

The Tablet of the Clouds (Lawḥu ‘s-Siḥáb)

Revealed by Bahá’u’lláh

Provisional Translation by Joshua Hall, with Passages Rendered by Shoghi Effendi

The Tablet of the Clouds, revealed by
God, the Possessor of all men

In God’s Name, the Omniscient, the
All-Wise

This is a missive from the All-Merciful
to those who have turned toward Him
Who is the Point of Adoration unto all
in the heavens and earth; that they may
be gladdened by the verses of God, be
attracted thereby unto the horizon of
Revelation, and be drawn nigh to a
station wherein all things proclaim that
there is none other god but Me, the
Almighty, the All-Knowing.

Arise in the Cause by the power and
strength born of God. Say: O concourse
of the Bayán, call ye to mind the
bounty of God unto you when ye were
on the sheer precipice of oblivion,
when He sent down upon you from the
heaven of utterance that which led you
to this clear and straight Path.

لوح السحاب

قد نزل من لدى الله

مالك الرقاب

بسم الله العليم الحكيم

هذا كتاب من لدى الرحمن
الى الذينهم اقبلوا الى قبلة من
فى السموات و الارضين
لتسرهم آيات الله و تجذبهم الى
افق الوحي و تقربهم الى مقام
ينطق فيه كل شىء انه لا اله
الا انا العزيز العليم. قم على
الامر بحول الله وقوته. قل يا
ملا البيان اذكروا نعمة الله
عليكم اذ كنتم فى شفا حفرة
النسيان و انزل عليكم من

O Pen of the Eternal, inscribe on this Tablet that whereby the hearts of the sincere rejoice and one with eyes to see is assured that I have the power to do as I will. None in all the earth can withhold Me from My purpose; indeed, I am the Omniscient, the All-Wise.

Say: The idolaters have violated the Covenant of God and His Testament, and have shackled Us in this Prison¹ with manifest tyranny. Upon Our arrival, We desired to dispatch unto the kings the Epistles of God, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the Sublime. Among them was the Shah of Persia; We revealed the beauty of the Cause unto him and made Ourselves known to him, after Our having chosen one among the righteous², in whose heart We breathed the spirit of indomitable fortitude, and whom We sent unto His Majesty as a cyclone of flame with a Tablet³ revealed from thy Lord, the Almighty, the Powerful.

In that Epistle, We enumerated such as

سَمَاءِ التَّبْيَانِ مَا عَلَّمَكُمْ بِهِ هَذَا
السَّبِيلِ الْوَاضِحِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ. اِنْ يَا
قَلَمَ الْقَدَمِ اذْكُرْ فِي اللُّوْحِ مَا
تَفْرَحُ بِهِ اِفْتِدَاةَ الْمَخْلُصِينَ وَ
يُوقِنُ كُلُّ بَصِيرٍ بَانِّي اَنَا
الْمُقْتَدِرُ عَلَى مَا اَشَاءُ لَا
يَمْنَعُنِي عَمَّا ارَدْتُ مِنْ عَلَى
الْاَرْضِ كُلِّهَا وَ اَنَا الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ. قُلْ اِنَّ الْمَشْرِكِينَ
نَقَضُوا عَهْدَ اللَّهِ وَ مِيثَاقَهُ وَ
ادْخَلُونَا فِي السَّجْنِ بِظُلْمٍ مُبِينٍ
فَلَمَّا وَرَدْنَا اِرْدْنَا اِنْ نَبَلِّغُ
الْمُلُوكَ رِسَالَاتِ اللَّهِ الْمُقْتَدِرِ
الْعَزِيزِ الْعَظِيمِ وَ مِنْهُمْ مَلِكُ
الْعَجْمِ كَشَفْنَا لَهُ جَمَالَ الْاَمْرِ
وَ عَرَّفْنَا نَفْسَنَا بَعْدَ الَّذِي اخْتَرْنَا
اِحْدًا مِنْ الْاِخْيَارِ وَ نَفَخْنَا فِي
قَلْبِهِ رُوحَ الْقُدْرَةِ وَ الْاِقْتِدَارِ وَ
ارْسَلْنَاهُ اِلَيْهِ كَكُرَّةِ النَّارِ بِلُوحٍ

¹ `Akká

² The youth Badí'. See *God Passes By*, Page 199

³ The Tablet to the Shah of Persia. See *God Passes By*, Page 199

he and the Sultan of Constantinople had wrought, that they might realize that no hardship could withhold Bahá from such as the Lord of all names had ordained, and that We fear not the ascendancy of those who disbelieve in God, the Almighty, the Illustrious. By virtue of that Epistle, We blew the trumpet of divine might once again and every stalwart oppressor was sorely perplexed. Therein We revealed such counsels and admonitions as awaken the hearts of them that slumber, and We set forth in every line thereof a clear and sufficient exposition. How blessed then is he who peruseth that Epistle and meditateth on such as is alluded therein. I swear by My life, it verily sufficeth the worlds. Were but a word thereof to be recited unto the mountains, they would assuredly soar in adoration towards God, the Cherished, the Beauteous. Our sole aim in revealing that Epistle was to manifest the sovereignty of God and His grandeur, to promulgate His Cause and make His exaltation apparent to His doubting servants. Therein We left no man an excuse. Peruse it, and be of them that are thankful.

Say: O concourse of the earth, ponder

من لدن ربك العزيز القدير و
فيه بينا ما اكتسبت يداه و ما
ارتكبه ملك الروم ليعلم ان
البلاء لن يمنع البهاء عما اراد
مالك الاسماء و لم يخوفنا
سطوة الذين كفروا بالله العزيز
الحميد. و به نفخنا في صور
القدرة مرة اخرى واضطرب
منه كل جبار عنيد و فيه نزل
من النصايح و المواعظ ما
تستيقظ به افئدة الراقدين. قد
نزلنا فيه من كل شان بيانا
شافيا. يا طوبى لمن يقرئه و
يتفكر في اشاراته لعمرى انه
يكفى العالمين لو نزلت كلمة
منه على الجبال لتطير من
الشوق الى الله العزيز الجميل.
انا ما اردنا منه الا اظهار
سلطنة الله و عظمته و انتشار
امره و ظهور استقلاله بين
عباده المريبين و ما تركنا فيه
لاحد من عذر ان اقرء و كن

awhile: In the Tablet unto your Chief We expressed Our desire that he gather Us among the learned of the age, that the Cause of God and His proof may become manifest before you. He, however, committed that by reason of which the denizens of the heavenly kingdom lamented. What cause have ye then to which ye can cling, and to whom can ye flee? Judge aright, and be not among the unjust. **And likewise, while in 'Irâq, We wished to come together with the divines of Persia. No sooner did they hear of this, than they fled and said: 'He indeed is a manifest sorcerer!'⁴ This is the word that proceeded aforetime out of the mouths of such as were like them. These [divines] objected to what they said, and yet, they themselves repeat, in this day, what was said before them, and understand not. By My life! They are even as ashes in the sight of thy Lord. If He be willing, tempestuous gales will blow over them, and make them as dust. Thy Lord, verily, doth what He pleaseth.⁵**

Those lands were honored with the footsteps of thy Lord, the

من الشَّاكرين. قل يا ملأ
الأرض تفكروا أنا نزلنا في
اللوّح لرئيسكم بان يجمعنا و
علماء العصر ليظهر امر الله
و حجّته لكم انه ارتكب ما
ناح به سگان الملكوت انتم
بعد ذلك باي امر تتمسكون و
الى من تذهبون ان انصفوا و
لا تكونن من الظالمين و
كذلك اردنا في العراق ان
نجتمع مع علماء العجم لمّا
سمعوا فرّوا و قالوا ان هو الا
ساحر مبين. هذه كلمة خرجت
من افواه امثالهم من قبل و
هو لاء اعترضوا عليهم بما
قالوا و هم يقولون اليوم مثل
قولهم و لا يفقهون. لعمرى
مثلهم كمثل الرماد عند ربك
اذا اراد تمرّ عليهم ارياح
عاصفات وتجعلهم هباء ان

⁴ An allegation by Muḥammad's persecutors that His Revelation was false sorcery and not of divine provenance. See Qur'án, Súrah 37, Verse 15

⁵ Translated by the Guardian in *The Promised Day is Come*

Unconstrained, and every stone and clod of earth spoke forth saying, “He Who is the pride of ages hath become manifest; the Object of Desire is come with undoubted majesty!”

Hijáz is astir by the breeze announcing the tidings of joyous reunion. ‘Praise be to Thee,’ We hear her exclaim, ‘O my Lord, the Most High. I was dead through my separation from Thee; the breeze laden with the fragrance of Thy presence hath brought me back to life. Happy is he that turneth unto Thee, and woe betide the erring.’⁶

Mount Sinai is irradiated by the divine effulgence and doth verily exclaim, “Thy perfume have I perceived, O God of all them in the heavens and on earth.” This is the land wherein We raised up the Prophets and Messengers; therein did the voice of Abraham call out, and of Moses and Christ. All of them admonished the people and proclaimed unto them the glad-tidings of this Glorious Proclamation and its promised advent in these domains. Thus was it revealed in the scriptures of old on the part of Him Who is the Revelator, the Ancient of Days.

رَبِّكَ لهُوَ الْمُقْتَدِرُ عَلَى مَا
يُرِيدُ. تَشْرِفَتْ تِلْكَ الدِّيَارُ
بِقُدُومِ رَبِّكَ الْمُخْتَارِ وَ نَطَقَ
كُلُّ حَجَرٍ وَ مَدْرٍ قَدْ ظَهَرَتْ
غُرَّةُ الْإَيَّامِ وَ أَتَى الْمَقْصُودَ
بِجَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ. قَدْ أَخَذَ الْإِهْتِرَازَ
أَرْضُ الْحِجَازِ وَ حَرَّكَتْهَا نَسْمَةٌ
الْوَصَالِ تَقُولُ يَا رَبِّي الْمَتَعَالِ
لَكَ الْحَمْدُ بِمَا أَحْيَيْتَنِي نَفَحَاتِ
وَصَلِّكَ بَعْدَ الَّذِي أَمَاتَنِي
هَجْرَكَ طُوبَى لِمَنْ أَقْبَلَ إِلَيْكَ
وَ وَيْلٌ لِلْمَعْرُضِينَ. أَنْارَ جَبَلِ
الطُّورِ مِنْ أَشْرَاقِ الظُّهُورِ وَ
قَالَ قَدْ وَجَدْتُ عَرْفَكَ يَا أَلِهَ
مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضِينَ.
تِلْكَ أَرْضٌ فِيهَا بَعَثْنَا النَّبِيِّينَ وَ
الْمُرْسَلِينَ قَدْ أَرْتَفَعُ فِيهَا نِدَاءُ
الْخَلِيلِ ثُمَّ الْكَلِيمِ وَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ
الْأَبْنِ كُلِّ أَخْبَرُوا وَ بَشَّرُوا
الْعِبَادَ بِهَذَا النَّبَا الْعَظِيمِ وَ
وَرُودِهِ فِي تِلْكَ الدِّيَارِ كَذَلِكَ

⁶Translated by the Guardian in *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*

The Burning Bush crieth aloud, "O people of creation, the Lord of the heavenly kingdom is come; He hath ascended the throne and round about Him are the angels brought nigh." Forsake your churches and mosques and hasten to the Dayspring of Revelation. Follow not the delusions of them that are heedless. By God, the dawn of certitude hath shone forth. Every temple is reared for the sake of God's praise, and He Who is the One foretold and Whose praises are sung is come with great dominion. Beware lest your devotions shut you out from the Him Who is the Unconstrained. Forsake what the people possess, then turn toward the Dayspring of inspiration; better is this for you than all else, if ye be among them possessed of understanding.

Do thou arise in My remembrance, and beware lest the words of the infidel hinder thee; in truth, the tongue was created to make mention of the All-Merciful. Call thou the people to remembrance, while practicing prudence and wisdom. Thus is the matter decreed and written by the ordaining pen of thy Lord, the

نَزَلَ فِي الْأَلْوَا حِ مِنْ لَدُنْ مَنْزِلِ
قَدِيمٍ وَ السَّدرَةِ تَتَادَى يَا أَهْلَ
النَّاسُوتِ قَدْ أَتَى مَالِكُ
الْمَلَكُوتِ وَ اسْتَوَى عَلَى
العَرْشِ وَ فِي حَوْلِهِ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ
المُقَرَّبِينَ. دَعُوا الكِنَائِسَ وَ
المَسَاجِدَ إِنْ اسْرَعُوا إِلَى مَطْلَعِ
الْوَحْيِ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعُوا ظَنُونَ الَّذِينَ
غَفَلُوا تَاللَّهِ قَدْ طَلَعَ فَجْرُ اليَقِينِ
إِنَّ المَعَابِدَ لَذَكَرَهُ قَدْ أَتَى
المَذْكُورَ بِسُلْطَانٍ عَظِيمٍ. أَيَّاكُمْ
إِنْ تَمْنَعُكُمْ الإِذْكَارَ عَنِ رَبِّكُمْ
المَخْتَارِ دَعُوا مَا عِنْدَ الإِنَامِ ثُمَّ
اقْبَلُوا إِلَى مَطْلَعِ الإِلْهَامِ هَذَا
خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ مِنَ العَارِفِينَ.
قُمْ عَلَى ذِكْرِي أَيَّاكَ إِنْ
يَمْنَعُكَ قَوْلُ المَشْرِكِينَ إِنْ
اللِّسَانَ خَلَقَ لِذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ ذِكْرَ
البَرِيَّةِ وَ لَكِنْ بِالحِكْمَةِ كَذَلِكَ
قَضَى الأَمْرَ وَ رَقْمَ مِنْ قَلَمِ
إِرَادَةِ رَبِّكَ العَلِيمِ القَدِيرِ. إِنْ
أَجْمَعَ أَحِبَّائِي ثُمَّ أَمْرَهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا

Omniscient, the Most Powerful. Gather My loved ones together and admonish them to adhere to morality and virtue. Thus art thou bidden by thy Lord, the All-Glorious. Thou art in this day accorded an exalted station in Our sight.

We are clear of all those who obstruct the Path, who consume the wealth of the people, and who foment sedition upon the earth; God is witness unto what I say. **My captivity can bring on Me no shame. Nay, by My life, it conferreth on Me glory. That which can make Me ashamed is the conduct of such of My followers as profess to love Me, yet in fact follow the Evil One. They, indeed, are of the lost.**

When the time set for this Revelation was fulfilled, and He Who is the Daystar of the world appeared in 'Iráq, He bade His followers observe that which would sanctify them from all earthly defilements. Some preferred to follow the desires of a corrupt inclination, while others walked in the way of righteousness and truth, and were rightly guided. Say: He is not to be numbered with the people of Bahá who followeth his

بالبرِّ و التَّقوى كذلك امرت
من لدن ربِّك الابهى و لك
اليوم عندنا مقام كريم. انّ
الَّذين يسدّون السَّبيل و ياكلون
اموال النَّاس و يفسدون فى
الارض اننى برآء منهم و الله
على ما اقول شهيد. ليس ذلّتى
سجنى لعمرى انه عزّ لى بل
الذّلة عمل احبائى الّذين
ينسبون انفسهم الينا و يتّبعون
الشّيطان فى اعمالهم الا انهم
من الخاسرين. لَمّا قضى الامر
و اشرق نيّر الافاق من شطر
العراق امرناهم بما يقدّسهم
عن العالمين. منهم من اخذ
الهوى و اعرض عمّا امر و
منهم من اتّبع الحقّ بالهدى و
كان من المهتدين. قل الّذين
ارتكبوا الفحشاء و تمسّكوا
بالدّنيا انهم ليسوا من اهل
البهاء هم عباد لو يردون و ادياً
من الذّهب يمرّون عنه كمرّ

mundane desires, or fixeth his heart on things of the earth. He is My true follower who, if he come to a valley of pure gold, will pass straight through it aloof as a cloud, and will neither turn back, nor pause. Such a man is, assuredly, of Me. From his garment the Concourse on high can inhale the fragrance of sanctity, and unto this doth thy Lord and one who hath knowledge of the Book testify. And if he met the fairest and most comely of women, he would not feel his heart seduced by the least shadow of desire for her beauty. Such a one, indeed, is the creation of spotless chastity. Thus instructeth you the Pen of the Ancient of Days, as bidden by your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful.⁷

O thou who hast turned unto God!
Dispatch the epistles of thy Lord, that mankind might renounce the world and take hold of that which they are commanded by God, the Breaker of the dawn. Say: Do not make vain the Cause of God amongst you, nor follow those who have denied Him, He by Whom the winds blow. Render God victorious with persuasive speech.

السَّحَابِ وَ لَا يَلْتَفِتُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَبَدًا
إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ مِنِّي لِيَجِدَنَّ مِنْ
قَمِيصِهِمُ الْمَلَأَ الْأَعْلَى عَرَفَ
التَّقْدِيسِ وَ يَشْهَدُ بِذَلِكَ رَبُّكَ
وَ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ وَ لَوْ
يُرْدُنَ عَلَيْهِمْ ذَوَاتُ الْجَمَالِ
بِأَحْسَنِ الطَّرَازِ لَا تَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِنَّ
أَبْصَارُهُمْ بِالْهَوَى أَوْلَيْكَ
خَلَقُوا مِنَ التَّقْوَى كَذَلِكَ
يَعْلَمُكُمْ قَلَمُ الْقَدَمِ مِنْ لَدُنْ رَبِّكُمْ
الْعَزِيزِ الْوَهَّابِ. يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَقْبَلِ
بَلِّغْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَعَلَّ النَّاسَ
يَضَعُونَ الْوَرِي وَ يَأْخُذُونَ مَا
أَمَرُوا بِهِ مِنْ اللَّهِ فَالِقِ
الْأَصْبَاحِ. قُلْ لَا تَضَيِّعُوا أَمْرَ
اللَّهِ بَيْنَكُمْ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعُوا الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ مَرْسَلِ الْأَرْيَاحِ إِنْ
أَنْصَرُوا اللَّهَ بِالسِّنِّكُمْ إِنْ اللِّسَانَ
سَيْفِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنْ افْتَحُوا بِهِ
مَدَائِنَ الْقُلُوبِ هَذَا شَأْنُ
الْإِنْسَانِ إِنْ أَعْرَفُوا يَا أَوْلَى

⁷ The above paragraphs in red have been translated by the Guardian in *Gleanings*, LX.

Indeed, the tongue is the sword of the All-Merciful; conquer thereby the cities of men's hearts. This is what is befitting of the true station of humanity; wherefore, understand, O men of discernment.

Say: O concourse of divines! Can any one of you race with the Divine Youth in the arena of wisdom and utterance, or soar with Him into the heaven of inner meaning and explanation? Nay, by My Lord, the God of mercy! All have swooned away in this Day from the Word of thy Lord. They are even as dead and lifeless, except him whom thy Lord, the Almighty, the Unconstrained, hath willed to exempt. Such a one is indeed of those endued with knowledge in the sight of Him Who is the All-Knowing. The inmates of Paradise, and the dwellers of the sacred Folds, bless him at eventide and at dawn. Can the one possessed of wooden legs resist him whose feet God hath made of steel? Nay, by Him Who illumineth the whole of creation!⁸

The winds of chastisement have taken hold of those who broke the Covenant of God and His testament; in the fire

الابصار قل يا معشر العلماء
هل يقدر احد منكم ان يركض
مع الفتى الالهى فى ميدان
الحكمة و البيان او يطير معه
الى سما المعاني و التبيان لا و
ربى الرحمن كلهم انصعقوا
اليوم من كلمة ربك كانهم
اموات غير احياء الا من شاء
ربك العزيز المختار. انه من
اهل العلم لدى العليم يصلين
عليه اهل الفردوس و اهل
حظائر القدس فى العشى و
الاشراق. من كان رجله من
الخشب هل يقدر ان يقوم مع
الذى جعل الله رجله من
الحديد لا ومنور الآفاق. ان
الذين نقضوا ميثاق الله و عهده
اولئك اخذتهم نفحات العذاب
سوف يرون منازلهم فى النار
فبئس مثوى كل متكبر جبار.
قل يا قوم تفكروا فى القرون

⁸ As rendered by the Guardian in *Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, Page 76

shall they find their abode, and how wretched is the end of the vainglorious oppressor!

Say: ponder ye the bygone ages of those before you; when We sent Our messengers unto them, they pronounced the verses of their Lord to be lies, and so We seized them on account of their sin and forsook them as an admonition to men of insight. Where are they who reposed in their palaces on the divans of conceit? We returned them to their graves! These are their abodes which We have abandoned to the spider; take heed, O men of vision!

Awaken, O people; the Herald hath called aloud in the field of utterance, and this is the Day when ye are called before the Lord. How long shall ye slumber in the cradle of heedlessness and lust? Arise and advance, and follow not every doubting idolater.

We had formerly sent down the verses unto thee, and these We reveal as a token of Our grace—and We are, in truth, the Almighty, the Forgiving—that thou mayest arise to serve God and yield Him thanks at

الَّتِي خَلْت قَبْلَكُمْ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيهَا
رِسَالًا كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ
أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَتَرَكْنَاهُمْ
تَذْكَرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ. إِنْ
الَّذِينَ اتَّكَّأُوا فِي الْقُصُورِ عَلَى
وَسَائِدِ الْغُرُورِ قَدْ أَرْجَعْنَاهُمْ
إِلَى الْقُبُورِ تِلْكَ الْبُيُوتِ
تَرَكَوْهَا لِلْعَنْكَبُوتِ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا
أُولِي الْأَنْظَارِ. قُلْ إِنْ أَنْتَبَهُوا يَا
قَوْمٍ قَدْ نَادَى الْمُنَادُ فِي بَرِّيَّةٍ
الْبَيَانَ وَهَذَا يَوْمُ النَّتَادِ. إِلَى مَتَى
تَرْقُدُونَ فِي مَهَادِ الْغَفْلَةِ
وَالهَوَى قَوْمُوا وَاقْبَلُوا وَ لَا
تَتَّبِعُوا كُلَّ مَشْرِكٍ مَّرْتَابًا أَنَا
نَزَّلْنَا لَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ آيَاتِ بَيِّنَاتٍ
تِلْكَ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى فَضْلًا مِنْ
لَدُنَّا وَ أَنَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ لَتَقُومَ
عَلَى خِدْمَةِ اللَّهِ وَ تَشْكُرُهُ فِي
الْغُدُوِّ وَ الْأَصَالِ. كَذَلِكَ
صَرَّفْنَا الْآيَاتِ وَ أَرْسَلْنَاهَا
إِلَيْكَ إِنْ رَبِّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْعَلَّامُ

| | |
|--|--|
| morn and eve. Thus have We set forth the verses and sent them unto thee. Thy Lord is verily the Almighty, the Omniscient. | |
|--|--|

Qalam al-Athar al-'ala, Volume One, Passage Eight