

Lawḥ-i-Javáhir-i-Tawḥíd (The Tablet of the Gems of Unity) by Bahá'u'lláh

Composite authoritative and provisional translation

Provisional translation by Joshua Hall

Introduction

The following Tablet (Phelps inventory # BH00690) was translated partially by Shoghi Effendi, as found in passage XXVII of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, and has been titled here after the first words of the original Persian, *javáhir-i-tawḥíd* (“the gems” or “essences of the profession God’s unity”), which Shoghi Effendi rendered obliquely as “[a]ll praise to the unity of God.” Shoghi Effendi’s translation of slightly more than half of the Lawḥ-i-Javáhir-i-Tawḥíd is marked below in red, while my own provisional translation is in black font—a method of differentiating parts of composite translations of the Bahá’í Writings drawn from Adib Masumian. The original Persian text has been published in *Majmú‘iy-i-Maṭbú‘iy-i-Alváḥ-i-Mubárákih* (Cairo, 1920), 338-346.

He is God, the Effulgent, the All-Glorious

هو الله البهيّ الابهى

All praise to the unity of God, and all honor to Him, the sovereign Lord, the incomparable and all-glorious Ruler of the universe, Who, out of utter nothingness, hath created the reality of all things, Who, from naught, hath brought into being the most refined and subtle elements of His creation, and Who, rescuing His creatures from the abasement of remoteness and the perils of ultimate extinction, hath received them into His kingdom of incorruptible glory. Nothing short of His all-encompassing grace, His all-pervading mercy, could have possibly

جواهر توحید و لطائف تمجید متصاعد بساط
حضرت سلطان بیمثال و ملیک ذوالجلالی است
که حقایق ممکنات و دقایق و رقایق اعیان
موجودات را از حقیقت نیستی و عدم در عوالم
هستی و قِدم ظاهر فرمود و از ذلّت بُعد و فنا
نجات داده بملکوت عزّت و بقا مشرف نمود و این
نبود مگر بصرف عنایت سابقه و رحمت منبسطه
خود چنانچه مشهود است که عدم صرف را

achieved it. How could it, otherwise, have been possible for sheer nothingness to have acquired by itself the worthiness and capacity to emerge from its state of nonexistence into the realm of being?

Having created the world and all that liveth and moveth therein, He, through the direct operation of His unconstrained and sovereign Will, chose to confer upon man the unique distinction and capacity to know Him and to love Him—a capacity that must needs be regarded as the generating impulse and the primary purpose underlying the whole of creation. It is even as it hath been related in the holy tradition.¹ He bade that mankind should be distinguished by the vesture of the grace entailed in the verse, “We have created man in the most noble of forms,” and by the mantle of the bountiful favor evinced in the words, “Blessed be God, the Best of all creators.”² For [u]pon the inmost reality of each and every created thing He hath shed the light of one of His names, and made it a recipient of the glory of one of His attributes. Upon the reality of man, however, He hath focused the radiance of all of His names and attributes, and made it a mirror of His own Self. Alone of all created

قابلیت و استعداد وجود نشاید و فانی بحت را
لیاقت کون و انوجاد نباید

* و بَعْدَ از خلق کل ممکنات و ایجاد موجودات
بتجلی اسم یا مختار انسان را از بین امم و
خلایق برای معرفت و محبت خود که علّت غائی
و سبب خلقت کائنات بود اختیار نمود چنانچه
در حدیث قدسی مشهود و مذکور است و
بخلعت مکرمتم لقد خلقنا الانسان فی أحسن
تقویم و برداء عنایت و موهبت فتبارک الله أحسن
الخالقین مفتخر و سر افراز فرمود * زیرا کینونت و
حقیقت هر شیء را باسمى از اسماء تجلی نمود و
بصفتی از صفات اشراق فرمود مگر انسان را که
مظهر کل اسماء و صفات و مرآت کینونت خود

¹ Most probably, the holy tradition (*ḥadīth qudsī*) mentioned here is one often quoted by Bahá'u'lláh, and appropriate for the context, being as follows: “I was a hidden treasure; I loved that I should be known, and so I created the creation that I might be known.”

² Qur'án 18:4, 23:14.

things man hath been singled out for so great a favor, so enduring a bounty.

These energies with which the Daystar of Divine bounty and Source of heavenly guidance hath endowed the reality of man lie, however, latent within him, even as the flame is hidden within the candle and the rays of light are potentially present in the lamp. The radiance of these energies may be obscured by worldly desires even as the light of the sun can be concealed beneath the dust and dross which cover the mirror. Neither the candle nor the lamp can be lighted through their own unaided efforts, nor can it ever be possible for the mirror to free itself from its dross. It is clear and evident that until a fire is kindled the lamp will never be ignited, and unless the dross is blotted out from the face of the mirror it can never represent the image of the sun nor reflect its light and glory.

And since there can be no tie of direct intercourse to bind the one true God with His creation, and no resemblance whatever can exist between the transient and the Eternal, the contingent and the Absolute, He hath ordained that in every age and dispensation a pure and stainless Soul be made manifest in the

قرار فرمود و باین فضل عظیم و مرحمت قدیم

خود اختصاص نمود

و لکن این تجلیات أنوار صبح هدایت و اشراقات
أنوار شمس عنایت در حقیقت انسان مستور و
محبوبست چنانچه شعله و اشعه و انوار در
حقیقت شمع و سراج مستور است و تابش
درخشش آفتاب جهانتاب در مرایا و مجالی که از
زنگ و غبار شئونات بشری تیره و مظلم گشته
مخفی و مهجور است * حال این شمع و سراج را
افروزنده باید * و این مرایا و مجالی را صیقل دهنده
شاید * و واضح است که تا ناری مشتعل ظاهر
نشود هرگز سراج نیفرزد * و تا آینه از زنگ و
غبار ممتاز نگردد صورت و مثال و تجلی و اشراق
شمس بی امس در او منطبق نشود

و چون ما بین خلق و حقّ و حادث و قدیم و
واجب و ممکن هیچوجه رابطه و مناسبت و
موافقت و مشابّهت نبوده و نیست لهذا در هر

kingdoms of earth and heaven. Unto this subtle, this mysterious and ethereal Being He hath assigned a twofold nature; the physical, pertaining to the world of matter, and the spiritual, which is born of the substance of God Himself. He hath, moreover, conferred upon Him a double station. The first station, which is related to His innermost reality, representeth Him as One Whose voice is the voice of God Himself. To this testifieth the tradition: "Manifold and mysterious is My relationship with God. I am He, Himself, and He is I, Myself, except that I am that I am, and He is that He is." And in like manner, the words: "Arise, O Muḥammad, for lo, the Lover and the Beloved are joined together and made one in Thee." He similarly saith: "There is no distinction whatsoever between Thee and Them, except that They are Thy Servants." The second station is the human station, exemplified by the following verses: "I am but a man like you." "Say, praise be to my Lord! Am I more than a man, an apostle?"

These Essences of Detachment, these resplendent Realities are the channels of God's all-pervasive grace. Led by the light of unflinching guidance, and invested with supreme

عهد و عصر کینونت سازجی را در عالم ملک و ملکوت ظاهر فرماید و این لطیفه ربّانی و دقیقه صمدانی را از دو عنصر خلق فرماید عنصر ترابی ظاهری و عنصر غیبی الهی * و دو مقام در او خلق فرماید یک مقام حقیقت که مقام لا ینطق الا عن الله ریّه است که در حدیث میفرماید ﴿ لی مع الله حالات انا هو و هو انا الا انا و هو هو ﴾ و همچنین ﴿ قف یا محمد أنت الحبيب و أنت المحبوب ﴾ و همچنین میفرماید ﴿ لا فرق بینک و بینهم الا اثم عبادک ﴾ و مقام دیگر مقام بشریت است که میفرماید ﴿ ما انا الا بشر مثلکم و قل سبحان ربّي هل كنت الا بشراً رسولاً ﴾



و این کینونات مجرّده و حقایق منیره و ساینط فیض کلیّه‌اند و به هدایت کبری و ربوبیت عظمی مبعوث شوند که تا قلوب مشتاقین و

sovereignty, They are commissioned to use the inspiration of Their words, the effusions of Their infallible grace and the sanctifying breeze of Their Revelation for the cleansing of every longing heart and receptive spirit from the dross and dust of earthly cares and limitations. Then, and only then, will the Trust of God, latent in the reality of man, emerge, as resplendent as the rising Orb of Divine Revelation, from behind the veil of concealment, and implant the ensign of its revealed glory upon the summits of men's hearts.

From the foregoing passages and allusions it hath been made indubitably clear that in the kingdoms of earth and heaven there must needs be manifested a Being, an Essence Who shall act as a Manifestation and Vehicle for the transmission of the grace of the Divinity Itself, the Sovereign Lord of all. Through the Teachings of this Daystar of Truth every man will advance and develop until he attaineth the station at which he can manifest all the potential forces with which his inmost true self hath been endowed. It is for this very purpose that in every age and dispensation the Prophets of God and His chosen Ones have appeared amongst men, and have evinced such power as

حقایق صافین را باهامات غیبیه و فیوضات
لا ربیّه و نسائم قدسیّه از کدورات عوالم
ملکیّه سازج و منیر گردانند * و افنده مقربین
را از زنگار حدود پاک و منزّه فرمایند تا
ودیعہ الهیّه که در حقایق مستور و مختفی
گشته از حجاب ستر و پرده خفا چون
اشراق آفتاب نورانی از فجر الهی سر بر آرد
و عَلمِ ظهور بر اتلال قلوب و افنده بر افرازد
*

و از این کلمات و اشارات معلوم و ثابت شده
که لابدّ در عالم ملک و ملکوت باید کینونت و
حقیقتی ظاهر گردد که واسطه فیض کلیّه مظهر
اسمُ ألوهیّت و ربوبیّت باشد تا جمیع ناس در ظل
تریت آن آفتاب حقیقت تربیت گردند تا به این
مقام و رتبه که در حقایق ایشان مستودع است
مشرف و فایز شوند * این است که در جمیع

is born of God and such might as only the Eternal can reveal.

Can one of sane mind ever seriously imagine that, in view of certain words the meaning of which he cannot comprehend, the portal of God's infinite guidance can ever be closed in the face of men? Can he ever conceive for these Divine Luminaries, these resplendent Lights either a beginning or an end? What outpouring flood can compare with the stream of His all-embracing grace, and what blessing can excel the evidences of so great and pervasive a mercy? There can be no doubt whatever that if for one moment the tide of His mercy and grace were to be withheld from the world, it would completely perish. For this reason, from the beginning that hath no beginning the portals of Divine mercy have been flung open to the face of all created things, and the clouds of Truth will continue to the end that hath no end to rain on the soil of human capacity, reality and personality their favors and bounties. Such hath been God's method continued from everlasting to everlasting.

أعهاد و أزمان أنبياء و أولياء با قوّت ربّاني و

قدرت صمداني در میان ناس ظاهر گشته *

و عقل سليم هرگز راضي نشود كه نظر ببعضي

كلمات كه معاني آن را ادراك ننموده اين باب

هدايت را مسدود انگارد و از براي اين شمس و

أنوار ابتدا و انتهائي تعقل نمايد زيرا فيضي أعظم

از اين فيض كليّه نبوده و رحمتي اكبر از اين رحمت

منبسطه الهيّه نخواهد بود * و شكّي نيست كه اگر

در يك آن عنايت و فيض او از عالم منقطع شود

البتّه معدوم گردد لهذا لم يزل ابواب رحمت حق بر

وجه كون و امكان مفتوح بوده و لا يزال امطار

عنايت و مكرمت از غمام حقيقت بر أراضی

قابليات و حقايق و أعيان متراكم و مفيض خواهد

بود * اينست سنّت خدا من الأزل الى الأبد *

Notwithstanding, whensoever these Holy Persons have become manifest in this visible world, a portion of mankind hath either been afflicted by the darkness of confusion and of ignorance—the fruits of their ill deeds—or hath remained busied in vain, ephemeral pursuits. Whensoever He Who is the revealer of the unseen Beauty hath summoned forth all men to evince complete detachment and perfect self-sacrifice, they have opposed Him and have stretched forth their malicious hands against Him. And yet, inasmuch as these Sovereigns of existence, in the realm of pre-eternity and in the worlds of the spirits, have accepted—indeed have yearned—to endure every manner of hardship in the path of God, They have consented to surrender Themselves into the hands of Their enemies. It is thus that in this earthly world such men have inflicted pain and suffering on the bodies, the very limbs and members, of these transcendent Beings.

And since those who believe in Them and cherish love for Them are even as the branches and the leaves of this Blessed Tree, every evil that hath beset the root of the Tree hath similarly befallen its boughs, its branches, and its leaves. In every age there thus have been, and shall continue to be, such injuries and hardships reserved for the lovers of Him Who

و لکن بعد از ظهور این طلعات قدسیّه در عالم ظهور و شهاده بعضی از نفوس و برخی از ناس که گروهی به ظلمت و جهل، که ثمرات افعال خودشان است، مبتلا گردند و گروهی به زخارف فانیه مشغول شوند * و چون آن جمال غیبی جمیع ناس را بانقطاع کل و انفاق کل دعوت مینماید لهذا اعراض نمایند و بایدان و اذیت دست درازی نمایند * و از ان جائی که این سلاطین وجود در ذرّ عما و عوالم ارواح بکمال میل و رغبت جمیع بلایا را در سبیل حقّ قبول نمودند لهذا خود را تسلیم در دست اعدا نمایند بقسمیکه آنچه بتوانند از ایذا و اذیت بر اجساد و اعضاء و جوارح این کینونات مجرّده در عالم ملک و شهاده ظاهر سازند *

و چون مؤمنین و محبّین بمنزله اغصان و اوراق این شجره مبارکه هستند لهذا هر چه بر اصل شجره وارد گردد البتّه بر فرع و اغصان و اوراق وارد آید اینست که در جمیع اعصار اینگونه صدمات و بلایا از برای عاشقان

is the sublime Beauty. Indeed, these supreme Manifestations of Divine unity have never appeared in the world of creation without there having occurred such injuries, hardships, and tribulations. Nevertheless, although to outward seeming they be imprisoned and murdered by men, and exiled among the nations, They inwardly delight in the unseen Providence of God. Though They be deprived of bodily ease and bereft of material pleasures, They delight in a spiritual well-being, and take pleasure in the choice foods of inner meaning and the fruits grown in the all-holy Paradise.

If men were to consider with discerning eyes, they would readily perceive that the very tests and tribulations, hardships and vicissitudes that beset the faithful and believing are, in reality, the quintessence of ease and the very substance of grace. The ease and ascendancy enjoyed by such as have turned aside from God are, in contrast, indistinguishable in their essential reality from hardship, punishment, and affliction. For the fruit of the suffering of the righteous is the profoundest bliss—for it is the cause of their ascent unto the most exalted heights—whereas the end and ultimate result of the present ease of the wicked is the most grievous woe—for it is the reason for their

جمال ذوالجلال بوده و خواهد بود و در وقتی
نبوده که این ظهورات عزّ احدیّه در عالم
ملکیّه ظاهر شده باشند و اینگونه صدمات
و بلایا و محن نبوده* و لکن اگر چه در
ظاهر اسیر و مقتول و مطرود بلاد گشتند
اما در باطن بعنایت خفیّه الهیّه مسرورند* و
اگر از راحت جسمانی و لذّت جسدی
مهجور ماندند و لکن براحته روحانی و
لذایذ فواکه معانی و ثمرات جنّت قدسی ملتذّ
و متنعم گردند*

و اگر ناس بدیده بصیرت ملاحظه نمایند
مشهود شود که این محن و بلایا و مشقّت و
رزایا که بر مخلصین و مؤمنین نازل و وارد
است عین راحت و حقیقت نعمت است*
و این راحت و عزّت معرضین از حقّ نفس
مشقّت و عذاب و زحمت است زیرا که نتیجه
و ثمره این بلایا راحت کبری و علّت وصول
برفرف اعلی است و پاداش و اثر این راحت
زحمت و مشقّت عظمی است و سبب نزول
در درک سفلی* پس در هیچ وقت و احوالیان

descent into the nethermost abyss. Under no circumstance, therefore, should one be sorrowed by the visitation of such trials, nor be vexed and grieved by the appearance of such vicissitudes and tribulations. One should rather hold fast to the sure handle of patience, and cling unto the unbreaking cord of fortitude. For God hath ordained, as the recompense of every good deed, a commensurate reward, save for the reward for patience, regarding which He hath promised: "The patient shall be recompensed with a reward without measure."³

With respect to Áqá Mírzá Isma‘íl, I cherish the utmost hope to receive Him into My presence, and with warm affection I hold him in My remembrance. God willing, thou shalt ever dwell and rest secure beneath the shadow of divine Providence. The purpose of these words was to express My love. And yet, the pen and ink are both of them but strangers; the moth and candle are outside this telling. The hidden meaning must elude expression; mere outward syllables cannot contain it. In the realms of spirit, every utterance is endowed with a fresh potency, and invested with a name of infinite capacity. The names of this age are limited, while the signs of that holy

از نزل بلایا و محن محزون نباید بود و از ظهورات قضایا و رزایا مهموم و مغموم نشاید شد بلکه بعروة الوثقی صبر باید تمسک جست و بجبل محکم اصطبار تشبث نمود * زیرا اجر و ثواب هر حسنه را پروردگار باندازه و حساب قرار فرموده مگر صبر را که میفرماید ﴿ اِنَّمَا يُوفَى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

آقا میرزا اسمعیل را بکمال شوق و اشتیاق طالب و ذاکرم ان شاء الله همیشه در ظلّ عنایت حق ساکن و مستریح باشی * مقصود از تحریر اظهار حبّ بود بر معانی و لکن قلم و مداد هر دو بیگانه و شمع و پروانه خارج از این افسانه * معانی مکنونه باین افسانه نرسد چگونه الفاظ از عهده بر آید * رسوم عوالم روح رسمی تازه دارد و اسمی بی اندازه * اسامی این کور محدود و مراسم آن

³ Qur'án, 39:10.

Dispensation are sanctified beyond all cycles and eons. Unfurl the wings of inner meaning, and traverse, even as a bolt of lightning, all realms. Enlarge the expanse of thy vision, and gaze upon the divine grace implicit in the words, “Never shall He be beheld.”⁴

If one should throw a clod of clay into the water, it would sink fast to the bottom. Yet, should one cast a rose on the water’s surface, it would float atop like a crown of glory. By this is meant, first, that to engage oneself in the world and to continue in life is preferable to seclusion and oblivion, and, secondly, that the burden of limitations will cause one to sink underneath its weight. One must, accordingly, free himself of the weight of the world even while, like the rose, continuing to live before it peoples. Such as that gentleman expressed in his letter is not permissible. By My life! To live during these days is to be prized and cherished, and to perish rejected.

کور مقدّس از دور و طور * پر معنوی برگشا
و جمیع ممالک را چون برق طی کن * میدان
چشم را وسیع نما و فضل لن یُری مشاهده
کن *

گُل در آب اندازی غرق شود و گُل بر آب
افکنی چون تاج بر فرق آب قرار گیرد یعنی
ظهور و بقا خوشتر از بطون و فنا * و معنی
دیگر ثقل حدود غرق نماید پس باید از ثقل
ملک فارغ شد و چون گُل در همین هیکل
بر وجه ملک باقی ماند * آنچه در متن
جناب مرقوم فرمودند جایز نه * و لعمری بقا
در این ایّام محبوب و فنا مردود *

⁴ An allusion, it seems, to the Qur’án, 7:143. The “grace” may be that in this Dispensation the unseen, unknowable God has been revealed—and thus seen and known—in the person of His Manifestation, Bahá’u’lláh.