

Lo, the appointed time is now arrived, and Carmel crieth out as if moved to ecstasy by the soul-stirring breezes of her Lord. Happy are those who hear her cry! Whoso hearkeneth with his inner ear shall hear the voice of the Rock

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as he beareth witness, with a mighty voice, to the Everlasting God. Blessed are they who perceive the savour of Divine utterance and, severing themselves from the world of being, advance towards the Kingdom. Behold! The things that had been mentioned in the Books of old have now appeared, and yet the people, though they look upon them, comprehend them not!

Regard thou, O friend, the mystery of the Great Reversal in the Sign of the Sovereign. Through this reversal He hath caused the exalted to be abased and the abased to be exalted. Call thou to mind how, in the days of Jesus, it was those who were distinguished for their learning, the men of letters and religion, who denied Him, whilst humble fishermen made haste to gain admittance into the Kingdom—this is the meaning of that which hath been expressed by symbol and allusion in the obscurities of words.

Great, immeasurably great is the Cause! Peter, the Apostle, despite the pre-eminence of his rank and the loftiness of his station, when questioned held back from speaking. Wert thou, with thy thoughts centred wholly on God, to reflect upon the happenings of former times, thou wouldst see the light shining refulgently before thy face, and wouldst keep it constantly before thy gaze. The truth is, of a certainty, too evident to be enshrouded in a veil, the way too clear to be obscured by darkness, and certitude too manifest to be eclipsed by any fleeting whim. Those who have been debarred therefrom are the followers of their corrupt desires. Today they are reposing on their bed of slumber; ere long they shall awake and rush, without avail, to find the things that have escaped them. Well is it with them who have inhaled the Divine fragrance at the time when it was shed abroad: These, verily, have attained unto that which is the portion of the sincere among God's servants.

Know thou that We have seen the letter "Sád", which appeareth in the word "sulh",

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become embellished by the ornament of the upright Alif. This, verily, is that which hath been recorded in an outspread Tablet. No sooner were the splendours of that Divine Word revealed than the portals of heaven were unlocked, the Kingdom of Names made manifest, and all was brought to consummation by the appearance of the letter "Há", which had been connected to the recumbent Alif, itself embellished by the Point from which had sprung the Treasured Name, the Hidden Secret, and the Guarded Symbol—that same Point from which all things have appeared and unto which they have all returned. Thereupon We saw the Word give utterance to a Word which was received by every people in accordance with its own particular tongue and language. As it spoke forth, there rose above the horizon of its utterance a Sun of such effulgent splendour that, overshadowed by its radiance, the celestial sun grew dark; then it cried out: "The brow of seventy hath been adorned with the diadem of forty and united with the seven

before ten"; at this it sighed, and moaned aloud: "Alas, I see the house oblivious of its Master, the son unmindful of his Father, the seeker heedless of the sanctuary and refuge for which he yearneth."

O thou who soarest in the atmosphere of understanding! Whoso perceiveth that which though solid, floweth; which though static, flieth; which is both manifest and hidden, both resplendent and obscure will be so enraptured by the effulgence of heavenly illumination that he will rise up on the wings of ardent longing into the empyrean of nearness, holiness, and heavenly reunion.

Respecting thy comments on the question of "darkness", We testify that it hath encompassed all mankind. Happy the man who hath been illumined by the light of Him Who hath shone forth resplendent from the horizon of the mercy of His Lord, the Most Holy. This darkness is naught but the idle imaginings of men, by which they have been prevented from directing themselves towards the Kingdom when, by the bidding of God, the Lord of the realm on high, it was made manifest.

As for thy mention of the opinion expressed to thee by a certain individual that, in so far as concerneth the Spirit, there existeth no difference between us, his assertion is correct, for the Spirit is too exalted either to admit of differences or to be comprehended by allusions. It is the revelation of the Light of God's singleness amongst men, the Sign of His ancient eternity before the nations. Whoso turneth himself thereto hath turned himself unto Him Who sent it forth, and whoso turneth away therefrom hath turned away from the One by Whose power it hath been manifested and endowed with utterance. It hath not changed from age to age, and such as it hath been it shall remain. Such differences as may be witnessed in the effulgence of its light are to be attributed to the mirrors that receive it, and to the disparity, in form and colour, of the images they reflect.

O friend! Were but a single token to be revealed of the Secret which hath lain wrapped in mystery, the hearts of all those who, clinging to the things of men, have cast away the things of God, would be thrown into perturbation. Shouldst thou, having meditated upon the words that We have addressed to thee, arise with perfect steadfastness to act in such wise as We have intimated, thou wouldst undoubtedly accomplish such things as have been witnessed in a former age.

O friend! This Bird lieth imprisoned beneath the talons of cruelty and malice; It seeth for itself neither nest wherein to shelter nor heavenly expanse in which to fly. In such a plight as this, it summoneth mankind unto everlasting life. Blessed then be the attentive ear!

We beseech God to unite us in one holy court, and to graciously assist us to do that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Him.

1. Jesus.
2. Cf. Zechariah 6:12–15.
3. Peter.

4. Literally, "peace".

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