the Comforter from whom the Spirit (Christ) hath received His Covenant."

(Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 102)

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.

(Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 105)

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."

(Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 111)

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.

(Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 213)

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.

(Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 219)

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.

(Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 225)

The ascension of Him Who was the Temple of the Covenant, the setting of Him Who was the Orb of harmony, Abdu'l-Bahá, may our lives be sacrificed for the wrongs He suffered, was the most dire calamity, and the most dread of ordeals. It dissolved our very hearts, it laid low the very pillars of our being. It made our eyes to shed tears of blood, and our sighs and the sound of our weeping reached upward to the Concourse on High. Then did a sea of anguish roll up great waves of grief, and a whirlwind of sorrow swept over the peoples of the earth.

That blessed soul, following the ascension of the sacred Abha Beauty, may our lives be sacrificed for the dust of His sacred threshold, and until the hour when His own luminous spirit rose up to the realms on high, for a period of thirty years had neither a peaceful day nor a night of quiet rest. Singly and alone, He set about to reform the world, and to educate and refine its peoples. He invited all manner of beings to enter the Kingdom of God; He watered the Tree of the Faith; He guarded the celestial Lote-Tree from the tempest; He defeated the foes of the Faith, and He frustrated the hopes of the malevolent; and always vigilant, He protected God's Cause and defended His Law.

That subtle and mysterious Being, that Essence of eternal glory, underwent trials and sorrows all the days of His life. He was made the target of every calumny and malicious accusation, by foes both without and within. His lot, in all His life, was to be wronged, and be subjected to toil, to pain and grief. Under these conditions, the one and only solace of His sacred heart was to hear good news of the progress of the Faith, and the proclaiming of God's Word, and the spreading of the holy Teachings, and the unity and fervour of the friends, and the staunchness of His loved ones. This news would bring smiles to His countenance; this was the joy of His precious heart.

Meanwhile He trained a number of the faithful and reared them with the hands of His grace, and rectified their character and behaviour, and adorned them with the excellence of the favoured angels of Heaven -- that they might arise today with a new spirit, and stand forth with wondrous power, and confront the forces of idle fancy, and scatter the troops upon troops of darkness with the blazing light of long endurance and high resolve; that they might shine out even as lighted candles, and moth-like, flutter so close about the lamp of the Faith as to scorch their wings.

The Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Bahá, may our souls be sacrificed for His meekness, is our guiding light upon the path, it is the very bounty of the Abha Kingdom. This Text is the decisive decree, the way that leads aright, the highest hope of all who stand firm in the Covenant of the Lord of Lords. It is tidings of great joy; it is the ultimate bestowal. (Compilations, Bahiyyih Khanum, p. 141)

This is the divinely-inscribed Book. This is the outspread Tablet. Say, this indeed is the Frequented Fane, the sweet-scented Leaf, the Tree of divine Revelation, the surging Ocean, the Utterance which lay concealed, the Light above every light... Indeed every light is generated by God through the power of His behest. He of a truth is the Light in the kingdom of heaven and earth and whatever is between them. Through the radiance of His light God imparteth illumination to your hearts and maketh firm your steps, that perchance ye may yield praise unto Him.

Say, this of a certainty is the Garden of Repose, the loftiest Point of adoration, the Tree beyond which there is no passing, the blessed Lote-Tree, the Most Mighty Sign, the most beautiful Countenance and the most comely Face.

FROM the beginning that hath no beginning all men have bowed in adoration

before Him Whom God shall make manifest and will continue to do so until the end that hath no end. How strange then that at the time of His appearance ye should pay homage by day and night unto that which the Point of the Bayan hath enjoined upon you and yet fail to worship Him Whom God shall make manifest.

CONSECRATE Thou, O my God, the whole of this Tree unto Him, that from it may be revealed all the fruits created by God within it for Him through Whom God hath willed to reveal all that He pleaseth. By Thy glory! I have not wished that this Tree should ever bear any branch, leaf, or fruit that would fail to bow down before Him, on the day of His Revelation, or refuse to laud Thee through Him, as beseemeth the glory of His all-glorious Revelation, and the sublimity of His most sublime Concealment. And shouldst Thou behold, O my God, any branch, leaf, or fruit upon Me that hath failed to bow down before Him, on the day of His Revelation, cut it off, O My God, from that Tree, for it is not of Me, nor shall it return unto Me.

(The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 154)

Then came he (Gabriel) nearer and approached,
And was at the distance of two bows, or even closer,
And he revealed to his servant what he revealed.
His heart falsified not what he saw.
What will ye then dispute with him as to what he saw?
He had seen also another time,
Near the Sidra-tree, which marks the boundary.
Near which is the garden of repose.
When the Sidra-tree was covered with what covered it,
His eyes turned not aside, nor did it wander,
For he saw the greatest of the signs of his Lord."

(Quran 53: 14)

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the Tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits; and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the Tree were for the healing of the nations".

Revelation, 22:2

— Sadrat'ul-Muntahá: The Tree beyond which there is no passing (Used by permission of the curator)