

Tablet to Ashraf (*Lawḥ-i Ashraf*)

Revealed by Bahā' u' llāh in Edirne

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Windflower Translations Project: <http://whoisbahauallah.com/windflower/>

He is the Mighty, the Incomparable!

O Ashraf¹, listen carefully to what the Tongue of the Eternal has to say. Any one of the melodies of your Lord would be sufficient to attract the hearts of all people, if they were to perceive it with a new and purified ear. And if the names were to release themselves from the limitations of the world of creation, they would surely all become the most great Name, could you but apprehend, for the Ancient Beauty has manifested himself to all things in the splendor of all the names during these blessed, mighty, and sublime days.

Strive to act uprightly in the Cause of your Lord and wholly for the sake of His love that He may appoint you among His most beautiful names in the kingdom of creation. This, indeed, is a great bounty.

I swear by my life! Were the hands of all created things to be lifted in this day, free of any evil suggestions, toward the court of hope of the King of Names, and ask Him for the treasures of the heavens and the earth, He would grant their wish, by His all-pervasive grace, before they lowered their hands. Thus does His mercy encompass all things.

Say: O people!² Do not withhold yourselves from the grace of God and His mercy. Whoever withholds himself from it is indeed in great loss. Say: O people! Do you worship the dust and forsake your Lord, the Gracious, the Bountiful? Fear God, and be not of those who have gone astray. Say: The Book of God has now appeared in the temple of this youth. Blessed, therefore, be God, the most excellent of makers! Flee not from him, O peoples of the world; rather, hasten to attain his presence and be of those who have returned. Repent, O people, for having abandoned God and for having transgressed against His Cause. Do not be heedless. It is He who has created you, who has provided for you by His command and acquainted you with himself—

¹ Siyyid Ashraf-i-Zanjāni. In *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā' u' llāh*, section LXIX, Bahā' u' llāh tells the story of Siyyid Ashraf's mother, who was brought to the scene her son's imminent death so she could urge him to recant, but instead she urged him not to. An outline of Siyyid Ashraf's life can be found in Adib Taherzadeh: *The Revelation of Bahā' u' llāh. Adrianople 1863-68*, vol. 2, pp. 223-30.

² The section of the Tablet to Ashraf commencing here has also been translated by Shoghi Effendi and can be found in *Gleanings*, section LII.

the Mighty, the Exalted, the Knowing—and who has unveiled to you the treasures of His knowledge and caused you to ascend to the heaven of certainty in His incorruptible, resistless, and transcendent Faith. Take care that you do not deprive yourselves of the grace of God, invalidate your works, and disavow Him in this most manifest, most exalted, shining, and glorious Revelation. Judge, then, the Cause of God, your maker, with justice, examine what He has sent down from the throne on high, and meditate on it with pure and faultless hearts. In this way, the truth of this Cause will appear to you as clearly as the midday sun and you will be assured.

Say: His first evidence is His own self, and following that is His revelation.³ But for whoever is unable to recognize these two evidences, He has made His verses His proof by His grace to all the worlds. He has endowed every soul with the capacity to recognize the signs of God. If human beings did not have this capacity, He could not complete His proof to them, were you to reflect on His Cause. He will never deal unjustly with anyone, nor will He task a soul beyond its power. He, verily, is the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Say: The Cause of God has become manifested in such a manner that even the blind can perceive it, how much more those whose vision is sharp and pure. Although the blind cannot see the light of the sun, they can feel its continual heat. The blind in heart, however, among the people of the Bayān—and to this God is my witness—are powerless, no matter how long the Sun may shine on them, either to perceive the radiance of its glory or to appreciate the warmth of its rays.

Say: O people of the Bayān! We have singled you out from among humankind to recognize us. We have caused you to draw near to the right side of Paradise—the place from which the undying Fire⁴ proclaims in every melody: “There is no God besides Me, the Powerful, the Most High!” Take care not to veil yourselves from this Sun that is shining above the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the All-Merciful, with a radiance that has encompassed all things, small and great. Open your eyes that you may behold it with your own vision, without depending on the vision of anyone else, for God does not burden a soul beyond its ability. Thus has it been revealed in all the scriptures to the prophets and messengers of the past.

Enter, O people, into this vast expanse for which neither a beginning nor an end has been decreed, in which the call of God has been raised and the breezes of His transcendent sanctity are wafting. Remove not from yourselves the robe of glory; neither let your hearts be deprived of remembering your Lord nor your ears from hearing His wondrous, sublime, compelling, and most eloquent melodies.⁵

³ Or ...His “manifestation” (*zuhūr*).

⁴ This is a reference to the Fire in the Burning Bush from which Moses heard the voice of God proclaiming “I am God, the Lord of the universe...” (Qur’ān 28:30; cf. Exodus 3:1–15).

⁵ The section of this tablet that Shoghi Effendi has also translated ends here.

O Ashraf! Give thanks to God inasmuch as He has honored you with meeting Him and permitted you to enter His presence, the seat of sublime glory. Blessed are your eyes, for they have beheld the beauty of God, your Lord and the Lord of the entire creation. Blessed are your ears, for they have heard the melody of God, the Powerful, the Knowing, the Wise.

Know that the time has come for your sojourn before the throne to end. Arise, and go forth with the tablet of God to His faithful servants, who have consumed the veils with the fire of their attraction and ascended to God, the King, the Mighty, the Praised. Tell them what has happened to us at the hands of those who were created by our command, then announce to them the glad tidings of the Paradise of God that they may rejoice. Recount to them one of the stories of this youth that they may be informed and give praise to God.

Say: O loved ones of God! Arise and assist Him. Pay no attention to those who contend with the Self of God and who repudiate the evidence that God has made the proof of His Cause between the heavens and the earth. They have wronged God by arising in opposition against Him, and they do not feel ashamed before God, who created them by His command. This is what has befallen the Ancient Beauty at the hands of these oppressors. So severe did their opposition become that they attempted to kill me through a plan that Satan cast into their breasts. God knows and is a witness to this. When they found themselves impotent before the sovereignty of God and His power, they devised a new plot. This is what befell us at the hands of those who were created by our command, yet we are well able to achieve our purpose.

O loved ones of God! Be clouds of bounty to those who believe in God and in His verses, and a sure torment to those who disbelieve in Him and His Cause and who join partners with God.

Say: O people! Do not listen to the words of those who are unfaithful to God and the Manifestation of Himself. Be mindful of the day when each will be asked about his deeds in the presence of his Lord, the Exalted, the Great, and will receive either reward or punishment for what he has done during this vain life. This is what has been ordained in God's mighty and guarded tablets. Do not be like those who habitually adhere to something as it suits them and at another moment reject it. Fear God, O concourse of believers. Hold fast to what has been sent down to you from the throne on high, forsake all else, and remain steadfast in His Cause.

If you see Muḥammad 'Alī,⁶ give him our greetings and deliver to him that with which you have been entrusted that he may arise to serve the Cause and be so steadfast that his steps will not slip from the path of God, the Almighty, the Praised.

Say: O servant! I swear by God! All you have heard and perceived has been manifested by us, and all besides me has been created by my command, if you apprehend. All that we have

⁶ Probably a reference to Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad-'Alī-y-i-Ṭabīb, who was also from Zanjān and died a martyr. Bahā'u'llāh wrote a tablet of visitation jointly for him, Siyyid Ashraf and Abā Baṣīr. See *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh*, vol. 2, p. 229.

mentioned is due to a wisdom on our part, of which no one is apprised save for those whom we have acquainted with the repositories of divine revelation and aided with the Faithful Spirit. Tear away the veils of idle fancies that the daystar of certainty may shine on you from the dawning place of my name, the All-Merciful, and He may appoint you among the sincere. Arise to serve your Lord, and turn away from those who have disbelieved in God and have denied Him. Summon the people to remembrance with wisdom and heavenly counsel, and do not dispute idly with anyone concerning the Cause of your Lord that His proof may be fulfilled to the entire creation. Be united with the loved ones of God, and gather them into the haven of security under the shade of the name of your Lord, the Almighty, the Knowing. Shield His servants so that the temptations of Satan do not cause them to falter when he arrives in your land with a great deception, by which he intends to deprive all of you of the love of this youth. Thus do we inform you with a message from the Unseen that you may be aware and remain steadfast.

Be detached from all things, then set your face toward the sanctuary that is the seat of the throne of your Lord, the Forgiving, the Merciful. Know that we have admonished you in other tablets, and we found you lacking in what is worthy of you. Beware that you do not deprive yourself of what we have ordained for you in our holy and preserved tablets. Cleanse yourself of everything that stands between you and God, then commune with Him with a humble and radiant heart. You should be so steadfast in the Cause that were all in the heavens and on earth to conspire against you, they would be unable to turn you aside from it and would find themselves powerless. This is what is worthy of those who consider themselves followers of God, in these days when most of the servants are submerged in a deluge of doubts and vain imaginings and set on the path of perdition.

If you see Abā Baṣīr,⁷ bring him this tablet so that he can read it and be of those who know. Convey my greetings to him that he may rejoice in the glad tidings of the spirit coming from the Almighty, the All-Wise.

Say: O servant! We have sent down the verses to you and delivered them to you as a mercy from us so that those who dwell in your land may be admonished, awakened from their slumber, and turn with their hearts toward the object of the adoration of the world, at whose appearance the inmates of the concourse on high fall prostrate. Call then to remembrance the loved ones of God, whom no obstacles have prevented from entering the depths of the ocean of the mercy of your Lord, the All-Bountiful, the Most Generous. Thus, do we bid and direct you that you may be thankful to God, your Lord, at all times.

Peace, honor and glory rest upon you, O people of Bahā, and upon those who have desired God's countenance and turned toward Him.

⁷ Āqā Naqd-‘Alī, who was blind and given the title ‘Baṣīr’ (Seeing) by Bahā’u’llāh. He was Siyyid Ashraf’s close friend and was beheaded just before Ashraf was killed. See *The Revelation of Bahā’u’llāh*, vol. 2, pp. 226-7. The sacrifice of the pair is mentioned by Bahā’u’llāh in *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 73-74.