1. The Divine Springtime is come, O Most Exalted Pen, for the Festival of the All-Merciful is fast approaching. Bestir thyself, and magnify, before the entire creation, the name of God, and celebrate His praise, in such wise that all created things may be regenerated and made new. Speak, and hold not thy peace. The day-star of blissfulness shineth above the horizon of Our name, the Blissful, inasmuch as the kingdom of the names of God hath been adorned with the ornament of the name of thy Lord, the Creator of the heavens. Arise before the nations of the earth, and arm thyself with the power of this Most Great Name, and be not of those who tarry.

2. Methinks that thou hast halted and movest not upon My Tablet. Could the brightness of the Divine Countenance have bewildered thee, or the idle talk of the froward filled thee with grief and paralysed thy movement? Take heed lest anything deter thee from extolling the greatness of this Day—the Day whereon the Finger of majesty and power hath opened the seal of the Wine of Reunion, and called all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth. Preferrest thou to tarry when the breeze announcing the Day of God hath already breathed over thee, or art thou of them that are shut out as by a veil from Him?

3. No veil whatever have I allowed, O Lord of all names and Creator of the heavens, to shut me from the recognition of the glories of Thy Day—the Day which is the lamp of guidance unto the whole world, and the sign of the Ancient of Days unto all them that dwell therein. My silence is by reason of the veils that have blinded Thy creatures’ eyes to Thee, and my muteness is because of the impediments that have hindered Thy people from recognizing Thy truth. Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee. Thou art the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. By Thy name that excelleth all other names! If Thy overruling and all-compelling behest should ever reach me, it would empower me to revive the souls of all men, through Thy most exalted Word, which I have heard uttered by Thy Tongue of power in Thy Kingdom of
glory. It would enable me to announce the revelation of Thy effulgent countenance wherethrough that which lay hidden from the eyes of men hath been manifested in Thy name, the Perspicuous, the sovereign Protector, the Self-Subsisting.

4. Canst thou discover any one but Me, O Pen, in this Day? What hath become of the creation and the manifestations thereof? What of the names and their kingdom? Whither are gone all created things, whether seen or unseen? What of the hidden secrets of the universe and its revelations? Lo, the entire creation hath passed away! Nothing remaineth except My Face, the Ever-Abiding, the Resplendent, the All-Glorious.

5. This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendours of the Light that shineth from the face of Thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful. Verily, We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all-subduing sovereignty. We have, then, called into being a new creation, as a token of Our grace unto men. I am, verily, the All-Bountiful, the Ancient of Days.

6. This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: “Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the footstool of thy God, and been chosen as the seat of His mighty throne.” The realm of glory exclaimeth: “Would that my life could be sacrificed for thee, for He Who is the Beloved of the All-Merciful hath established His sovereignty upon thee, through the power of His Name that hath been promised unto all things, whether of the past or of the future.” This is the Day whereon every sweet smelling thing hath derived its fragrance from the smell of My garment—a garment that hath shed its perfume upon the whole of creation. This is the Day whereon the rushing waters of everlasting life have gushed out of the Will of the All-Merciful. Haste ye, with your hearts and souls, and quaff your fill, O Concourse of the realms above!

7. Say: He it is Who is the Manifestation of Him Who is the Unknowable, the Invisible of the Invisibles, could ye but perceive it. He it is Who hath laid bare before you the hidden and treasured Gem, were ye to seek it. He it is Who is the one Beloved of all things, whether of the past or of the future. Would that ye might set your hearts and hopes upon Him!

8. We have heard the voice of thy pleading, O Pen, and excuse thy silence. What is it that hath so sorely bewildered thee?
9. The inebriation of Thy presence, O Well-Beloved of all worlds, hath seized and possessed me.

10. Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He Who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Riḍván and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the garden of delight which God hath made the Throne of His Paradise. We have chosen thee to be Our most mighty Trumpet, whose blast is to signalize the resurrection of all mankind.

11. Say: This is the Paradise on whose foliage the wine of utterance hath imprinted the testimony: “He that was hidden from the eyes of men is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!” This is the Paradise the rustling of whose leaves proclaimeth: “O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come.” From the whispering breeze that wafteth midst its branches there cometh the cry: “He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is made manifest. The Kingdom is God’s,” while from its streaming waters can be heard the murmur: “All eyes are gladdened, for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered, hath lifted the veil of glory, and uncovered the countenance of Beauty.”

12. Within this Paradise, and from the heights of its loftiest chambers, the Maids of Heaven have cried out and shouted: “Rejoice, ye dwellers of the realms above, for the fingers of Him Who is the Ancient of Days are ringing, in the name of the All-Glorious, the Most Great Bell, in the midmost heart of the heavens. The hands of bounty have borne round the cup of everlasting life. Approach, and quaff your fill. Drink with healthy relish, O ye that are the very incarnations of longing, ye who are the embodiments of vehement desire!”

13. This is the Day whereon He Who is the Revealer of the names of God hath stepped out of the Tabernacle of glory, and proclaimed unto all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth: “Put away the cups of Paradise and all the life-giving waters they contain, for lo, the people of Bahá have entered the blissful abode of the Divine Presence, and quaffed the wine of reunion, from the chalice of the beauty of their Lord, the All-Possessing, the Most High.”

14. Forget the world of creation, O Pen, and turn thou towards the face of thy Lord, the Lord of all names. Adorn, then, the world with the ornament of the favours of thy Lord, the King of
everlasting days. For We perceive the fragrance of the Day whereon He Who is the Desire of all nations hath shed upon the kingdoms of the unseen and of the seen the splendour of the light of His most excellent names, and enveloped them with the radiance of the luminaries of His most gracious favours—favours which none can reckon except Him, Who is the omnipotent Protector of the entire creation.

15. Look not upon the creatures of God except with the eye of kindliness and of mercy, for Our loving providence hath pervaded all created things, and Our grace encompassed the earth and the heavens. This is the Day whereon the true servants of God partake of the life-giving waters of reunion, the Day whereon those that are nigh unto Him are able to drink of the soft-flowing river of immortality, and they who believe in His unity, the wine of His Presence, through their recognition of Him Who is the Highest and Last End of all, in Whom the Tongue of Majesty and Glory voiceth the call: “The Kingdom is Mine. I, Myself, am, of Mine own right, its Ruler.”

16. Attract the hearts of men, through the call of Him, the one alone Beloved. Say: This is the Voice of God, if ye do but hearken. This is the Dayspring of the Revelation of God, did ye but know it. This is the Dawning-Place of the Cause of God, were ye to recognize it. This is the Source of the commandment of God, did ye but judge it fairly. This is the manifest and hidden Secret; would that ye might perceive it. O peoples of the world! Cast away, in My name that transcendeth all other names, the things ye possess, and immerse yourselves in this Ocean in whose depths lay hidden the pearls of wisdom and of utterance, an ocean that surgeth in My name, the All-Merciful. Thus instructeth you He with Whom is the Mother Book.

17. The Best-Beloved is come. In His right hand is the sealed Wine of His name. Happy is the man that turneth unto Him, and drinketh his fill, and exclaimeth: “Praise be to Thee, O Revealer of the signs of God!” By the righteousness of the Almighty! Every hidden thing hath been manifested through the power of truth. All the favours of God have been sent down, as a token of His grace. The waters of everlasting life have, in their fullness, been proffered unto men. Every single cup hath been borne round by the hand of the Well-Beloved. Draw near, and tarry not, though it be for one short moment.

18. Blessed are they that have soared on the wings of detachment and attained the station which, as ordained by God, overshadoweth the entire creation, whom neither the vain imaginations of the learned, nor the multitude of the hosts of the earth have succeeded in
deflecting from His Cause. Who is there among you, O people, who will renounce the world, and draw nigh unto God, the Lord of all names? Where is he to be found who, through the power of My name that transcendeth all created things, will cast away the things that men possess, and cling, with all his might, to the things which God, the Knower of the unseen and of the seen, hath bidden him observe? Thus hath His bounty been sent down unto men, His testimony fulfilled, and His proof shone forth above the Horizon of mercy. Rich is the prize that shall be won by him who hath believed and exclaimed: “Lauded art Thou, O Beloved of all worlds! Magnified be Thy name, O Thou the Desire of every understanding heart!”

Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá, as ye call to remembrance the Day of supreme felicity, the Day whereon the Tongue of the Ancient of Days hath spoken, as He departed from His House, proceeding to the Spot from which He shed upon the whole of creation the splendours of His name, the All-Merciful. God is Our witness. Were We to reveal the hidden secrets of that Day, all they that dwell on earth and in the heavens would swoon away and die, except such as will be preserved by God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

Such is the inebriating effect of the words of God upon Him Who is the Revealer of His undoubted proofs, that His Pen can move no longer. With these words He concludeth His Tablet: No God is there but Me, the Most Exalted, the Most Powerful, the Most Excellent, the All-Knowing.

– 7 –

He it is Who is established upon this luminous Throne.

1. Proclaim unto the celestial Concourse, O Pen of effulgent glory, that lo, the veil of concealment hath been rent asunder and the Beauty of the Lord hath been revealed from this Scene of transcendent glory with such radiance as to cause the luminaries of His command to shine above the dayspring of His almighty Name. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath dawned above a horizon of surpassing grace!
2. This is a festival wherein all things have been adorned with the vesture of the names of God, and wherein His bounty hath compassed all things from first to last. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath shone above a dayspring of resplendent holiness!

3. Summon, then, the maids of eternity to hasten forth from their crimson chambers in their celestial grace, and to appear betwixt earth and heaven with the most glorious adorning. Grant them leave, then, to pass round to the inhabitants of the world, high and low alike, that cup of life which hath been drawn from the heavenly stream of mercy. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared above the horizon of holiness with wondrous rapture!

4. Bid then the heavenly youths, who have been fashioned from the splendours of the All-Praised, to issue forth from their heavenly abode, decked in the attire of the All-Merciful, and to proffer with ruby fingers the chalice of immortality to the inmates of the highest Paradise among the companions of Bahá, that they may be drawn nigh unto the Splendour of the Lord of Grandeur—this shining and resplendent Beauty. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared above a dayspring of exalted glory!

5. By God! This is the festival wherein the beauty of the Unknowable Essence hath appeared unveiled and arrayed with such sovereignty as to lay low the necks of them that have repudiated His truth. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared with supreme dominion!

6. This is a festival wherein all things have been absolved by virtue of the appearance of Him Who is the Ancient King from behind the veil of names. Wherefore, rejoice in your hearts, O peoples of the world, for the breezes of forgiveness have been wafted over the entire creation and the spirit of life hath been breathed into the world. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared above a dayspring of resplendent holiness!

7. Beware lest ye transgress the bounds of courtesy and commit that which your minds and your hearts abhor. This is that whereunto ye were bidden by the Pen of God, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared above a horizon of wondrous grace!
This is a festival wherein the Beauty of the Lord of Grandeur hath been exalted above all things, and wherein He, unveiled and unconcealed, hath proclaimed His will and purpose unto all that are in heaven and on earth. And this is but a token of His grace that hath pervaded the entire creation. Therein was the Temple of Bahá seated upon the throne of eternity, and the splendours of His countenance dawned above the horizon of creation with the light of wondrous glory. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared above a horizon of wondrous grace!

O ye that abide beneath the tabernacle of grandeur! O ye that dwell within the pavilion of inviolable sanctity! O ye that are sheltered under the canopy of loftiness and glory! Lift up your voices and sing in the most melodious of tones in your most exalted chambers, for in this Dispensation the veiled Beauty hath been revealed, and the Day-Star of the Unseen hath risen above the horizon of ancient glory. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath appeared with a splendid adorning!

O company of the Concourse on high, and O denizens of the immortal city! Hasten ye to pay homage, for the Shrine of grandeur hath appeared within this Tabernacle round which all former shrines revolve; and circle about and draw nigh unto the Lord of all men in these days, the like of which the eyes of the former generations have never beheld. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath dawned above the horizon of God, the Most Gracious, the All-Bountiful!

Drink deep, O ye dwellers of earth and heaven, from the chalice of eternal life that the hand of Bahá proffereth in this most lofty and exalted Paradise. By God! Whoso partaketh but a drop thereof shall neither suffer the vicissitudes of time nor fall prey to the wiles of the Evil One, but the Lord shall send him forth in every Dispensation adorned with a hallowed and wondrous beauty. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath been made manifest from the seat of the Lord of all wisdom!

Sanctify your souls from the world, O people, and hasten unto the Divine Lote-Tree in this furthermost sanctuary, that ye may hearken unto the voice of your Lord, the All-Merciful, calling from this Paradise which hath been created at the behest of God, the All-Praised, and before whose portals the inmates of the pavilion of sanctity bow down in adoration. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath shone forth above the horizon of majesty and grandeur!
13.

Take heed, O people, lest ye deprive yourselves of the breezes of these days wherein the fragrance of the divine Robe is being wafted at every moment from the presence of this glorious and radiant Youth. All hail then to this, the Festival of the Lord, that hath shone from the dayspring of His name, the Most High!

– 8 –

*He is the Most Holy, the Most Glorious.*

1. Praise be to Thee, O my God, that the dawn of Thy Ridván Festival hath broken, and that therein one who had sought Thy presence hath attained his goal, O Thou our Lord, the Most Merciful! How numerous are Thy loved ones, O my God, who traversed the sands of Syria in their longing to gaze on Thy beauty but who were prevented from attaining the court of Thy transcendent oneness by reason of the misdeeds of Thy foes, who have disbelieved in Thee and gainsaid Thy sovereignty.

2. O Lord! Look upon the oppressors of Thy people with the eye of Thine avenging wrath. By Thy might! Their iniquity hath reached such heights as none can reckon save Thyself, Who knowest all things. Thy loved ones acquiesced to captivity and confinement in this prison, and yet their enemies were still not satisfied, so intense was their hatred for the Manifestation of Thy Cause. Blessed be the man of insight who seeth in all that hath befallen him in Thy path naught save that which shall exalt his station and magnify Thy Cause, O Thou the Lord of the worlds!

3. By Thy glory! Were all the peoples of the earth to join together to harm a single one of the people of Bahá, they would find themselves powerless, for all that they see as harming Thy chosen ones is as light unto them and as fire unto Thine enemies. Were it not for the confinement, in the Most Great Prison, of Him Who is the Exponent of Thy transcendent sovereignty, how would Thy Cause have been promulgated, Thy sovereignty manifested, Thy might proclaimed, and the truth of Thy signs established? Would that I Myself had borne all the tribulations of the world, out of love for Thee and for Thy creatures!
O Lord! Open Thou the eyes of Thy servants, that they may behold Thee at all times seated upon the throne of Thy grandeur and supreme over all who are in heaven and on earth. Potent art Thou to do what Thou willest. No God is there but Thee, the Almighty, the Most Powerful.

– 9 –

On the first day that the Ancient Beauty ascended His Most Great Throne in the garden named Riḍván, the Tongue of Glory gave utterance to three blessed words. First, that in this Revelation the law of the sword hath been annulled. Second, that ere the expiration of one thousand years whosoever advanceth a prophetic claim is false. By “year” a full year is intended, and no exegesis or interpretation is permitted in this matter. And third, that at that very hour God, exalted be His Glory, shed the full splendour of all His names upon all creation.

The following verse was revealed subsequently, but He indicated that it should occupy the same station as the other three: that when the name of anyone, whether living or dead, is mentioned in His presence, that soul hath verily attained to the mention of the pre-existent King. Blessed are they that attain thereto!

– 10 –

The day-star of words, dawning above the horizon of the utterance of Him Who is the Lord of all names and attributes, hath, at this most blessed of hours, shone forth in all truth with the splendours of the light of God. The spirit of understanding, flowing from the Pen of the All-Glorious, hath, by virtue of His grace, been conferred upon all created things. The mystery of all mysteries, emerging from behind the veils of concealment, hath, in very truth, been revealed to the righteous, as bidden by God, the Almighty, the Unconstrained.

God, the Most Powerful, the Most Exalted, the Most Great, addresseth the holy Beings created through the Primal Word that proceeded from His mouth, and beyond them the Concourse on high, and beyond them those whom He hath sanctified above the comprehension
of all who are on earth and in heaven and whom He hath raised up through His hidden and inscrutable Will, saying: “Rejoice in your very souls, for the most auspicious time hath come; and the Hour hath struck round which revolve all the other hours foretold in the Tablets of God, the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the Most Merciful; and the hidden Morn hath broken forth, in this treasured Name, from the dayspring of divinity, shedding its radiance upon all that hath been and all that shall be.” Blessed be the Lord of all bounty, the source of this supernal grace!

3. The promised Day of God is come! He Who is the Manifestation of the Adored One hath been established upon the throne of His name, the All-Loving, and the sun of His bounty hath cast its rays upon the seeing and seen alike. Wherefore renounce ye, O denizens of the realms of limitation, that which ye possess, adorn your temples with His glorious vesture, and behold with untainted vision Him Who is the luminous Beauty of God seated upon the throne of glory in His transcendent, His almighty and all-subduing sovereignty. All praise be to the Best-Beloved, Who hath revealed His hidden beauty with such manifest authority!

4. All days have attained their consummation in this most august of days, and all hours in this noblest of hours, and the Unseen hath willed to confer every grace upon the inmates of earth and heaven, to establish, before all who are in the kingdoms of revelation and creation, the Manifestation of God and His loftiness, and the sovereignty of God and His grandeur, that His favour might be made complete unto His servants and His bounty fulfilled unto His creation. And yet, when once He appeared, the eyes of all who had awaited Him were dazzled, save for those whom His might had protected and from whose sight He had lifted all worldly veils. Blessed, then, be He Who hath been made manifest through the power of truth in this wondrous, this shining vesture!

5. And when the appointed hour of His Revelation struck on this promised Day, the veils of destiny were rent asunder and the divine decree was fulfilled with the departure of the Luminary of the heaven of eternity from the city of Baghdád. This came to pass by reason of what the hands of the malicious had wrought against this Light—a Light that hath outshone every other in its sacred and wondrous splendour. Blessed, then, be He Who hath sent down these twin Revelations through His most great, His most mighty sovereignty!

6. At the advent of this Manifestation the realities of all created things were filled with joy, and all seized the cup of ecstasy with the hands of longing and rapture and drank thereof the
choicest wine for love of this Beauty—a Beauty that hath appeared through the power of truth, arrayed with the ornament of God, the Sovereign, the Just, the All-Wise. Blessed, then, be He Who, through this Revelation, hath attracted the hearts of the well-favoured of the Lord!

7. Say: This is the Day for which the Pen of the Most High hath ordained no peer, and whose like the denizens of the Concourse on high and the realities of the Prophets and Messengers of God have never attained. Blessed, then, be He Who hath made manifest this hallowed and sacred, this mighty and wondrous Day!

8. This is the Day whereon the pillars of the Throne trembled in their yearning for God to establish Himself thereon, the Day whereon the foundations of the most lofty Seat were stirred into motion. Blessed, then, be God, the Source of this rapture that hath seized the entire creation!

9. This is the Day whereon the Sun of Beauty dawned above the horizon of the countenance of God, the Most Exalted, the Most Great, and the clouds of bounty rained down, and the trees of Paradise yielded such fruits as God hath apportioned to them that turn unto Him with radiant hearts in this Dispensation. Blessed, then, be God, Who hath ordained this surpassing grace!

10. This is the Day whereon the spirits departed from their bodies in their eagerness to behold the unveiled countenance of the Ancient Beauty. Blessed, then, be the One Who hath manifested this mighty Day!

11. This is the Day whereon the Most Great Spirit was embodied in the most comely of forms, and, proceeding from the Realm on high, approached the Scene of transcendent glory with such radiance as to delight the Maid of Heaven, until she paused, suspended in the air before Our presence, with such an adorning as to seize with longing the hearts of the Messengers of God. Blessed, then, be God, Who hath created this noble angel!

12. Thereupon the inmates of Paradise, and beyond them the inhabitants of the retreats of holiness and the realms of communion, and beyond them they that dwell within the habitations of heaven and they that abide beneath the tabernacle of concealment, stepped forth one and all from their lofty mansions, and, conversing in hushed tones, apprised one another of that which had come to pass upon the earth. It was as though the Ancient King had revealed Himself unto Himself, and then, with undisputed sovereignty, unto His servants and His creatures in the
realm of creation. Blessed, then, be God, Who bringeth forth whatsoever He pleaseth through the potency of His all-compelling command!

13. Then the Most Great Spirit raised a call that resounded through the entire creation, saying: “Solaced be your eyes, O ye inhabitants of earth and heaven, O ye manifestations of the divine names and attributes, and O ye who are immersed beneath the oceans of grandeur that lie beyond the worlds of intimation and allusion! This is the Day whereon God Himself, the Most Exalted, the Most High, through His own sacred and glorious Self, beareth round unto every soul, high and low alike, the cup of nearness and reunion.” Blessed, then, be God, Who hath revealed Himself in all His manifold grace on this greatest of all days!

14. This is the Day whereon the most grievous veil was torn asunder and the Scene of transcendent purity was made manifest; the Day whereon the face of God smiled with the joy of reunion, and the gates of His presence were flung open to the embodiments of His beauty and majesty and to them that had pierced the veils of glory through the power born of God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise; the Day whereon all things visible and invisible cried out: “Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!”

15. Whereupon the Most Great Spirit was summoned to silence, and the rapture of God seized the inhabitants of the cities of eternity, the inmates of the crimson chambers, and the dwellers of the kingdom of names. One and all they descended from their habitations until they stood betwixt earth and heaven, with utmost humility and submissiveness, before His Countenance. Blessed, then, be God, Who hath made manifest this resistless, this all-glorious and transcendent Cause!

16. Then were their voices lifted up in praise and exultation on this glorious Day, a Day whose radiance deriveth not from the sun and its rays but from the effulgent light of the Countenance of God, the King, the Exalted, the All-Bountiful. Blessed, then, be He Who hath caused it to appear through the power of truth and Who hath resurrected therein the souls of all humankind!

17. And then another herald called out from the Scene of transcendent glory: “By God! This is the Day whereon the veils of contention were torn asunder, and the breezes of unity were wafted, and the Lord of creation appeared, invested with manifest sovereignty and riding upon the clouds of grandeur on this, His promised Day.” Blessed, then, be God, Who hath descended in truth from the heaven of sublime holiness!
18. This is the Day whereon fire and water were joined together as one, and the veils were removed from the face of all mysteries, inasmuch as the Beauty of the Unconstrained came forth arrayed in the raiment of His own Self, the Help in Peril, the Almighty, the Incomparable. All glory be to this Day whose advent hath cheered the eyes of the well-favoured of God!

19. When that joy born of God had taken hold of all else besides Him, the Most Great Spirit called out once more, proclaiming: “O ye dwellers of the kingdoms of earth and heaven! O ye denizens of the realms of revelation and creation! Blessed are your ears, for they have hearkened unto the verses of nearness and reunion. Hear now the tidings of remoteness and separation, for the Luminary of the world hath purposed to depart from the land of ‘Irāq, in accordance with the firm covenant that hath been set forth in the Scriptures of God, the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”

20. At this announcement the dwellers of earth and heaven were filled with dismay. Such was their weeping and wailing that they fell prostrate upon the dust, consumed with sorrow. How strange that grievous and sore-trying separation! All things visible and invisible were bewildered by this call. Such was their plight that the letter “B” became oblivious of the letter “E”, and the lovers forsook the face of their Beloved, the Almighty, the All-Praised. How woeful was that manifest and irrevocable decree!

21. When matters came to such a pass, the Ancient Beauty bestirred Himself, and all things were inwardly and outwardly set in motion. Then He arose, and through His arising the Most Great Resurrection was ushered in betwixt earth and heaven. Whereupon the Spirit called out once again, before His presence: “O Isrá‘il![4] By the righteousness of God, thou wert created for this day. Wherefore, sound thy trumpet to proclaim the advent of this Manifestation, that every mouldering bone may be quickened thereby!” As bidden, the angel sounded his trumpet, causing all who dwell in heaven and on earth to swoon away. Then he sounded his trumpet anew; they arose and, fixing their gaze upon this glorious Vision, cried out: “Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!”

22. The Ancient Beauty stepped forth, while the Kingdom of Revelation preceded Him and the Heaven of divine Inspiration followed in His wake. On His right strode the Realm of Command, and on His left marched the hosts of the well-favoured ones. All glory be to this manifest and wondrous Cause!
23. And when He reached the courtyard of the House, the concourse of the realm of holiness prostrated themselves at His feet, and the foundations of the House trembled in their separation from God, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Most Exalted. The inhabitants of every city cried out, and the hearts of them that circle round God were sorely shaken. How grievous that separation which caused the very pillars of the world to crumble!

24. Upon hearing the lamentations of the inhabitants of the realm of dust, the Beauty of the All-Beloved lingered a moment, and the Eye of majesty wept sore at their weeping. Indeed, the sighs of His loved ones caused His heart to swell with such grief that none in the heavens or on the earth could bear its weight.

25. He proceeded until He reached the concealing veil, and there at His feet He beheld a child that had removed itself from its mother's breast. And this infant clung to the hem of His robe so earnestly and besought Him in such piteous tones to stay, that the dust of sorrow shrouded the face of every perceiving soul and the winds of anguish blew upon the entire creation. How heavy the burden of grief that clouded the countenance of the sincere! Were it not for the protection of God, the seven heavens would at that moment have been cleft asunder, and the earth would have swallowed up all that dwell upon it, and every lofty peak would have been reduced to dust.

26. The Hand of Power then parted the veil of grandeur, whence the Beauty of the All-Glorious emerged with supreme sovereignty. When He Who is the Self of God, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful, purposed to pass through the gate, the Most Great Spirit made its final proclamation: “By God! The Well-Beloved of the worlds hath departed from His House by reason of what the hands of the oppressors have wrought.”

27. He then wept within Himself with such a weeping that the dwellers of earth and heaven, and those suspended in the air before Him, and those circling round the Countenance of grandeur, wept with Him. And He spoke unto them, saying: “Know ye that in such a departure on the very Day of Our Appearance there are signs and tokens for them that understand. Haply, by reason of Our departure on this most sublime and wondrous Day, the peoples of earth and heaven may emerge from behind the veils of self and passion; draw nigh unto God, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious; and become detached from whatsoever He hath created or ordained in this world. This is that which God had purposed for them as a bounty from His presence. He, verily, is the
All-Bountiful, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.” Blessed, then, be God, the source of this most manifest, this most exalted bestowal!

28. The King of Eternity went forth, flanked by the hosts of the seen and the unseen, with His gaze fixed upon the court of the divine decree. Before Him arose the sighs of His lovers, whilst behind Him could be heard the lamentations of them that yearn after Him. When He reached the banks of the river, He parted from His loved ones, and it was as though the very souls of those devoted servants had parted from their bodies. But He exhorted them to patience and fortitude, and summoned them to the fear of God, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Unconstrained. And then, crossing the river, He entered the Garden of Riḍván, wherein He ascended the throne of His wondrous sovereignty. Blessed, then, be the All-Bountiful, the Source of this all-encompassing grace!

29. Once seated on His throne, the Ancient Beauty shed the splendour of His name, the Self-Subsisting, upon all things, so as to fulfil that which had been recorded by the Supreme Pen at the bidding of God, the Most Exalted, the Most High. Then He cast the light of His name, the All-Possessing, upon all things seen and unseen; and of His name, the Most Manifest, upon all that is mentioned and all that is concealed; and of His name, the Most Great, upon the embodiments of eternity and all other peoples; and of His name, the All-Knowing, upon the exponents of the names of God. Well is it with the one who hath turned towards that which He hath revealed through His unfailing grace on this most august Day. How glorious was His assumption of that seat of majesty, through which the hearts of them that enjoy near access to Him were assured, and the souls of them that have recognized Him drew nigh, and the faces of them that have turned towards Him were illumined, and the spirits of them that have fixed their gaze upon Him were sanctified, and the eyes of the Concourse on high were cheered, and the tongues of all things, visible and invisible, were unloosed in praise of God, the Sovereign Lord, the Mighty, the Gracious! Sweet indeed was that heavenly fragrance through which the musk of hidden meanings was scattered throughout the worlds!

30. The Ancient Beauty’s ascent upon His throne took place at the very moment the people arose to offer the afternoon prayer unto God, the Almighty, the Beauteous. Even in this there are signs for those who are well assured, evidences for them that discern, and allusions for such as have been endued with insight. The Beauty of the All-Merciful tarried in the Garden of Riḍván for twelve days, during which the hosts of the Concourse on high, the well-favoured
angels of God, and the souls of His Messengers circled day and night round the Tabernacle of grandeur and the Pavilion of inviolable sanctity, guarding and protecting the people of God from the hosts of the Evil One. Blessed, then, be God, Who manifested this incomparable, this glorious station!

31.

During every moment of those days, the inmates of the chambers of Paradise descended from on high, bearing chalices brimming over with the living waters of revelation and cups overflowing with the choice wine of holiness, which they proffered unto the dwellers of the pavilion of glory and the inmates of the tabernacle of resplendent majesty. Blessed, then, be God for this most exalted, this all-encompassing grace!

32.

And when the appointed time of tarrying was fulfilled and the decree of departure was received, the Beauty of the All-Merciful arose and went out from the Riḍván Garden riding upon the finest stallion. Blessed, then, be the All-Glorious, Who appeared in the world of creation with a sovereignty that transcendeth the heavens and the earth!

33.

As He departed, a cry of sorrow ascended from the garden, and its trees, and leaves, and fruits, and walls, and air, and ground, and pavilion, while the dwellers of the deserts and the wilderness, and even the very dunes and the dust of the earth, rejoiced at His approach.

34.

Thus did the Beauty of the All-Glorious establish Himself upon the lofty heights of eternity, inasmuch as His gaze was fixed upon the decree which the Finger of God, the Most Exalted, the Most Glorious, had inscribed upon the blessed and snow-white Tablet. And thus do We relate unto you the account of the day of Our Manifestation and the circumstances of Our banishment by reason of the machinations of such seditious souls as had disbelieved in and joined partners with God, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Most Bountiful.

— 11 —

He is the Manifest, the Hidden, the All-Glorious, the All-Knowing, the Ever-Forbearing.

1. O Lord my God! Whenceover I attempt to unloose my tongue to extol the wondrous expressions of Thy transcendent oneness, or to open my lips to disclose the mystic gems of Thine
incomparable handiwork wherewith Thou hast inspired me, I am compelled to recognize that all things sing Thy praise and glorify Thy remembrance—a remembrance which hath so pervaded the heavens and the earth that all things proclaim, in their very being, the wondrous testimonies of Thine exalted praise and bear witness to the marvellous tokens of Thy transcendent unity. Wherefore am I ashamed, as are all who mention Thee, to approach the exalted heights of Thy remembrance, and am powerless, as are all who extol Thee, to ascend unto the lofty summits of Thy praise.

2. Glorified, immeasurably glorified, art Thou! So exalted are the wonders of Thy bounty unto Thy creatures that Thou hast made all things to serve as a sign unto the mindful amongst Thy servants and as an admonishment unto the heedless amidst Thy people. Thy glory beareth me witness! They that are endued with true understanding can discern naught in all creation save the wondrous tokens of Thy matchless handiwork, nor behold aught else in the world of being but the hidden gems of Thine all-glorious sovereignty.

3. I swear by Thy glory, O my Best-Beloved! Wherewith I raise mine eyes to the heavens and witness their loftiness, I recognize naught therein but the wondrous heights of Thy supreme power and sovereign authority. And wherewith I turn my gaze towards Thine earth and observe the potentialities wherewith it hath been endowed, I perceive naught but the peerless signs of Thine immutable nature and abiding constancy. And wherewith, O my God, I behold the sea and its waves, methinks I hear the billowing ocean of Thy wealth and power. In the sun I discern naught but the marvellous splendour of the light of Thy hallowed countenance and presence, and in the wind I sense naught save the stirring breezes of Thy nearness and reunion. In the trees I behold only the revelation of the fruits of Thy wisdom and knowledge, and in their leaves I read but the pages of the books enshrining the mysteries of all that hath been through Thy command or will be through Thy power.

4. Glorified, then, be Thou, O my God! I am powerless, as are all those who enjoy near access unto Thee, to reckon the least sign of Thy creation, inasmuch as Thou hast made all things to mirror forth the manifestations of Thy handiwork and the revelations of Thy sovereign rule. Such being the bounds of powerlessness and poverty that confine me and all created things, how then can any soul ever hope to approach the portals of the sanctuary of Thy knowledge or conceive the least expectation of attaining the city of Thy transcendent glory? Glorified, immeasurably glorified, art Thou! From everlasting Thou hast been sanctified above the
comprehension of Thy creatures, for this comprehension is naught but the product of such idle fancies as pertain to their own selves, while Thou hast remained, in the reality of Thine own Self, exalted above them and all that they possess, and beyond the grasp of all that are in heaven and on earth. There is none other God but Thee, the Almighty, the Incomparable.

Having acknowledged, O my God, with my soul, my tongue, mine essence, and with mine inner and outer being, all my trespasses, whose like mortal eyes have never beheld nor human minds conceived, I implore Thee to pardon me and Thy loved ones for whatsoever we have failed to observe of Thy laws and ordinances. Attire us then with the robe of forgiveness, O my God, in this Day whereon Thou hast assumed the throne of Thy grace and bounty invested with the full glory of Thy names and attributes; the Day whereon the sun of Thy beauty hath dawned above the horizon of Thy grandeur, and the signs of Thy glorious sovereignty have been vouchsafed from the treasury of Thy grace; the Day whereon the sweet savours of reunion have wafted over all who are in Thy heaven and on Thine earth, and the hidden Word hath shone forth from the repository of Thy protection and power.

I bear witness, O my God, that Thou hast ordained this Day to stand unequalled amongst all the days of Thy world and unrivalled amidst all that Thou hast fashioned through Thy creative power. This is that primal Day which Thou hast singled out from among all other days, and exalted over all other times, and appointed as the King of Days unto all peoples, inasmuch as Thou didst manifest on this Day the tokens of Thy transcendent power and the evidences of Thy holy unity. Thou hast caused its radiance to surpass the splendour of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and to transcend the brightness of every lofty and glorious, every shining and brilliant light. Nay, Thou hast illumined this Day, O my Best-Beloved, with the very lights of Thine own inaccessible Being and with the full glory of Thine own exalted Essence.

Magnified, then, be this Day whereon Thou hast revealed unto all things the effulgent lights of Thy glorious unity and cast upon all creation the radiance of Thy sovereign and transcendent oneness, the Day whereon Thou hast lifted the veil of concealment from the countenance of Thy beauty; burned away, through Thy gracious favour, the shrouds of idle fancy blinding the eyes of the people; and summoned all to partake of Thy nearness and reunion. Immensely glorified be this Day whereon the oceans of splendour and grace have surged and the rivers of bounty and justice have flowed, a Day whereon Thy bounty hath attained such a degree that every stammering tongue hath celebrated Thy praise, every blind eye hath beheld the lights of Thy
beauty, and every deaf ear hath hearkened unto the glorious strains of the Dove of Thy oneness.

8. On this Day the poor have been enriched through the wonders of Thine incomparable wealth, the abased have been exalted through the manifold revelations of Thy majesty and glory, the sinful have partaken of the wine of Thy forgiveness, the sick have quaffed from the waters of Thy gracious healing, the disconsolate have taken refuge beneath the shade of the tree of Thy hope and bestowal, and the destitute have attained the shores of the sea of Thy grace and favour.

9. Blind is the eye that faileth, on this Day, to behold Thee seated upon the throne of Thy sovereignty, or to witness Thine undisputed authority over all that Thou hast created to be the exponents of Thy names and attributes! Can any of Thy signs and tokens, O my God, be confounded with those that pertain to Thy creatures? Nay, by Thy glory! Whatsoever proceedeth from Thee and from Thy presence shineth as brightly as the noonday sun in the heaven of Thy justice, whilst all else, even though it be among the treasures of Thy creation or of the quintessence of Thy handiwork, fadeth into utter nothingness. And inasmuch as Thou hast assigned no partner unto Thyself, whatsoever is manifested from Thee hath likewise no peer or equal. And even though Thou hast shed upon all created things the effulgent lights of Thy sublime singleness, and nothing proceedeth from anything except it be manifested from Thee and be created at Thy behest, yet that which appeareth from Thine own Self excelleth and surpasseth all else in Thy heavens and on Thine earth, and thus the tokens of Thy glorious sovereignty are revealed before the eyes of men and Thy testimony is fulfilled before all creation.

10. Since Thy bounty hath suffused the whole universe and the lights of Thy countenance have illumined all created things, I beseech Thee by this Day, and by the hearts which Thou hast made to be the repositories of Thy knowledge and inspiration and the treasuries of Thy revelation and recognition, to grant that the signs of Thine undisputed ascendancy may shine above the horizon of Thy command, that the showers of Thy surpassing mercy may rain from the heaven of Thy grace, and that the tokens of Thy deliverance may appear through the operation of Thy sovereign Will. Thus may Thy friends be released from the clutches of Thy foes, and Thy loved ones delivered from the hands of the wayward among Thy servants, that they may extol Thee, O Lord, with ringing voices in the supernal realms of Thy names and
worship Thee with their entire beings in the kingdom of Thine attributes. And thus may Thy Name be exalted, Thy testimony established, Thy proof vindicated, Thy favour completed, Thy bounty fulfilled, Thy verses promulgated, and Thy signs expounded, in such wise that the entire world may be filled with the light of Thy countenance and all dominion may be Thine alone. No God is there but Thee, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, the All-Compelling.

11. I entreat Thee, moreover, O my God, by Thy Name through which the Bird of the celestial Throne hath warbled in the Realm of the unseen the melodies of Thy transcendent unity, and the Dove of Thy Revelation hath sung forth in the Kingdom of eternity the paean of Thy sovereign oneness, and the Holy Spirit hath magnified in wondrous tones Thine everlasting glory—I entreat Thee not to withhold from these servants the gentle breezes of the morn of Thy nearness and presence, nor to suffer them to be far removed from the sweet savours of the dawn of Thy reunion and recognition.

12. Grant, O my God, that this Festival may be a source of blessings for them and for all Thy loved ones. Supply them, then, with all the good Thou didst ordain in the heaven of Thy decree and purpose and in the Tablets of Thy protection and behest. Vanquish, then, O my God, in the course of this year, their enemies through the power of Thy wrath and of Thy resistless might, and ordain for them, O my God, all that I have asked of Thee and all that I have left unasked. Endue them, then, with such constancy in Thy love and in Thy Cause, that they may never break Thy Covenant nor violate Thy Testament to which they pledged themselves ere the creation of the heavens and the earth. Render them victorious through the most wondrous means that lie hid in the treasuries of Thy power and the repositories of Thy might, and grant them, O my God, to attain the Hour Thou didst promise them in Thy latter Resurrection through the appearance of the Manifestation of Thine all-glorious Self—for this in truth is the very object of their existence and the existence of all things, the cause of their creation and the creation of all things. Suffer them then, O my God, to submit to Thy will under all conditions. Verily, Thou art the Lord of grace and bounty, of endless bestowal and unfettered sovereignty. And Thou art verily the Most Exalted, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful.

13. I beg Thee moreover, O my God, by all the Exponents of Thy names and all the Revealers of Thine attributes, not to number these Thy servants with those who outwardly observe the Festivals associated with the advent of Thy Manifestation, who honour and glorify these days as beseemeth their means and abilities, and yet who remain shut out as by a veil from the One
Who is, through His command and decree, the Author of these observances and of all else, for thus will all their works be rendered vain, even though they perceive it not.

I implore Thee, O my God, by the appearance of Him Whom Thou hast manifested in these days through Thy Name “He Who is Invoked”, and by His beauty, and His majesty, and the afflictions He hath been made to suffer, and His divine fragrances, and His sweet accents, and His grandeur, and His might, to grant that the eyes of Thy loved ones may be freed from the veils of ignorance and blindness and from the obscuring mists of doubt and wretchedness. Perchance they may fix their gaze upon the Tree of Thy Revelation and upon that which appeareth thereon of the wondrous leaves of Thine ancient eternity and the precious fruits of Thy holy unity, may take delight in them and in that which they contain of Thy hidden gifts and concealed knowledge, and may rid themselves thereby of attachment to aught else. This, verily, is but perfect grace and unalloyed blessing, and the very essence, origin, and ultimate abode thereof, for within the compass of Thy knowledge there is naught higher than this grace nor sweeter than this blessing. Thou, verily, art the King, the Omniscient, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

— 12 —

Ḥúr-i-ʻUjáb

(Tablet of the Wondrous Maiden)

1. The hallowed Beauty shone resplendent from behind the veil. How wondrous a thing, how wondrous indeed!

2. And, lo, the flame of rapture caused all souls to swoon away. How wondrous is this, how wondrous indeed!

3. Rising up, they soared unto the blest pavilion ’neath the throne of heaven’s canopy. How wondrous a mystery, how wondrous indeed!

4. Say: The Maiden of Eternity unveiled Her face—may her wondrous beauty be exalted indeed!—
5. Shedding forth from earth to heaven its resplendent rays. How wondrous a light, how wondrous indeed!

6. A lightning glance She cast, as piercing as a shooting star—how wondrous Her glance, how wondrous indeed!—

7. A glance consuming every name and every title in its flames. How wondrous a feat, how wondrous indeed!

8. To the dwellers of the realm of dust She turned Her gaze. How wondrous Her gaze, how wondrous indeed!

9. And then did all creation shake and pass away. How astounding a death, how astounding indeed!

10. She then let fall a raven lock, an ornament of spirit in the darkest night—how wondrous a hue, how wondrous indeed!—

11. From which the fragrant breezes of the spirit were perceived. How wondrous a scent, how wondrous indeed!

12. In Her right hand She bore the ruby wine and in Her left a portion of the finest fare. How wondrous a grace, how wondrous indeed!

13. With hands encrimsoned with Her ardent lovers’ blood—how wondrous is this, how wondrous indeed!—

14. In cups and chalices She passed round the wine of life. How wondrous a draught, how wondrous indeed!

15. With harp and lute She sang in praise of Her Beloved. How wondrous a song, how wondrous indeed!

16. Whereat the hearts were melted in consuming flames. How wondrous a love, how wondrous indeed!
17. Of Her sustaining beauty She bestowed a boundless share—how wondrous a share, how wondrous indeed!—
18. Then brought Her sword of charm upon Her lovers’ necks. How wondrous a blow, how wondrous indeed!
19. Her pearl-like teeth did flash, no sooner had She smiled. How wondrous a pearl, how wondrous indeed!
20. Whereat the hearts of them that know cried out and wept. How wondrous a piety, how wondrous indeed!
21. But they that doubt and boast of self denied Her truth. How astounding a denial, how astounding indeed!
22. And, hearing this, in sorrow, She repaired to Her abode. How astounding Her grief, how astounding indeed!
23. She returned from whence She came: How lofty were the steps She traced! How astounding a decree, how astounding indeed!
24. She cried a cry of anguish, as to reduce all things to naught. How astounding Her woe, how astounding indeed!
25. And from Her lips there streamed these words of warning and rebuke—how astounding a stream, how astounding indeed!—
26. “Why do ye gainsay Me, O people of the Book?” How astounding is this, how astounding indeed!
27. “Claim ye to be the guided and the loved ones of the Lord?” By God! How astounding a lie, how astounding indeed!
28. “O my friends,” She said, “We shall not come again,”—how wondrous a return, how wondrous indeed!—
29. “But will conceal God’s secrets in His Scriptures and His Books,” as bidden by One mighty and bounteous indeed!

30. “Nor shall ye find Me till the Promised One appear on Judgement Day.” By My life! How astounding an abasement, how astounding indeed!

– 13 –

He is the Most Holy, the Most Glorious.

1. Praise be to Thee, O Thou our Lord the Most Merciful! This is one of the days of the festival Thou hast named Ridván, a festival wherein Thou hast manifested Thy sovereignty over all who are in Thy heavens and on Thine earth, notwithstanding that the people have arisen to harm Thee and to extinguish Thy light, and wherein the Luminary of Thy oneness hath shone forth from the dayspring of Thy House upon all things visible and invisible.

2. I beseech Thee, O my God, by this Day and by Him Whom Thou hast made to be the Dawning-Place of Thy revelation and the Dayspring of Thine inspiration, to ordain for Thy loved ones the good of this world and of the world to come, and to number them with those whom naught can distract from Thy remembrance and praise. Strengthen, then, their hearts in such wise that the ascendancy of those who have disbelieved in Thee and in Thy signs may never dismay them.

3. O Lord! Illumine their eyes with the light of Thy knowledge, and their hearts with the splendour of Thy countenance. Bind, then, their souls and spirits together, that through their unity all the inhabitants of Thy dominion may become united.

4. Potent art Thou over all who are in the kingdoms of Thy revelation and Thy creation. Thou, verily, art the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. Praised be Thou, O Lord of the worlds!
In the name of God, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful!

1. Glorified art Thou, O my God! I beseech Thee by this Day, and by Him Whom Thy sovereignty and Thy majesty and Thy might have manifested therein, and by the tears which Thine ardent lovers have shed in their remoteness and separation from Thee, and by the fire that hath consumed the hearts of them that yearn to behold Thy beauty, to send down upon us on this Day that which beseemeth Thy beauty and becometh Thy grace and Thy generosity.

2. O Lord! We are but poor creatures who have detached ourselves from all save Thee, set our faces towards the treasury of Thy wealth, and fled from remoteness in the hope of approaching Thee. Send down, then, upon us from the heaven of Thy Will that which will sanctify us from the world and from all that pertaineth thereunto, and attire us with the raiment Thou hast purposed for us through Thy grace and favours.

3. I beseech Thee moreover, O my God, by Thy Name which Thou hast made to be the treasury of Thy knowledge, the repository of Thy revelation, and the fountainhead of Thine inspiration, the Name through which Thou hast separated and united the faithful and the infidels, to clothe us in this Day with the vesture of Thy guidance and the mantle of Thy favour. Enable us, then, to champion Thy Cause, to assist Thy Faith, and to speak forth Thy Name before all who are in Thy heaven and on Thine earth, that every land may be filled with the wonders of Thy remembrance and every face illumined with the light of Thy countenance.

4. O Lord! We bear witness that Thou art God and that there is none other God but Thee. We testify that Thou hast from everlasting occupied so transcendent a station as to elude the grasp of even them that have recognized Thee, and that Thou wilt abide unto everlasting in heights of glory so inaccessible that the birds of the hearts of Thy devoted servants will forever fail to soar into the atmosphere of Thy knowledge.

5. O Lord! All things bear witness to Thy unity, and whatsoever can be said to exist, whether visible or invisible, testifieth to Thy oneness. Thou, verily, hast sanctified Thy Self beyond the
knowledge of aught save Thee, and hast exalted Thine Essence above the mention of all else. All the words and meanings that have been created in the realm of existence return, in the end, to that Word which hath flowed from the pen of Thy Command and the fingers of Thy Decree. Every great one is as naught before the evidences of Thy greatness, and every mighty one is as a thing forgotten before the revelations of Thy transcendent might.

O Lord! Thou seest Thy loved ones encircled by the workers of iniquity. I beseech Thee by that name of Thine whereby the fire of Thy wrath was kindled and the flames of Thine anger were made to blaze, to lay hold upon them that have oppressed Thy loved ones. Send down then upon us all that we have besought of the wonders of Thy grace and favour, and suffer us not to be debarred from turning towards Thee and drawing nigh unto the sanctuary of Thy transcendent oneness. Thou, verily, art that omnipotent One to Whose might all the atoms of the earth have from all eternity borne witness, and to Whose majesty all created things will ever testify. Thou, in truth, art the Lord of might and grandeur, and the Ruler of earth and heaven. No God is there but Thee, the Almighty, the All-Glorious, Whose help is implored by all.

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1. Praise be to Thee, O my God, for having cast in this Day the radiance of all Thy names upon all created things, O Thou Who art the Lord of glory, majesty, and grandeur; of power, might, and blessings! This is the Day whereon He Who is the Mouthpiece of God, the All-Possessing, the Inaccessible, the Most High, hath called out from the realm of eternity, saying: “The Kingdom is God’s, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the Most Glorious!”

2. Lauded be Thy name, O Thou Who causest the winds to blow and the dawn to break, Who revealest the verses and unveil est the proofs! All things proclaim that Thou art God, and that there is none other God but Thee, the Sovereign, the All-Powerful, the Most Exalted, the Most Great. Magnified be Thy name, O Thou Who art the Fashioner of the heavens and the Creator of all names, Who sheddest Thy splendour upon all things through the power of Thy Most Great Name. This, verily, is the name whereby the Mystic Dove hath warbled upon the celestial bough, proclaiming: “All dominion belongeth forever unto God, our Lord, the Most Merciful!”
3. Glorified art Thou, O King of eternity, and Ruler of the nations, and Quickener of every mouldering bone! Praise be unto Thee, a praise that no earthly tongue can ever befittingly extol, a praise through which the outpourings of Thy mercy have rained upon all created things and the light of Thy countenance hath shone upon all who are in heaven and on earth. Praise be unto Thee, a praise that hath unloosed the tongue of every stammerer in Thy celebration, that hath drawn every remote one nigh unto the seat of Thy mighty throne, and that hath guided every thirsty one to the living waters of Thy bounty and the soft-flowing streams of Thy favour. Praise be unto Thee, a praise through which the fragrance of the robe of Thy mercy hath been wafted upon all who are in heaven and on earth, and the sweet smell of the roses of Thy Paradise hath been diffused over the dwellers of the cities of eternity, and every name hath been made to extol Thy remembrance and glory. Praise be unto Thee, a praise that hath endued the hearts of Thy loved ones with such constancy that no earthly veil can hinder them from fixing their gaze upon the horizon of Thy bounties, nor can the ascendancy of the oppressors deter them from beholding the wondrous light of Thy countenance. Praise be unto Thee, a praise that hath blotted out from the hearts of Thy servants the mention of aught else save Thee and aided them to teach Thy Cause and to blazon Thy remembrance in every region.

4. I beseech Thee, O my God, by Thy most excellent names and Thy most exalted attributes, and by them that have soared in the atmosphere of Thy nearness and good-pleasure and taken flight upon the wings of trust and detachment towards the Dayspring of Thy name, the All-Merciful, and by the blood that hath been shed for Thy sake, and by the sighs that have been uttered for Thy love, to accept from us on this day all our works in Thy path.

5. This is the Day whereon the All-Merciful shed the splendour of His effulgence upon all names. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

6. This is the Day whereon He Who is the Hidden and the Unseen appeared before the eyes of all creation. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

7. This is the Day whereon the Most Great Idol was shattered. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!
8. This is the Day whereon the Lord of mercy revealed Himself unto all creation. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

9. This is the Day whereon Pharaoh was drowned and Moses beheld Him Who is the Beauty of the All-Glorious Lord. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

10. This is the Day whereon the false gods of idle fancy were overthrown through the power of our Lord, the Almighty, the All-Knowing. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

11. This is the Day whereon the billows of the Most Great Ocean were made manifest in the Scene of transcendent glory. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

12. This is the Day whereon all created things were summoned to the presence of their Lord, the Inaccessible, the Most High. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

13. This is the Day whereon all things testified to that whereunto the Tongue of Power hath testified before the Divine Lote-Tree. All glory be to that which God hath bestowed upon us!

16

In the name of God, Who hath cast His splendour over all creation!

1. O concourse of earth and heaven! Give ear to the testimony of God that proceedeth from the mouth of your Lord, the All-Glorious. He verily hath testified, in Himself and by Himself, ere the heaven of His Cause was raised up and the clouds of His Decree were gathered together, that there is none other God but Him, and that He Who hath appeared is that Most Great Name through which His ancient proof and testimony have been established before all who are in the heavens and on the earth.

2. Verily God hath testified, in Himself and by Himself, and in His inmost Essence, that there is none other God but Him and that He Who is come through the power of truth is the Manifestation of His most excellent names and the Dawning-Place of His most exalted attributes. Through Him the voice of the mystic Morn rang out from the horizon of eternity and
the Most Great Spirit spoke forth before the Divine Lote-Tree, saying: “This, verily, is He Who hath been intended in the Cities of Names and mentioned in the Tablets revealed from the empyrean of the Will of your Lord, the Ruler of earth and heaven. He, indeed, is the most great Instrument amidst the nations, Who hath come to regenerate the whole world.”

3. Verily God hath testified, in Himself and by Himself, and ere the creation of the world and the manifestation of His names and attributes, that there is none other God but Him, and that He Who is come upon the clouds of divine decree is the Trust of God amongst you and the Revealer of His Essence in your midst.

4. We verily behold, at this hour and from His realm, all the denizens of earth and heaven, and summon them to this Beauty that hath solaced the eyes of the inmates of Paradise and the dwellers of the tabernacle of holiness, them that have fixed their gaze on this Scene of resplendent glory and whom the veils of human limitations have failed to debar from beholding the countenance of God, the Almighty, the Most Wondrous. He it is Who proclaimeth within all things: “Verily, I am your Lord, the Merciful, the Compassionate. From time immemorial I was a Treasure hidden in a station unknown to all save Mine own Self, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. Cast away all that ye possess and soar on the wings of detachment into this atmosphere wherein waft the breezes of the mercy of your Lord, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.”

5. By My life! The Day is come which from all eternity was concealed in the treasuries of the might of your Lord. Rejoice in this blessed, this glorious and sublime Day. For He verily is Mine own Appearance amongst you, and whoso maketh the slightest distinction between Him and Me hath indeed strayed far from the straight path of truth. He it is Who hath caused the Mystic Dove to warble upon the twigs of the Tree of glory, saying: “By the one true God! The Best-Beloved of the worlds is come!”

6. Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! Can anyone befittingly thank Thee for such blessings as Thou hast sent down from the heaven of Thy oneness and the firmament of Thy Will, blessings which Thou hast reserved for the people of Bahá in the realm of creation? Nay, by Thy might, O Thou the Beloved of the worlds and the sole Desire of them that have recognized Thee! Wert Thou to endow every creature of earth and heaven with a myriad tongues, even to the number of the atoms of the universe, and were they to yield Thee thanks, so long as Thy kingdom and
Thy dominion endure, for the bounties which Thou hast bestowed upon Thy loved ones in this Day—a Day whereon Thou hast revealed Thyself in Thine own Essence and inmost Being to the dwellers of earth and heaven, and in Thy Beauty to the inhabitants of the cities of eternity, and through Thy Names to them that are immersed in the billowing oceans of grandeur—yet would their thanksgiving fade into nothingness before that which Thou hast bestowed upon them through Thy grace and bounty.

7. I know not, O my God, which among Thy gifts to extol in this Day, a Day that Thou hast made to be the source of all Thy days and the dawning-place whence the rays of the light of Thine Essence and the splendours of the glory of Thy countenance have shone forth. Shall I praise the heavenly repast which Thou hast sent down in this Day unto the people of Bahá, whom Thou hast singled out for Thy favour amongst the dwellers of earth and heaven? This, verily, is a sustenance borne in the vessel of Thy words, from every letter of which a myriad suns of divine wisdom and utterance dawn forth and the lights of authority and exposition shine resplendent. This, verily, is a sustenance whose substance is such inner meanings as had from everlasting lain concealed within Thine inviolable treasuries and hidden beneath the tabernacles of Thy glory. Or shall I, O my God, extol Thine appearance in this Day from the dawning-place of Thine Essence; or Thine establishment, before the gaze of all men, upon the throne of Thy name, the All-Bountiful; or yet Thy proclamation, through the Tongue of might and power, to all things visible and invisible? By Myself, the True One! The Hidden Secret and Treasured Mystery hath been revealed. Whosoever seeketh Me shall behold Me.

8. I swear by Thy glory, O Fashioner of names and Creator of earth and heaven! The tongues of Thy creatures are powerless to render thanks for the favours Thou hast bestowed upon them in this Day, a Day from which Thou hast made all Thy days to proceed. This is the Day whereon Thou hast summoned the well-favoured to the Dayspring of Thy nearness and the sincere to the Dawning-Place of the light of Thy countenance. This is the Day concerning which Thou didst covenant with every Prophet to herald unto all the advent of Him Who shall be manifested therein with Thy sovereign might and celestial power.

9. This is the Day whereon Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, cried out from the midmost heart of Paradise, saying: “O peoples of the earth! By God, the Beloved of the worlds and the Desire of every understanding heart is come! He, verily, is the One to Whose voice I hearkened on My Night Journey but Whose beauty I was not to behold until the days attained their consummation
in this Day, a Day which is the adornment of all the days of God, the Sovereign Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised. This is the Day whereon the rule of His grace and all-pervading mercy hath been so universally established as to embrace every soul, for He hath in truth summoned each and all to His presence and hath shed upon all things the splendour of His glorious and refulgent beauty."

10. This is the Day whereon the Spirit proclaimed from the midmost heart of heaven: “O concourse of creation! He Who is the sovereign Ruler of all hath been made manifest. That which pertaineth to the Kingdom of My Lord hath been fulfilled. He Who is the Beloved of My heart and the Helper of My Cause is now come. Follow Him, and be not of those that have turned aside. This is the Day whereon every veil hath been parted, and your Lord, the Almighty, the Most Bountiful, hath appeared and fulfilled through His appearance all that was promised aforetime. Hasten then to this resplendent, this most luminous Beauty!

11. “O priests! Tell Our servants to ring not the bells save in His name, the All-Glorious, the Most High. This is the Day whereon the sore athirst have attained the stream of everlasting life and the yearning souls have beheld the Vision of the All-Merciful. This is the Day whereon the lowly have been exalted, the poor enriched, the sick made whole, the deaf given to hear His melody, and the blind made to see. Render thanks, then, and be not of those who join partners with God. The Kingdom of God doth in truth circle round Him. It is for His sake that I adorned the cross with My body and then arose from the dead to perfect His remembrance amongst men.

12. “O people of the Gospel! Take heed lest ye direct your prayers towards Me after having turned away from Mine all-glorious Father, Who changed, through His love, Abraham’s fire into light. He who awaiteth another when once He hath appeared is indeed in grievous error. Hasten, then, to the river of the mercy of your Lord, the All-Merciful, and beware lest ye withhold yourselves from its soft-flowing waters. We have, verily, reared you for this Day. Peruse ye the Book, that ye may apprehend the meaning of My words in My days. Verily, I revealed Myself only for the sake of His Cause, and I came amongst you solely to herald the Kingdom of God, your Lord and the Lord of the worlds. That which was hidden is now revealed, and that which was concealed is now come. Bestir yourselves to greet this Day, a Day whereon the gates of heaven have been flung open, and the clouds of eternity have rained down, and the Nightingale of His Cause hath warbled its melody upon the twigs of the Divine Lote-Tree, and the hearts of the Concourse on high have been seized with longing in the all-highest Paradise, and the Maids
of Heaven have hastened forth from their celestial chambers towards His mighty Throne. Cast away all that ye possess and cleave unto that which hath been enjoined upon you by this Ancient Beauty.

13. “O concourse of divines! Still your pens, for the Pen of Glory hath spoken. Lay aside your books, for the Book hath appeared that compriseth all that hath been said aforetime and sufficeth all the inhabitants of the earth. Rise above the horizon of certitude in the name of your Lord, the All-Merciful, and tear asunder the veils that have come between you and the Lord of all creation.

14. “Thus commandeth you the Spirit, Who offered up His life that the world might be quickened and that the Desire of every heart might appear. And He, verily, hath appeared through the power of truth. Follow Him, and cling not unto that which ye possess of the proclamations of former times. For the trumpet-blast hath been sounded, and lo! the earth of idle fancy hath been cleft asunder; and the Tongue of Grandeur hath spoken from the pavilion of glory, saying: The Kingdom in this Day is God’s, the All-Possessing, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the Most Great! The dead have risen and the souls have been gathered together, and yet still We behold you entombed in the sepulchres of heedlessness and desire. Fear God, O people! Rise from amongst the dead and turn your faces towards the Dayspring of His grace which shineth above this resplendent horizon. I, verily, await His command, that by His leave I might descend into the world, even as I ascended from it. He, verily, hath the power to ordain whatsoever He pleaseth.

15. “O followers of the Gospel! Do ye seek Jerusalem, when He Who built the House of God therein by a mere indication of His will hath come? Far have ye wandered in the paths of error! Of a certainty, no deed will be accepted in this Day unless it be performed by His leave, and the invocation of no soul shall rise up unto God unless it be uttered for His love. Thus hath the decree been fulfilled and the command established by Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Knowing.”

16. This is the Day whereon Moses lifted up His voice from the Sinai of Our name, the Almighty, saying: “O people! Verily the Day is come! This is He at Whose separation I wept sore in the desert of longing, and for Whose love I bewailed in the wilderness of ardent love. And when I purposed to enter the sanctuary of His nearness and to gaze upon His beauty, He restrained Me through the power of His sovereign might and withheld Me from the desire of My heart.
Whereupon He addressed Me, saying: ‘Thou shalt never behold Me!’ and returned Me to the splendours of the lights of His mighty Throne. Such was the longing with which I was then consumed as I am powerless to describe and the ears of the true believers unable to hear. But lo, He hath now appeared with the power of truth and unveiled to you His beauty. At every moment He proclaimeth: ‘O concourse of creation, look and ye shall behold Me!’ By God, this is the Word that hath proceeded from the mouth of the Will of your Lord, the All-Merciful. It behoveth you to offer up your souls for His sake, if ye be of them that judge with fairness. Thus have I informed you, O people, of Him Whose remoteness hath lacerated My heart and Who hath made Me to quaff the cup of separation. Bear witness unto Him, and be not of the heedless. Blessed are your eyes for having beheld, and your ears for having hearkened. And woe unto them that have deprived themselves of this resplendent Vision.”

17. This is the Day whereon the Point of the Bayán[6] called out from the midmost heart of Paradise, saying: “O people! This is He in Whose path I laid down My life. This is He for Whose sake I revealed Myself and of Whose presence I bore unto you the most joyful tidings. Beware lest ye deny the One but for Whom the Day-Star of the Bayán would never have dawned nor would the verses of the All-Merciful have been revealed. By God! He it is Who caused the morn of inner meaning and explanation to break, and the gates of divine reunion to be opened before the faces of all the peoples of the earth. It is by His Name that the cities of names have been adorned; it is by His remembrance that the hearts of the chosen ones have been set ablaze. Beware lest ye deal with Him as ye dealt with Me. I testify that I was but a herald of His Revelation unto all who are in heaven and on earth, and that I conditioned the Bayán upon His leave and good-pleasure. I swear by God! It is for His love that I rose up amongst you and consorted with you. Were it not for Him, I would assuredly not have revealed a single word or verse. Cling ye to the hem of the robe of His mercy, and hold fast to the cord of His love. This is the Day whereon every atom proclaimeth: ‘By the Possessor of all names and attributes! Verily, He Who is invoked by all that are in heaven is now come!’”

18. Praise be to Thee, O my God, for having adored the preamble of the book of eternity with this most luminous Day, a Day whereon Thou didst shed the splendour of Thy most excellent names and most exalted attributes upon all created things. This, verily, is a Day whereon Thou hast ordained that each of Thy names be endowed with the potentialities of all Thy names. Blessed, then, be they that have turned towards Thee, attained Thy presence, and hearkened unto Thy call.
19. O Lord, my God! I beseech Thee by this Day, and by Thy most consummated Name through which the Most Great Ocean hath surged, to protect the people of Bahá from them that have disbelieved in Thy mighty signs. Make them then, O my God, to be the exponents of Thine ascendancy and Thy might, that they may arise to glorify Thee and to celebrate Thy praise amidst Thy servants, in such wise that neither the veils of the people of the earth, nor their insinuations, nor the onslaught of them that have arisen to put out Thy light, may keep them back from Thee. O God! Deprive them not of the gentle breezes that are wafting in this Day, a Day whereon every atom proclaimeth: “Verily, Thou art God; no God is there but Thee!” O Lord, adorn them with the ornaments of constancy and certitude, and cause them to be champions of Thy Cause amidst all creation.

20. O my God and the God of all the worlds! O my desire and the desire of every understanding heart! I implore Thee, by Him Who hath caused the sun of Thy revelation and inspiration to dawn, to ordain for the people of this Day that which Thou hast ordained for the chosen ones amongst Thy servants. Send down then upon them such liberal effusions of Thy grace as none hath previously attained, and cause them to circle round the court of Thy nearness and the sanctuary of Thy presence. Inspire them, then, in Thy Cause with that which setteth ablaze the hearts and souls of men. Make each one of them to be as a lamp of Thy remembrance unto those servants of Thine whom self and passion have veiled from recognizing the Manifestation of Thine Essence and the Dayspring of Thy signs.

21. O Lord! Thou art He to Whose power and sovereignty every mighty one hath testified, and to Whose majesty and grace every great one hath borne witness. Bestow, then, upon Thy loved ones that which beseemeth this Day, a Day which Thou hast made to be a luminous ornament upon the brow of all Thy days, and which Thou hast caused to shine above the horizon of eternity. Send down then upon them, from the clouds of Thy oneness and the heaven of Thy grace, that which will enable them to dispense with aught else except Thee.

22. O Lord! Give them to drink, from the hands of Thy mercy, a draught from that river of everlasting life that floweth from the right hand of Thy Throne, and aid them to abide by that which Thou hast revealed in Thy perspicuous Book. Thou, verily, ordainest as Thou pleasest. No God is there but Thee, the Most Exalted, the Sovereign Protector, the All-Compelling, the Almighty, the Most Bountiful.
In the name of God, the Almighty, the Unconstrained!

1. Praise be to Thee, O my God, for having gathered together Thy loved ones to celebrate Thy Most Great Festival, whereon Thou didst shed the splendour of Thy most excellent names upon all who are in heaven and on earth, the Festival whereon the Day-Star of truth hath shone resplendent above the horizon of Thy will and the Ancient King ascended the throne of Thy mercy.

2. This is the ninth day of Riḍván, O my God, and on this day one of Thy loved ones hath, as a token of his love for Thy Beauty and in the eagerness of his devotion to Thee, invited Him Who is the Manifestation of Thy Self and the Dayspring of Thy glory to leave His room in the prison for another. There he hath spread before Thy presence such of Thy gifts as he hath been able to provide, notwithstanding that the people had plundered all his possessions and the possessions of others among Thy loved ones. O Lord, since Thou hast gathered them round Thee and aided them to attain this surpassing grace, endue them with constancy in Thy Cause and bind their hearts together in such wise that no differences may arise in their midst. Grant, then, that they may guide all people unto this Luminary, the like of which the eye of creation hath never beheld and which standeth peerless in the realms of the seen and the unseen.

3. Thou well knowest, O Lord, that it hath been the desire of all that circle round Thee to receive Thee during the days of Riḍván. A few have been enabled, in accordance with their means, to attain this honour, while others, through its want, have been prevented therefrom. These have contented themselves with passing round in white vessels that crimson-coloured wine that is brewed from the leaves of China.\[7\] I beseech Thee, O my God, by Thy Word which Thou hast made to be the lodestone of the hearts and souls of men, the Word whereby Thou hast drawn Thy servants unto the heaven of Thy loving-kindness and the horizon of Thy grace and bounty, to accept from the former all that they have accomplished in Thy path and to ordain for the latter the recompense of whatsoever they had purposed to accomplish. Thou, verily, art the Lord of bounty and generosity, of grace and glory. O Lord, help certain souls among them to know their
own selves and to restrain their tongues, lest they utter that which would abase their stations and bring their works to naught. Thou, verily, hast power over all things.

4.
Thou hearest, O Lord, the lamentations of the sincere amongst Thy loved ones who were hindered from meeting Thee during these days, days which Thou hast ordained as a festival unto Thy people and as a treasure and honour unto the inhabitants of Thy realm.... Accept from them, O Lord, that which they have purposed in their love for Thee, and ordain for each and every one of them the recompense of such as have attained unto every good Thou hast in store. Thou, verily, hast power over all things.

5.
Look Thou moreover, O my God, with the glances of the eye of Thy mercy, upon Thy loved ones who are scattered in the land of Há.[8] They have tarried there ever since they were prevented from seeking shelter beneath the shade of the Tree of Thy oneness. O Lord, deny them not the things Thou dost possess. Verily, Thou art the Ruler of the heavens and of the earth. No God is there but Thee, the Almighty, the All-Wise. Praise be to Thee, O Lord of the worlds and Desire of all them that have recognized Thee!

6.
The glory of Thy might beareth me witness, O my God! It behoveth all to lay down their lives for the sake of Thine ear that heareth the cries of Thine ardent lovers in every land and the sighs of Thy friends who suffer at the hands of Thine enemies. Verily, the voice of their lamentation hath been raised on account of their love for Thee, and their hearts are consumed with the fire of separation in Thy days. May my soul be a ransom for Thy long-suffering, O Countenance of glory, and may my spirit be a sacrifice for Thy forbearance, O Thou in Whose hand is the kingdom of earth and heaven!

7.
I swear by Thy glory, O Beloved of them that yearn after Thee and Desire of those who cherish Thy love! Were any man of insight to press upon this holy Tablet, he would see the blood of my heart flowing from it, a blood that hath melted for the love of Thee and of those who have been hindered from beholding Thy face after having directed their steps towards Thee and having come to abide within the city or its precincts. May my entire being be offered up as a sacrifice for Thy patience, O Lord of might and power! May my soul be a ransom for Thy forbearance, O Thou the fear of Whose wrath causeth the hearts of the dwellers of the kingdom of names to tremble!
8. Praise be to Thee, O solace of the hearts of the people of Bahá! I testify, O my God, that none besides Thee can fathom Thine inscrutable wisdom or apprehend the truths and mysteries enshrined in all that hath proceeded from the manifold tokens of Thy power and the manifestations of Thy will. I entreat Thee moreover, O my God, to graciously enable my loved ones to show their hospitality unto Thee through their character and their conduct, that the heavenly table of Thy loving-kindness may thereby be spread before all Thy servants and that all the peoples of the world may gather round it. This, verily, is the true meaning of offering hospitality unto one’s fellow men. Thy might and Thy power are, verily, equal to all things. Praise be to Thee, O Lord of the worlds, Thou Whose power embraceth the heavens and the earth!

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*In the name of God, the Most Glorious!*

1. Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! This is one of the days of Thy Ridván Festival whereon Thou didst shed the splendour of Thy name, the All-Merciful, upon all the peoples of the earth, and didst manifest Thy power and Thy sovereignty unto all created things. Thou seest, O Lord, how on this day one of Thy loved ones hath invited the Manifestation of Thine Essence from His room to another room in this prison, wherein a gathering hath been held in Thy name and adorned with the ornament of Thine own Self, in such wise that the Sun of Thy beauty hath shone forth above its horizon. Blessed be the one who hath attained thereunto, blessed the day that hath been honoured with Thy revelation, and blessed the land that hath been illumined by the light of Thy Countenance.

2. O Lord! Ordain for him, and for Thy servants who have been hindered from meeting Thee, the recompense decreed for such as have attained Thy presence and convened a gathering to exalt Thy name and Thy remembrance. Write down, then, for them what Thou hast written down for such as enjoy near access to Thee. Thy might, in truth, is equal to all things.
1. Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! This is one of the days of Thy Riḍván Festival whereon a corner of this prison hath been decked forth for the appearance of Him Who is the Exponent of Thy beauty, granting the request of one whose ardent devotion hath prompted him to invite Thee. All praise be to Thee, inasmuch as Thou hast, as a token of Thy bounty unto them that abide beneath Thy shadow and circle round Thy being, shone forth on this day above the horizon of the prison with such splendour as to illumine the entire creation.

2. This is the Day whereon Thou didst unloose Thy tongue and bestow in abundance the gems of inner meaning and utterance upon the peoples of the world. Quicken, then, O Lord, through this heavenly cup, all who dwell on earth, and ordain that which will be profitable unto those among the people of Bahá who long to behold Thy face, but whom the misdeeds of Thine enemies have debarred therefrom, O King of Names and Ruler of earth and heaven. Bestow upon them, moreover, a portion of Thy manifold bounties in these days whereon every abased one hath been exalted, every faithful soul invested with Thy grace, every chilled heart enkindled, every poor one enriched, and every seeker sent forth upon the path.

3. Laudèd art Thou, O Lord, for having singled out Thy loved ones and chosen them from amongst Thy people, and for having turned Thy gaze towards them from this spot wherein He Who is the Embodiment of Thy Cause lieth imprisoned. O Lord, withhold not from them the things Thou dost possess, but so enrapture their hearts through the breezes of Thy Revelation that they may detach themselves from all else but Thee and set their faces towards the court of Thy grace and generosity. Potent art Thou to do what Thou pleasest, and powerful art Thou over all things. All praise be to Thee, O Desire of the worlds!
1. All praise be to Thee, O Lord my God! This is one of the days of Thy Riḍván Festival whereon a servant of Thine hath extended an invitation to the Manifestation of Thine Essence and the Revealer of Thy Sovereignty, and hath decked forth a place in the prison to receive Thine all-glorious Beauty, O Thou Who art the Lord of earth and heaven! All glory be to this hour wherein He Who is the Dayspring of Thy transcendent might hath directed His steps from one room of the prison to another. I beseech Thee, O Thou Who art the King of Names and Creator of earth and heaven, to write down for such of Thy loved ones as have been debarred from entering the precincts of Thy mercy and standing before the throne of Thy might the recompense decreed for such as have attained Thy presence and beheld Him Who is Thy Beauty.

2. Thou hearest, O Lord, their sighs and lamentations in their separation and remoteness from Thee. I beseech Thee to ordain for them all the good Thou dost possess. Potent art Thou to do as Thou willest. No God is there but Thee, the Almighty, the All-Praised.

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Lawḥ-i-ʻĀshiq va Mašūq

(Tablet of the Lover and the Beloved)

_He is the Exalted, the Transcendent, the All-Highest._

1. Release yourselves, O nightingales of God, from the thorns and brambles of wretchedness and misery, and wing your flight to the rose-garden of unfading splendour. O My friends that dwell upon the dust! Haste forth unto your celestial habitation. Announce unto yourselves the joyful tidings: “He Who is the Best-Beloved is come! He hath crowned Himself with the glory of God’s Revelation, and hath unlocked to the face of men the doors of His ancient Paradise.” Let all eyes rejoice, and let every ear be gladdened, for now is the time to gaze on His beauty, now is the fit time to hearken to His voice. Proclaim unto every longing lover: “Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!” and to the messengers of the Monarch of love impart the tidings: “Lo, the Adored One hath appeared arrayed in the fullness of His glory!” O lovers of His
beauty! Turn the anguish of your separation from Him into the joy of an everlasting reunion, and let the sweetness of His presence dissolve the bitterness of your remoteness from His court.

2. Behold how the manifold grace of God, which is being showered from the clouds of Divine glory, hath, in this day, encompassed the world. For whereas in days past every lover besought and searched after his Beloved, it is the Beloved Himself Who now is calling His lovers and is inviting them to attain His presence. Take heed lest ye forfeit so precious a favour; beware lest ye belittle so remarkable a token of His grace. Abandon not the incorruptible benefits, and be not content with that which perisheth. Lift up the veil that obscureth your vision, and dispel the darkness with which it is enveloped, that ye may gaze on the naked beauty of the Beloved’s face, may behold that which no eye hath beheld, and hear that which no ear hath heard.

3. Hear Me, ye mortal birds! In the Rose-Garden of changeless splendour a Flower hath begun to bloom, compared to which every other flower is but a thorn, and before the brightness of Whose glory the very essence of beauty must pale and wither. Arise, therefore, and, with the whole enthusiasm of your hearts, with all the eagerness of your souls, the full fervour of your will, and the concentrated efforts of your entire being, strive to attain the paradise of His presence, and endeavour to inhale the fragrance of the incorruptible Flower, to breathe the sweet savours of holiness, and to obtain a portion of this perfume of celestial glory. Whoso followeth this counsel will break his chains asunder, will taste the abandonment of enraptured love, will attain unto his heart’s desire, and will surrender his soul into the hands of his Beloved. Bursting through his cage, he will, even as the bird of the spirit, wing his flight to his holy and everlasting nest.

4. Night hath succeeded day, and day hath succeeded night, and the hours and moments of your lives have come and gone, and yet none of you hath, for one instant, consented to detach himself from that which perisheth. Bestir yourselves, that the brief moments that are still yours may not be dissipated and lost. Even as the swiftness of lightning your days shall pass, and your bodies shall be laid to rest beneath a canopy of dust. What can ye then achieve? How can ye atone for your past failure?

5. The everlasting Candle shineth in its naked glory. Behold how it hath consumed every mortal veil. O ye moth-like lovers of His light! Brave every danger, and consecrate your souls to its consuming flame. O ye that thirst after Him! Strip yourselves of every earthly affection, and
hasten to embrace your Beloved. With a zest that none can equal make haste to attain unto Him. The Flower, thus far hidden from the sight of men, is unveiled to your eyes. In the open radiance of His glory He standeth before you. His voice summoneth all the holy and sanctified beings to come and be united with Him. Happy is he that turneth thereunto; well is it with him that hath attained, and gazed on the light of so wondrous a countenance.

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In Thy name, the Most Wondrous, the Most Glorious!

1. Since Thou hast, O my God, stablished Thyself upon the throne of Thy transcendent unity, and ascended the mercy-seat of Thy oneness, it befitteth Thee to blot out from the hearts of all beings whatsoever may keep them back from gaining admittance into the sanctuary of Thy Divine mysteries, and may shut them out from the tabernacle of Thy Divinity, that all hearts may mirror Thy beauty, and may reveal Thee, and speak of Thee, and that all created things may show forth the tokens of Thy most august sovereignty, and shed the splendours of the light of Thy most holy governance, and that all who are in heaven and on earth may laud and magnify Thy unity, and give Thee glory, for having manifested Thy Self unto them through Him Who is the Revealer of Thy oneness.

2. Divest, then, Thy servants, O my God, of the garments of self and desire, or grant that the eyes of Thy people may be lifted up to such heights that they will discern in their desires naught except the stirring of the gentle winds of Thine eternal glory, and may recognize in their own selves nothing but the revelation of Thine own merciful Self, that the earth and all that is therein may be cleansed of whatever is alien to Thee, or anything that manifesteth aught save Thy Self. All this can be fulfilled throughout Thy dominion by Thy word of command, “Be,” and it is! Nay, even swifter than this, and yet the people understand not.

3. Glorified, immeasurably glorified art Thou, O my Beloved! I swear by Thy glory! I recognize this very moment that Thou hast granted all for which I have supplicated Thee, in this blessed night which, as decreed by Thee, calleth to remembrance Him Who was the Companion of Thy beauty and the Beholder of Thy face, ere I had been mentioned by Thee, or called into being within the court of Thy holiness. I perceive that Thou hast made all things to be the
manifestations of Thy behest, and the revelations of Thy handiwork, and the repositories of Thy knowledge, and the treasuries of Thy wisdom. I recognize, moreover, that were any of the revelations of Thy names and Thine attributes to be withheld, though it be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, from whatsoever hath been created by Thy power and begotten by Thy might, the foundations of Thine everlasting handiwork would thereby be made incomplete, and the gems of Thy Divine wisdom would become imperfect. For the letters of negation, no matter how far they may be removed from the holy fragrances of Thy knowledge, and however forgetful they may become of the wondrous splendours of the dawning-light of Thy beauty, which are shed from the heaven of Thy majesty, must needs exist in Thy realm, so that the words which affirm Thee may thereby be exalted.

4. Thy might beareth me witness, O my Well-Beloved! The entire creation hath been called into being to exalt Thy triumph and to establish Thine ascendancy, and all the bounds that have been set by Thee are but the signs of Thy sovereignty, and proclaim the power of Thy might. How great, how very great, are the revelations of Thy wondrous power in all things! They are such that the lowliest among Thy creatures hath been made by Thee a manifestation of Thy most august attribute, and the most contemptible token of Thy handiwork hath been chosen as a recipient of Thy most mighty name. Poverty, as decreed by Thee, hath been made the means for the revelation of Thy riches, and abasement a path leading to Thy glory, and sinfulness a cause for the exercise of Thy forgiveness. By them Thou hast demonstrated that to Thee belong Thy most excellent titles, and unto Thee pertain the wonders of Thy most exalted attributes.

5. Since Thou hast purposed, O my God, to cause all created things to enter into the tabernacle of Thy transcendent grace and favour, and to waft over the entire creation the fragrances of the raiment of Thy glorious unity, and to look upon all things with the eyes of Thy bounty and Thy oneness, I beseech Thee, therefore, by Thy love, which Thou hast made to be the mainspring of the revelations of Thine eternal holiness, and the flame that gloweth within the hearts of such of Thy creatures as yearn towards Thee, to create, this very moment, for those of Thy people who are wholly devoted to Thee, and for such of Thy loved ones as love Thee, out of the essence of Thy bounty and Thy generosity, and from the inmost spirit of Thy grace and Thy glory, Thy Paradise of transcendent holiness, and to exalt it above everything except Thee, and to sanctify it from aught else save Thyself. Create, moreover, within it, O my God, out of the lights shed by Thy throne, handmaidens who will intone the melodies of Thy wondrous and most sweet invention, that they may magnify Thy name with such words as have not been heard by any of
Thy creatures, be they the inmates of Thy heaven or the dwellers of Thine earth, nor been comprehended by any of Thy people. Unlock, then, the gates of this Paradise to the faces of Thy loved ones, that haply they may enter them in Thy name, and by the power of Thy sovereignty, that thereby the sovereign bounties vouchsafed by Thee unto Thy chosen ones and the transcendent gifts granted unto Thy trusted ones may be perfected, that they may extol Thy virtues with such melodies as none can either intone or describe, and that none of Thy people may conceive the design of appearing in the guise of any of Thy chosen ones, or of emulating the example of Thy loved ones, and that none may fail to discern between Thy friends and Thine enemies, or to distinguish them that are devoted to Thee from such as stubbornly oppose Thee. Potent art Thou to do what Thou willest, and powerful and supreme art Thou over all things.

6. Exalted, immeasurably exalted art Thou, O my Beloved, above the strivings of any of Thy creatures, however learned, to know Thee; exalted, immensely exalted art Thou above every human attempt, no matter how searching, to describe Thee! For the highest thought of men, however deep their contemplation, can never hope to outsoar the limitations imposed upon Thy creation, nor ascend beyond the state of the contingent world, nor break the bounds irrevocably set for it by Thee. How can, then, a thing that hath been created by Thy will that overruleth the whole of creation, a thing that is itself a part of the contingent world, have the power to soar into the holy atmosphere of Thy knowledge, or reach unto the seat of Thy transcendent power?

7. High, immeasurably high art Thou above the endeavours of the evanescent creature to soar unto the throne of Thine eternity, or of the poor and wretched to attain the summit of Thine all-sufficing glory! From eternity Thou didst Thyself describe Thine own Self unto Thy Self, and extol, in Thine own Essence, Thine Essence unto Thine Essence. I swear by Thy glory, O my Best-Beloved! Who is there besides Thee that can claim to know Thee, and who save Thyself can make fitting mention of Thee? Thou art He Who, from eternity, abode in His realm, in the glory of His transcendent unity, and the splendours of His holy grandeur. Were any one except Thee to be deemed worthy of mention, in all the kingdoms of Thy creation, from the highest realms of immortality down to the level of this nether world, how could it, then, be demonstrated that Thou art established upon the throne of Thy unity, and how could the wondrous virtues of Thy oneness and Thy singleness be glorified?
8. I bear witness, this very moment, to what Thou hast testified for Thine own Self, ere Thou hadst created the heavens and the earth, that Thou art God, and that there is none other God besides Thee. Thou hast from everlasting been potent, through the Manifestations of Thy might, to reveal the signs of Thy power, and Thou hast ever made known, through the Daysprings of Thy knowledge, the words of Thy wisdom. No one besides Thee hath ever been found worthy to be mentioned before the Tabernacle of Thy unity, and none except Thyself hath proved himself capable of being praised within the hallowed court of Thy oneness.

9. Praise be to Thee, O my God, that Thou hast revealed Thy favours and Thy bounties; and glory be to Thee, O my Beloved, that Thou hast manifested the Day-Star of Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender mercies. I yield Thee such thanks as can direct the steps of the wayward towards the splendours of the morning light of Thy guidance, and enable those who yearn towards Thee to attain the seat of the revelation of the effulgence of Thy beauty. I yield Thee such thanks as can cause the sick to draw nigh unto the waters of Thy healing, and can help those who are far from Thee to approach the living fountain of Thy presence. I yield Thee such thanks as can divest the bodies of Thy servants of the garments of mortality and abasement, and attire them in the robes of Thine eternity and Thy glory, and lead the poor unto the shores of Thy holiness and all sufficient riches. I yield Thee such thanks as can enable the Heavenly Dove to warble forth, upon the branches of the Lote-Tree of Immortality, her song: “Verily, Thou art God. No God is there besides Thee. From eternity Thou hast been exalted above the praise of aught else but Thee, and been high above the description of any one except Thyself.” I yield Thee such thanks as can cause the Nightingale of Glory to pour forth its melody in the highest heaven: “'Alí (the Báb), in truth, is Thy servant, Whom Thou hast singled out from among Thy Messengers and Thy chosen Ones, and made Him to be the Manifestation of Thyself in all that pertaineth unto Thee, and that concerneth the revelation of Thine attributes and the evidences of Thy names.” I yield Thee such thanks as can stir up all things to extol Thee, and to glorify Thine Essence, and can unloose the tongues of all beings to magnify the sovereignty of Thy beauty. I yield Thee such thanks as can fill the heavens and the earth with the signs of Thy transcendent Essence, and assist all created things to enter the Tabernacle of Thy nearness and Thy presence. I yield Thee such thanks as can make every created thing to be a book that shall speak of Thee, and a scroll that shall unfold Thy praise. I yield Thee such thanks as can establish the Manifestations of Thy sovereignty upon the throne of Thy governance, and set up the Exponents of Thy glory upon the seat of Thy Divinity. I yield Thee such thanks as can make
the corrupt tree to bring forth good fruit through the holy breaths of Thy favours, and revive the bodies of all beings with the gentle winds of Thy transcendent grace. I yield Thee such thanks as can cause the signs of Thine exalted singleness to be sent down out of the heaven of Thy holy unity. I yield Thee such thanks as can teach all things the realities of Thy knowledge and the essence of Thy wisdom, and will not withhold the wretched creatures from the doors of Thy mercy and Thy bountiful favour. I yield Thee such thanks as can enable all who are in heaven and on earth to dispense with all created things, through the treasuries of Thine all-sufficing riches, and can aid all created things to reach unto the summit of Thine almighty favours. I yield Thee such thanks as can assist the hearts of Thine ardent lovers to soar into the atmosphere of nearness to Thee, and of longing for Thee, and kindle the Light of Lights within the land of 'Iráq. I yield Thee such thanks as can detach them that are nigh unto Thee from all created things, and draw them to the throne of Thy names and Thine attributes. I yield Thee such thanks as can cause Thee to forgive all sins and trespasses, and to fulfil the needs of the peoples of all religions, and to waft the fragrances of pardon over the entire creation. I yield Thee such thanks as can enable them that recognize Thy unity to scale the heights of Thy love, and cause such as are devoted to Thee to ascend unto the Paradise of Thy presence. I yield Thee such thanks as can satisfy the wants of all such as seek Thee, and realize the aims of them that have recognized Thee. I yield Thee such thanks as can blot out from the hearts of men all suggestions of limitations, and inscribe the signs of Thy unity. I yield Thee such thanks as that with which Thou didst from eternity glorify Thine own Self, and didst exalt it above all peers, rivals, and comparisons, O Thou in Whose hands are the heavens of grace and of bounty, and the kingdoms of glory and of majesty!

Lauded be Thy name, O Lord my God, and my Master! Thou bearest witness, and seest, and knowest the things that have befallen Thy loved ones in Thy days, and the continual trials, and the successive tribulations, and the incessant afflictions, which have been sent down upon Thine elect. Such hath been their plight that the earth became too strait for them, and they were encompassed by the evidences of Thy wrath and the signs of Thy fear in every land, and the doors of Thy mercy and Thy loving-kindness were shut against them, and the garden of their hearts was deprived of the overflowing showers of Thy grace and Thy bountiful favours. Wilt Thou withhold, O my God, from such as love Thee the wonders of Thine ascendancy and triumph? Wilt Thou shatter, O my Beloved, the hopes which they who are devoted to Thee have fixed on Thy manifold bounties and gifts? Wilt Thou keep back, O my Master, those that have recognized Thee from the shores of Thy sanctified knowledge, or wilt Thou cease to rain down
upon the hearts of such as desire Thee the showers of Thy transcendent grace? No, no, and to this Thy glory beareth me witness! I testify this very moment that Thy mercy hath surpassed all created things, and Thy loving-kindness encompassed all that are in heaven and all that are on earth. From everlasting the doors of Thy generosity were open to the faces of Thy servants, and the gentle winds of Thy grace were wafted over the hearts of Thy creatures, and the overflowing rains of Thy bounty were showered upon Thy people and the dwellers of Thy realm.

11. I know full well Thou hast delayed to manifest Thy triumph in the kingdom of creation by reason of Thy knowledge which embraceth both the mysteries of Thy decree, and the hidden things ordained behind the veils of Thine irrevocable purpose, that thereby those who have entered beneath the shadow of Thy transcendent mercy may be separated from those who have dealt disdainfully with Thee, and turned back from Thy presence at the time when Thou didst manifest Thy most exalted Beauty.

12. Exalted, immeasurably exalted art Thou, therefore, O my Beloved! Forasmuch as Thou hast divided, in Thy realm, Thy loved ones from Thine enemies, and hast perfected Thy most weighty testimony and Thy most infallible Proof unto all who are in heaven and on earth, have mercy, then, upon those who were brought low in Thy land, by reason of what hath befallen them in Thy path. Exalt them, then, O my God, through the power of Thy might and the potency of Thy will, and raise them up to proclaim Thy Cause through Thine omnipotent sovereignty and purpose.

13. I swear by Thy glory! My sole purpose in showing forth Thine ascendancy hath been to glorify Thy Cause, and to magnify Thy word. I am persuaded that if Thou wert to delay to send down Thy victory and to demonstrate Thy power, the signs of Thy sovereignty would assuredly perish in Thy land, and the tokens of Thy rule would be blotted out throughout Thy dominion.

14. My breast is straitened, O my God, and sorrows and vexations have compassed me round, for I hear among Thy servants every praise except Thy wondrous praise, and behold amidst Thy people the evidences of all things save the evidences of what Thou hast prescribed unto them by Thy behest, and destined for them through Thy sovereign will, and ordained unto them by Thine overruling decree. They have strayed so far from Thee that should any of Thy loved ones deliver unto them the wondrous tokens of Thy unity, and the gem-like utterances that attest Thy transcendent oneness, they would thrust their fingers into their ears, and would cavil at him and
mock him. All this hast Thou set down through Thine all-encompassing sovereignty, and apprehended through Thine omnipotent supremacy.

15. Glorified, immeasurably glorified art Thou, O my Master! Look, then, upon the hearts which, in their love for Thee, have been transfixed by the darts of Thine enemies, and the heads which were borne on spears for the sake of the exaltation of Thy Cause and the glorification of Thy name. Have pity, then, upon those hearts which have been consumed by the fire of Thy love, and been touched by such tribulations as are known only unto Thee.

16. All laud and honour to Thee, O my God! Thou well knowest the things which, for a score of years, have happened in Thy days, and have continued to happen until this hour. No man can reckon, nor can any tongue tell, what hath befallen Thy chosen ones during all this time. They could obtain no shelter, nor find any refuge in which they could abide in safety. Turn, then, O my God, their fear into the evidences of Thy peace and Thy security, and their abasement into the sovereignty of Thy glory, and their poverty into Thine all-sufficient riches, and their distress into the wonders of Thy perfect tranquillity. Vouchsafe unto them the fragrances of Thy might and Thy mercy, and send down upon them, out of Thy marvellous loving-kindness, what will enable them to dispense with all except Thee, and will detach them from aught save Thyself, that the sovereignty of Thy oneness may be revealed and the supremacy of Thy grace and Thy bounty demonstrated.

17. Wilt Thou not, O my God, look upon the tears which Thy loved ones have shed? Wilt Thou not pity, O my Beloved, the eyes which have been dimmed by reason of their separation from Thee, and because of the cessation of the signs of Thy victory? Wilt Thou not behold, O my Master, the hearts wherein have beaten the wings of the dove of longing and love for Thee? By Thy glory! Things have come to such a pass that hope hath well nigh been banished from the hearts of Thy chosen ones, and the breaths of despair are ready to seize them, by reason of what hath befallen them in Thy days.

18. Behold me, then, O my God, how I have fled from myself unto Thee, and have abandoned my own being that I may attain unto the splendours of the light of Thy Being, and have forsaken all that keepeth me back from Thee, and maketh me forgetful of Thee, in order that I may inhale the fragrances of Thy presence and Thy remembrance. Behold how I have stepped upon the dust of the city of Thy forgiveness and Thy bounty, and dwelt within the precincts of Thy
transcendent mercy, and have besought Thee, through the sovereignty of Him Who is Thy Remembrance and Who hath appeared in the robe of Thy most pure and most august Beauty, to send down, in the course of this year, upon Thy loved ones what will enable them to dispense with any one except Thee, and will set them free to recognize the evidences of Thy sovereign will and all-conquering purpose, in such wise that they will seek only what Thou didst wish for them through Thy bidding, and will desire naught except what Thou didst desire for them through Thy will. Sanctify, then, their eyes, O my God, that they may behold the light of Thy Beauty, and purge their ears, that they may listen to the melodies of the Dove of Thy transcendent oneness. Flood, then, their hearts with the wonders of Thy love, and preserve their tongues from mentioning any one save Thee, and guard their faces from turning to aught else except Thyself. Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou, verily, art the Almighty, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

19. Protect, moreover, O my Beloved, through Thy love for them and through the love they bear to Thee, this servant, who hath sacrificed his all for Thee, and expended whatsoever Thou hast given him in the path of Thy love and Thy good-pleasure, and preserve him from all that Thou abhorrest, and from whatsoever may hinder him from entering into the Tabernacle of Thy holy sovereignty, and from attaining the seat of Thy transcendent oneness. Number him, then, O my God, with such as have allowed nothing whatever to deter them from beholding Thy beauty, or from meditating on the wondrous evidences of Thine everlasting handiwork, that he may have fellowship with none except Thee, and turn to naught save Thyself, and discover in whatever hath been created by Thee in the kingdoms of earth and heaven nothing but Thy wondrous Beauty and the revelation of the splendours of Thy face, and be so immersed beneath the billowing oceans of Thine overruling providence and the surging seas of Thy holy unity, that he will forget every mention except the mention of Thy transcendent oneness, and banish from his soul the traces of all evil suggestions, O Thou in Whose hands are the kingdoms of all names and attributes!

20. Lauled be Thy name, O Thou Who art the Goal of my desire! I swear by Thy glory! How great is my wish to attain unto a detachment so complete that were there to appear before me those countenances which are hid within the chambers of chastity, and the beauty of which Thou didst veil from the eyes of the entire creation, and whose faces Thou didst sanctify from the sight of all beings, and were they to unveil themselves in all the glory of the splendours of Thine incomparable beauty, I would refuse to look upon them, and would behold them solely for
the purpose of discerning the mysteries of Thy handiwork, which have perplexed the minds of
such as have drawn nigh unto Thee, and awed the souls of all them that have recognized Thee.
I would, by Thy power and Thy might, soar to such heights that nothing whatsoever would have
the power to keep me back from the manifold evidences of Thy transcendent dominion, nor
would any earthly scheme shut me out from the manifestations of Thy Divine holiness.

21. Glorified, immeasurably glorified art Thou, O my God, and my Beloved, and my Master, and
my Desire! Shatter not the hopes of this lowly one to attain the shores of Thy glory, and deprive
not this wretched creature of the immensities of Thy riches, and cast not away this suppliant
from the doors of Thy grace, and Thy bounty, and Thy gifts. Have mercy, then, upon this poor
and desolate soul who hath sought no friend but Thee, and no companion except Thee, and no
comforter save Thee, and no beloved apart from Thee, nor cherished any desire but Thyself.

22. Cast, then, upon me, O my God, the glances of Thy mercy, and forgive me my trespasses
and the trespasses of them that are dear to Thee, and which come in between us and the
revelation of Thy triumph and Thy grace. Cancel Thou, moreover, our sins which have shut off
our faces from the splendours of the Day-Star of Thy favours. Powerful art Thou to do Thy
pleasure. Thou ordainest what Thou willest, and art not asked of what Thou wishest through the
power of Thy sovereignty, nor canst Thou be frustrated in whatsoever Thou prescribest through
Thine irrevocable decree. No God is there save Thee, the Almighty, the Most Powerful, the
Ever-Living, the Most Compassionate.

– 23 –

Súriy-i-Qalam

(Súrih of the Pen)

This is the Súrih of the Pen, which hath been sent down from the heaven of eternity unto
them that have fixed their gaze upon His Throne.

In the name of God, the Most Wondrous, the Most Glorious!
1. O Pen of the Most High! Bear thou witness, in thine own self, that verily He is God and that there is none other God but Me, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Bear thou witness, then, by thine own essence, that verily I am God and that there is none other God but Him, that all have been created at My behest and that all abide by My command. Bear thou witness, moreover, by thine inmost being, that this is the Beauty of God which hath dawned above the horizon of the Unseen, a Beauty that hath ever been, and shall ever remain, unknown to all save Himself. He, verily, is the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the Best-Beloved. Through but one of His effulgences the Day-Stars of majesty and grandeur have shone forth, the hearts of the denizens of the everlasting realm and the sanctified realities that lay hid beneath the mystic veil have been called into being, and the secrets of all that was and shall be have been laid bare.

2. O Pen! Let nothing dismay thee, for unto thee have We vouchsafed the inviolable protection of Our sovereign might and power, and into thee have We breathed a spirit, one breath of which would, if wafted upon the bodies of all existence, cause them to arise from their couches, unloose their tongues, speak forth, and bear witness in their inmost being that there is none other God but Me, the Powerful, the Glorious, the Exalted, the Mighty, the Peerless, the All-Subduing, the Self-Subsisting.

3. O Pen of Command! Be assured in thyself, and reveal then unto all beings a measure of that which God bestowed upon thee ere the creation of words and letters and the fashioning of all things, and ere the establishment of the kingdom of names and attributes and the revelation of His mighty and guarded Tablet. Say: This is a Power unsurpassed from all eternity to all eternity, could ye but know it, O concourse of the Spirit, and this is a Beauty unrivalled from the beginning that hath no beginning, could ye but perceive it. Say: Whoso conceiveth the least design to confront this Pen, to presume partnership with it, to gain intimate access unto it, or to fully grasp that which emanateth from it, be assured that the Evil One doth whisper within his breast. Thus hath the Divine Command been issued, could ye but understand. Say: By God! None hath ever been, nor shall ever be, able to rival Me amidst all creation. Thus hath it been inscribed by the Pen of divine revelation, could ye but comprehend it. Say: A single letter of Mine utterance hath, verily, brought forth the entire universe, the realities of all things, and worlds which none can fathom save God, the Almighty, the Most Manifest.
4. O Pen! Give ear unto that which the unbelievers have imputed to thee. Say: O assemblage of malice! Perish in your hatred, in your envy and your unbelief! By Him Who is the Eternal Truth! This is that Pen through a mere intimation of whose will the souls of the Concourse on high, and the realities of the denizens of the everlasting realm, and the essences of human hearts and minds, were all fashioned. This is that Pen through but a movement of which the sun of might and grandeur, and the moon of loftiness and sanctity, and the stars of grace and favour, were called into existence. This is that Pen through which were created the all-highest Paradise and all that abide therein, and the celestial garden and all that pertaineth thereto, could ye but comprehend. Say: Through but a single stroke have been manifested the knowledge of all that was and shall be, and the creation of all things past and future. Open then your eyes that ye may bear witness to this truth.

5. O Pen! Content thyself with that which thou hast so far intimated to the world of thy sovereignty and power, for the hearts of the envious are well-nigh bursting. Veil, then, thy Cause, and reveal no more than this, for thy words would rend asunder the heavens of ancient glory, and cleave in twain the earth of holiness itself, and cause the inmates of the realm of grandeur to swoon away. Be patient in thy heart, for the people of the world are incapable of beholding thy sovereignty or perceiving thy manifold signs, how much less of recognizing Him Who hath created and fashioned thee through but a single word of His utterance! Exalted is thy Lord above all that thou hast revealed in the past or wilt manifest in the future. Exalted is He above all that His sincere and well-favoured servants have comprehended or will ever comprehend. Content thyself, then, with that which thou hast thus far revealed. I swear by the One True God! Should all that are in the heavens and on earth and whatsoever lieth between them—whether trees, fruits, leaves, twigs, branches, rivers, oceans, or mountains—encounter a single word of thy pronouncement, they would assuredly speak forth that which the Burning Bush, springing from the soil of divine revelation, spoke unto Moses in that holy and blessed Vale.

6. O Pen! Give ear unto the wondrous account of that which God hath graciously bestowed upon thee. Detach thyself, then, from all thou dost possess, and announce unto the people the joyful tidings of the appearance of the Most Exalted Word in this mighty Revelation, that haply they may recognize their Creator and renounce all else but Him. Call then upon the Concourse on high to rejoice, saying: O ye exponents of grandeur sheltered beneath the tabernacle of
majesty! O ye denizens of the dominion of power abiding beneath the canopy of glory! O ye dwellers of the kingdom of the seen and the unseen situate in the furthermost precincts beyond the ocean of eternity! O ye manifestations of the divine names in the highest heaven! Let your hearts rejoice in this Most Great Festival wherein God Himself proffereth this most pure chalice unto such as stand before Him with beseeming lowliness and humility. Adorn, then, your souls with the silken vesture of certitude and your bodies with the broidered robe of the All-Merciful, for lo, a light hath dawned forth and shone resplendent from the horizon of My brow, before whose revelation all that are in the heavens and on earth have bowed down in adoration, could ye but perceive it.

7. Say: I swear by the one true God that there hath never appeared in all creation another like unto Him. Whoso asserteth otherwise hath gainsaid the testimony of God and is accounted among the faithless in His mighty and well-guarded Tablet. Say: This is the Light through which the inhabitants of the celestial world and their inner realities have been brought forth, and through which the embodiments of the heavenly realm and their inmost essences have been raised up. This is the Light through which God hath created worlds that have neither beginning nor end, worlds whereof none hath the slightest intimation save those whom their Lord hath willed. Thus do We disclose unto you the hidden mysteries, that haply ye may ponder the signs of God. Say: This, verily, is the Light before whose effulgence every head hath bowed down in lowliness, and before whose manifestation the hearts of the well-favoured of God, and the souls of His holy ones, and the inmost realities of His true worshippers, and beyond them His honoured servants, have prostrated themselves in adoration.

8. O inmates of the holy sanctuary! I swear by God! He in very truth is the Sanctuary of God amongst you and His sacred Precinct in your midst, the holy Site of the Spirit before your eyes and the Station of both inner and outer peace and security. Take heed lest ye deprive yourselves of the Sanctuary of His knowledge. Hasten unto Him and tarry not. This is that Sanctuary round which circle the Manifestations of the Divine Being and the Embodiments of His eternal Reality, and whose court God hath hallowed beyond the reach of the outcast and the ungodly. This, verily, is that Sanctuary the blessing of whose service is sought by the Maids of Heaven, and them that dwell in the depths of the Most Great Ocean, and them that abide in the habitation of holiness and the realm of reunion—and yet the people, for the most part, comprehend not.
9. O denizens of earth and heaven! Abandon your couches and undertake the Most Great Pilgrimage for the sake of this pure and resplendent Beauty. Should God witness your inability to do so, He will exempt you therefrom and command you instead to approach Him with heart and soul. And they alone shall attain this who behold all that is in the heavens and on the earth as a day wherein none was deemed worthy of mention. These are they to whom their Lord will give to drink, from His own hands, of the sealed wine of holiness. Verily, whoso turneth his face towards this most blessed and luminous Spot, round him shall circle resplendent suns whose effulgence knoweth neither beginning nor end, and above the horizon of his heart there shall dawn that Sun of suns before Whose light the orbs of worldly names are wrapped in darkness, if ye be of them that understand.

10. O Pen! Proclaim unto the concourse of eternity, saying: O ye that rove in the arenas of immortality! O ye that abide beneath the tabernacle of grandeur! O ye gem-like realities that lie hid from the eyes of creation! Descend from your lofty retreats to celebrate and rejoice, and to quaff from the cup of everlasting life that the hand of the All-Glorious is proffering on this Day. This, in truth, is a Day the like of which hath never been witnessed in all creation, a Day whereon the Eye of Grandeur hath been cheered in the Seat of transcendent glory. O ye bearers of the throne of God! Adorn the most great throne on this Day, for the unseen Beauty hath appeared—He Whose presence the inmates of the all-highest Paradise and the dwellers of the garden of repose have thus far been powerless to attain. Say: By God! The Hidden Secret hath appeared in the plenitude of His glory and hath solaced by His beauty the eyes of all things seen and unseen, and beyond them the eyes of them that have cleansed their souls with the holy waters streaming from the ocean of the Name of their Lord, the Most Manifest.

11. Say: This is a Day whereon God hath made His own Self known and revealed it unto all who are in the heavens and on earth, a day whereon He hath established His sovereign ascendancy over the kingdoms of revelation and creation. How exalted, then, is this holy, this most blessed and best-beloved grace! This is a Day, moreover, whereon the Ancient Beauty hath appeared with such an adorning as to cause the veils to be rent asunder, and the mysteries to be revealed, and the fruits to spring forth, and all things to utter the praise of their Lord, the Unconstrained—a Day whereon the earth and all that it holdeth, and the heavens and all that they contain, and the mountains and all that they conceal, and the oceans and all that they treasure in their depths, have laid bare their secrets, though the people remain veiled therefrom.
This is a day whereon the idols of misbelief and worldly desire have been shattered and the Ancient Beauty hath ascended His mighty throne. The Spirit of glory hath called out from the precincts of eternity, and the Most Holy Spirit from the Divine Lote-Tree, and the Spirit of command from the Tree beyond which there is no passing, and the Spirit of might from the exalted dominion, and the faithful Spirit from the right hand of the Burning Bush, saying: “Hallowed be the Lord of mercy, Who hath appeared in the world of existence invested with that which mortal eyes had never beheld!” Say: He it is Who through a movement of His finger causeth the creatures of earth and heaven to perish, Who through a word of His mouth bringeth them to life again, and Who through a mere intimation of His glance turneth all creation unto the presence of God, the Help in Peril, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved.

12. Say: O concourse of monks! Abandon the churches wherein ye have glorified your Lord, for He Who ascended unto heaven hath in very truth come down again and circleth round the Throne of God. I swear by the one true God! In this Day the bells are pealing out in My remembrance, the Trumpet soundeth My praise, and the Bugle proclaimeth My Name, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Deprive not yourselves of the grace of this day; hasten rather to the seat of the Throne, forsake that which ye possess, and take fast hold of the Cord of God, Who hath arisen and manifested Himself and spoken forth for all to hear.

13. O inhabitants of the realms of the seen and the unseen! Sing, O sing the most joyous melodies on this Festival of God which hath appeared with the power of truth and to which the former and latter generations had never attained, could ye but know it. This is the Day whereon the Pen of God hath absolved all who are in the heavens and on earth. Thus hath His eternal command shone forth from the dayspring of His Pen, that ye may rejoice in your souls and be of those whose hearts are gladdened.

14. O Pen! Announce unto the Maid of Paradise: “[10]“By God! This day is thy day. Come forth as thou willest, and array thyself as thou pleasest with the brodered robe of names and the silken vesture of immortality. Emerge then from thine eternal habitation even as the sun that dawneth from the countenance of Bahá. Descend from thy lofty heights and, standing betwixt earth and heaven, lift the veil of concealment from thy luminous face and shine forth above the horizon of creation as the black-eyed Damsel, that haply the most great veil may be torn away from the eyes of these people and they may behold the Scene of transcendent glory, the Beauty of God, the Most Holy, the Most Powerful, the Best-Beloved.”
“O Ancient Beauty! The unbelievers, verily, are lost in the stupor of idle fancy and are powerless to turn their eyes towards the most hallowed Court. Through the sovereign potency of Thine inviolable protection, Thou hast shielded me beneath the veils of light and guarded my beauty from the gaze of Thine enemies. Thine is the power to command; Thou ordainest as Thou pleasest through Thy word ‘Be’, and it is.”

“O Maid of Bahá! Step forth from the court of eternity, but let not thy most pure gaze linger upon the faces of mortal men. I swear by the one true God! None save them that are possessed of true insight can ever hope to behold thee in this most sublime vision. Leave the kingdom of names on thy right and the dominion of attributes on thy left, and shine forth by My leave above the horizon of Mine inviolable protection, divested of all that hath been created in the realm of Revelation and shorn of all that hath appeared in the kingdom of creation, that thou mayest manifest the beauteous image of God in all regions. Intone, then, the sweetest of melodies betwixt earth and heaven, that all existence may be detached from aught save the face of thy Lord, the Most Holy, the Most Gracious, the Well-Beloved. Beam forth above the horizon of the Ríḍván with the beauty of the All-Merciful, and let thy fragrant locks flow upon thy bosom, that the perfume of the garment of thy most gracious Lord may be diffused throughout the world. Hide not thy luminous form from the eyes of the concourse of Revelation, and withhold not thine ethereal veil of holiness from the gaze of the people. Present thyself, then, before the Throne with thy locks flowing, thine arms bejewelled, thy countenance blushing, thy cheeks aglow, and thine eyes adorned, and take hold of the snow-white chalice in My most exalted Name. Proffer then to the denizens of the realm of eternity the crimson wine of Mine all-glorious Beauty, that haply the concourse of Revelation may sanctify their souls in this most august Festival by virtue of this pure draught, and that they may emerge from behind the veil of concealment through the power of Mine almighty and all-powerful, Mine all-subduing and self-subsisting sovereignty.”

“By God! I am the Maid of Heaven, abiding in the midmost heart of Paradise, hidden behind the veil of the All-Merciful and concealed from the eyes of men. From time immemorial I remained shrouded in the veil of sanctity beneath the Tabernacle of Grandeur. I heard a most sweet call from the right hand of the throne of my Lord, the Most Exalted, and I saw Paradise itself set in motion and all its inhabitants stirred up in their longing to attain the presence of God, the All-Glorious. Whereupon another call was raised: ‘By God! The Beloved of the worlds is come! Blessed be the one who attaineth His presence, and beholdeth His face, and giveth ear
to His most holy, His most glorious and beloved utterance. The Voice of God hath enraptured
the souls of the Concourse on high and the hearts of the dwellers of the everlasting realm, and
the all-consuming ecstasies of love have caused them to tremble with yeaming and to fix their
gaze upon the court of sanctity, the station of unapproachable glory.’ Were I to speak in every
tongue, I would nonetheless be powerless to describe that which I beheld in that state. And yet,
in spite of this grace that hath encompassed all things, and this rapture that hath overtaken all
that are immersed beneath the ocean of names, behold, I found the people of the Bayán veiled
and heedless, and lying as dead in the graves of oblivion. O people of the Bayán! Reckon ye to
be treading the path of the spirit even as ye have rejected this Revelation? Nay, by my Beauty,
which God hath ordained as the manifestation of His own Beauty amongst all the former and
latter generations!”

18.

“O Maid of holiness! Forsake the mention of such people, for their hearts are as immovable
as stones and impervious to all but the promptings of idle fancy. For they remain immature in
the Cause of God and suckle the milk of ignorance at the breast of waywardness. Leave them
to dwell upon the dust, and warble thou My melodies in the realm of eternity. Apprise, then, the
inhabitants of Paradise of that which hath been manifested in the kingdom of creation. Thus
may they become attracted by Thy sweet accents, hasten towards this hallowed and promised
Beauty, and become fully apprised of this Day—a Day whereon all things have been adorned
with the ornament of names, a Day whereon every poor one hath found the source of true
wealth and every deprived and sinful soul hath attained forgiveness.”

19.

O people! Seek ye in these days the grace of God and His all-embracing mercy, and beware
lest ye follow in the footsteps of every veiled and heedless soul.

20.

Thus the summons of the Pen regarding this blessed and fated account endeth, in this
Tablet.

– 24 –

*He is the Ever-Abiding.*
1. It is the Festival of Riḍván, the vernal season wherein the Beauty of the All-Glorious was revealed betwixt earth and heaven. In this wondrous Day the gates of Paradise were flung open before the faces of all people, at the behest of Him Who is the All-Praised, and the outpourings of divine mercy rained down from the clouds of celestial favour upon His countless embodiments and manifestations in the world of being.

– 25 –

1. Another letter of thine, which made mention of the hallowed and blessed days of Riḍván, was received. Praise be to God, there wafted therefrom the sweet savours of the rose-garden of true knowledge and inner meaning. Should the people of the world resolve, one and all, to extol the days that We passed in the garden of Najib Páshá, which hath been designated as the Garden of Riḍván, they would find themselves utterly incapable thereof and would confess to their powerlessness.

2. Verily, the eye of creation hath never beheld the light of those days, nor hath the gaze of humankind ever witnessed their like. The approach of Him Who is the Desire of the world, His entrance into that garden, His ascent upon the throne of utterance, and the words that streamed forth from the mouth of His will at that moment shall forever transcend every earthly mention. Any attribute that might be ascribed unto them, any praise wherewith they might be extolled will fail to do justice to the dust that hath been ennobled by His footsteps, how much less to His mighty throne, His manifest establishment thereon, and His pervasive and all-embracing utterance. Indeed, the splendours of that Day elude the understanding and comprehension of the peoples of the world.

3. That garden hath been named after its caretaker, who was called Riḍván. Those were the days whereon the All-Merciful cast the splendour of all His names over all who are in His heaven and on His earth. Some among His chosen ones had the honour of witnessing those days and beholding that which was manifested therein. In the arrival and departure of the Ancient Beauty, the signs and tokens of God were made clear and evident, and the light of
Revelation was made to shine forth in the plenitude of its glory. Verily, His majesty was exalted, His power magnified, and His sovereignty revealed.

4. This servant besought his Lord to write down for His chosen ones the recompense of this Day and of that which shone forth thereon above the horizon of the will of our Lord, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Upon perusing thy letter, I presented myself before His throne and read it in its entirety in His presence. He graciously heard it and said, blessed and exalted be His utterance: “In My Name that hath shed its radiance upon all that are in heaven and on earth. O ‘Alí! Upon thee be My glory and My loving-kindness. Thou hast attained aforetime, and wilt continue hereafter to attain, unto My mention and My favour, and unto the Ocean and its waves, and the Light and its effulgence, and the Lote-Tree and its fruits, and the Sun and its rays. We have sent down unto thee, from the heaven of Our providence and bounty, verses whose import the wisest and most learned of men are powerless to apprehend. We beseech God, exalted and glorified be He, to aid thee at all times to serve His Cause amidst His servants, and to supply thee under all conditions, from the cup of His favour, with the living waters of His recognition, that all men may draw nigh unto His court of holiness and His throne of glory. He, verily, is the Almighty, the Most Powerful.

5. “Thou didst mention the days of Ridván and those who gathered in thy house and in other homes to remember God, the Lord of the throne on high and of earth below, the King of this matchless Day. Well is it with the home that hath been adorned with My favour, within whose walls My remembrance hath been glorified, and which hath been honoured with the presence of such of My loved ones as have extolled My praise, clung to the cord of My providence, and recited My verses. These, verily, are among those honoured servants whom God hath extolled in the Qayyúmu'l-Asmá’ and other Holy Books. He, verily, is the One Who heareth all, Who seeth all, and Who is ready to answer.

6. “We, verily, have heard their remembrance and praise of this Announcement concerning which the Concourse on high cried out: By God! This is the Great Announcement which hath been mentioned in the Qur’án and in the former Books revealed by God, the Lord of the worlds. He, verily, praiseth His own Self on their behalf and mentioneth Himself through their tongues. He, verily, is the Most Generous, the Lord of grace abounding. Blessed the steadfast soul that hath stood unswayed by the tempestuous gales of doubt which the enemies have unleashed. And blessed the faithful one that hath remained unshaken by the onslaught of the
hosts of oppression and the ascendancy of the exponents of denial, them that have fallen prey to their own idle imaginings and repudiated the very One to Whom they claim allegiance. These, verily, are accounted among the lost in My manifest Book.

7. “O ‘Alí! Call upon My loved ones on My behalf. Convey unto them My praise, My remembrance, and My greetings, that the sweet fragrances of the bounty of thy Lord may attract them and draw them nigh unto God, the Almighty, the All-Praised. We, moreover, call to remembrance My handmaidens and My leaves who have held fast to My Tree and clung to the hem of My mighty and luminous Robe. Upon thee, and upon them, man and woman alike, be the glory of God, the Compassionate, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.”