

CHAPTER SIX

THE COVENANT AND TESTAMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH

527. In His Name who shines forth from the Horizon of Might!

Verily, the Tongue of the Ancient gives glad tidings to those who are in the world concerning the appearance of the Greatest Name, and who takes His Covenant among the nations.

Verily, He ¹ is Myself; the Shining-Place of My Identity; the East of My Cause; the Heaven of My Bounty; the Sea of My Will; the Lamp of My Guidance; the Path of My Justice; the Standard of My Love.

The one who hath turned to Him who turned to My Face and is illumined through the lights of My Beauty; hath acknowledged My Oneness and confessed My Singleness.

The one who hath denied Him hath been deprived of the Salsibíl of My Love, of the Kawthar of My Grace, the cup of My Mercy and the Wine by which the sincere ones have been attracted and the monotheists have taken flight in the air of My Compassion, which no one hath know except him whom I have taught the matter revealed in My Hidden Tablet.

TABLET OF THE BRANCH

528. He is Eternal in His 'Abhá Horizon!

Verily, the Cause of God hath come upon the Clouds of Utterances and the polytheists are in this Day in great torment! Verily, the Hosts of Revelation have descended with Banner of Inspiration from the Heaven of the Tablet of the Name of God, the Powerful, the Mighty! At this time the monotheists all rejoice in the victory of God and His Dominion, and the deniers will then be in manifest perplexity.

O ye people! Do ye flee from the Mercy of God after It hath encompassed the existent things created between the heavens and earths? Beware lest ye prefer your own selves before the Mercy of God, and deprive not yourselves thereof! Verily, whosoever turneth away therefrom will be in great loss. Verily, Mercy is like unto Verses which has descended from the one heaven, and from them the monotheists drink the choice Wine of Life, whilst the polytheists drink from the fiery water; and when the Verses of God are read unto them, the fire of hatred is enkindled within their breasts. Thus have they preferred their own selves before the Mercy of God, and are of those who are heedless.

Enter, O people, beneath the shelter of the Word! Then drink therefrom the choice wine of Inner Significances and Utterances; for therein is hidden the Kawthar of the Glorious One—and it hath appeared from the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the Merciful, with wonderful lights.

529. Say: Verily, the Branch ² of Command hath sprung forth from this Root which God hath firmly planted in the ground of the Will, the Limb of which hath been elevated to a station which encompasses all existence. Therefore, exalted be He for this Creation, the Lofty, the Blessed, the Inaccessible, the Mighty!

O ye people! Draw nigh unto It, and taste the fruits of Its Knowledge and Wisdom on the part of the Mighty, the Knowing One. Whosoever will not taste thereof shall be deprived of the Bounty, even though he hath partaken of all that is in the earth—were ye of those who know.

1 Bahá'u'lláh.

2 'Abdu'l-Bahá'.

Say: Verily, a Word hath gone forth in favor from the Most Great Tablet and God hath adorned It with the Mantle of Himself, and made It Sovereign over all in the earth and a Sign of His Grandeur and Omnipotence among the creatures; in order that, through It, the people shall praise their Lord, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Wise; and that, through It, they shall glorify their Creator and sanctify the Self of God which standeth within all things. Verily, this is naught but a Revelation on the part of the Wise, the Ancient One!

Say: O people, praise ye God, for the Manifestation of It (the Branch), for verily It is the Most Great Favor upon you and the Most Perfect Blessing for you; and through Him ('Abdu'l-Bahá') every mouldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to Him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away from Him hath turned away from My Beauty, denied My Proof, and is of those who transgress. Verily, He is the Remembrance of God amongst you, and His Trust within you, and His Manifestation unto you and His Appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the Message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereto testifieth God, then His Angels, then His Messengers, and then His Holy Servants.

Inhale the fragrances of the Ridván from His Roses and be not of those who are deprived. Appreciate the Bounty of God upon you and be not veiled therefrom—and, verily, We have sent Him forth in the temple of man. Thus praise ye the Lord, the Originator of whatsoever He willeth through His wise and inviolable Command!

Verily, those who withhold themselves from the Shelter of the Branch are indeed lost in the wilderness of perplexity; and are consumed by the heat of self-desire, and are of those who perish.

530. Hasten, O people unto the Shelter of God, in order that He may protect you from the heat of the Day whereon none shall find for himself any refuge or shelter whatsoever except beneath the Shelter of His Name, the Clement, the Forgiving! Clothe yourselves, O people, with the garment of Assurance, in order that He may protect you from the dart of doubts and superstitions, and that ye may be of those who are assured in those days wherein none shall ever be assured and no one shall be firmly established in the Cause, except by severing himself from all that is possessed by the people and turning unto the Holy and Radiant Outlook.

O ye people! Do ye take unto yourselves the Jept (idol) as a helper other than God, and do ye seek the Taghoot (idol) as a Lord besides your Lord the Almighty, the Omnipotent? Forsake, O people, their mention, then hold the Chalice of Life in the Name of your Lord, the Merciful. Verily, by God, the existent world is quickened through a drop thereof, were ye of those who know.

Say: In that Day there is no refuge for any one save the Command of God, and no salvation for any soul but God. Verily, this is the truth and there is naught after truth but manifest error.

531. Verily, God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause according to his ability. Thus hath the Command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness.

Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one who quickeneth all the servants and the Lord shall bring him forth in the Day of Resurrection into the Ridván of Oneness, adorned with the Mantle of Himself, the Protector, the Mighty, the Generous! Thus will ye assist your Lord, and naught else save this shall ever be mentioned in this Day before God, your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers.

As to thee, O servant, hearken unto the admonition given unto thee in the Tablet; then seek the Grace of thy Lord at all times. Then spread the Tablet among those who believe in God and in His Verses; so that they may follow that which is contained therein, and be of those who are praiseworthy.

Say: O people, cause no corruption in the earth and dispute not with men; for, verily, this is not worthy of those who have chosen in the shelter of their Lord a station which shall indeed remain secure.

If ye find one athirst, give him to drink from the Chalice of Kawtha and Tasneed; and if ye find one endowed with an attentive ear, read unto him the Verses of God, the Mighty, the Merciful, the

Compassionate! Unloose the tongue with excellent utterance, then admonish the people if ye find them advancing unto the sanctuary of God; otherwise abandon them unto themselves and forsake them in the abyss of hell. Beware lest ye scatter the pearls of Inner Significance before every barren, dumb one. Verily, the blind are deprived of witnessing the Lights and are unable to distinguish between the stone and the holy, precious pearl.

Verily, wert thou to read the most mighty, wonderful Verses to the stone for a thousand years, will it understand, or will they take any effect therein? No! by thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement! If thou readest all the Verses of God unto the deaf, will he hear a single letter? No! Verily, by the Beauty, the Mighty, the Ancient!

Thus have We delivered unto thee some of the jewels of Wisdom and Utterance, in order that thou mayest gaze unto the direction of thy Lord and be severed from all the creatures. May the Spirit and Glory rest upon thee, and upon those who dwell upon the plain of Holiness and who remain in the Cause of their Lord in manifest steadfastness!

KITÁB-I-'AHD
The Book of the Covenant

532. Although the Supreme Horizon is devoid of the vanities of the world, yet in the Treasury of Trust and Resignation, We have placed a priceless and unequalled inheritance for the heirs. We have not placed (therein) a treasure, neither have we added to the pain.

533. By God! In wealth fear is concealed and peril is hidden. Behold and then reflect upon that which the Merciful One hath revealed in the Qur'án: "Woe unto every maligner and backbiter who heapeth up riches and counteth them over." There is no continuance in the riches of this world. That which is subject to mortality and undergoeth a change hath never been and is not worth regarding. But as is well-known, the purpose of this Oppressed One in enduring these adversities and calamities, the revelation of the Verses and the manifestation of the Proofs, hath been to quench the fire of hatred and animosity, so that perchance the horizons of the minds of the people of this world may shine with the light of concord and attain the real tranquillity. The sun of this explanation is shining and arising from the horizon of the Divine Tablet; all must look toward it.

534. O people of the world! I enjoin you to that which is the means of the elevation of your station. Hold to the virtue of God and grasp the hem of that which is just. Verily, I say, the tongue is for mentioning that which is good; pollute it not with evil speech. God hath forgiven you that which is past; hereafter you must all speak that which is befitting. Avoid execration, reviling and that which is aggravating to man.

The station of man is high. A short while since, this exalted Word was revealed from the Repository of the Pen of 'Abhá: "This is a great and blessed Day, but that which hath been hidden in man is and shall be disclosed." The station of man is great if he holds to Reality and Truth, and if he be firm and steadfast in the Commands. The true man appeareth before the Merciful One like unto the heavens; his sight and hearing are the sun and moon; his bright and shining qualities are the stars; his station is the highest one; his traces are the educators of existence. Every believer who hath found the Perfume of the Garment in this Day and turneth with a pure heart toward the Supreme Horizon, he is mentioned as one of the followers of Bahá upon the Red Page.

Take the Chalice of My Favor in My Name; then drink from it to My Remembrance, the Beloved, the New!

535. O people of the world! The Creed of God is for love and union; make it not the cause of discord and disunion. In the sight of the men of discernment and those who are holding to the Manifestation, that which is the means of preservation and the cause of the ease and tranquillity of the servants is revealed from the Supreme Pen; but the ignorant of the earth who are fostered in

ambition and lust are heedless of the matured Wisdom of the True Wise One and are speaking and working in imaginations and fancies.

536. O saints of God and His faithful ones! Kings are the appearances of power and the daysprings of the might and wealth of the True One. Pray in their behalf, for the government of the earth is ordained to those souls; but the hearts He hath appointed for Himself.
537. He hath forbidden dispute and strife with an absolute prohibition in the Book (Kitáb-i-Aqdas). This is the command of God in this Greatest Manifestation, and He hath preserved it from any order of annulment and hath adorned it with the ornament of confirmation. Verily, He is the All-Knowing and the All-Wise!
538. It is incumbent upon all to aid those souls who are the day-spring of authority and the dawning-points of command, and who are adorned with the ornaments of equity and justice. Blessings be upon the princes and learned ones in Bahá. These are My Trusted ones amongst My servants; these are the rising-points of My Commandments amongst My creatures. Upon them be My Glory, My Mercy and My Grace which have surrounded all existence!
539. It is revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas concerning this, that which from the Horizons of its Words the Lights of the Divine Bounties gleam, rise and are resplendent.
540. O My Branches! In this Existent Being the greatest strength and the most perfect power is hidden and concealed; look towards It and gaze in the direction of Its union and not at Its seeming differences. This is the Testament of God that the Branches, Twigs, and Relations must each and every one look to the Greatest Branch.³ Reflect upon that which is revealed in My Book, the Aqdas: "When the Ocean of My Presence hath disappeared and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn your faces towards Him whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Pre-Existent Root." The aim of this blessed verse hath been the Greatest Branch. We have likewise elucidated the Command as a favor from before Us; and I am the Generous, the All-Giving!
541. Verily, God hath ordained the station of the Greater Branch after the station of the former. Verily, He is the Ordainer, the Wise. We have surely chosen the Greater after the Greatest as a Command from the All-Knowing, the Omniscient!
542. The love of the Branches is incumbent upon all, but God hath not ordained to them any right over the property of the people.
543. O My Branches, My Twigs and My Relations! We enjoin you to the virtue of God, to follow that which is just and benefiting, and that by which your station will be exalted. Truly, I say, piety is the greatest commander for the assistance of the Divine Religion, and the hosts that befit this Commander have been and are good, pure, and pleasing qualities and deeds.
544. Say: O servants, make not the course of order to be the cause of confusion, and make not the reason of union to be the occasion of discord! It is hoped that the people of Bahá will look towards the blessed Word: "Say, all are from the Presence of God"; and this exalted Word resembles water for extinguishing the fire of hatred and animosity which is deposited in all minds and hearts. The different creeds will attain the light of real union through this simple Word. Verily, He sayeth the Truth and guideth in the Path, and He is the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Wonderful!
545. Respect and regard for the Branches is incumbent upon all for the honoring of the Religion and the exaltation of the Word; and this Command hath been both previously and afterwards recorded and mentioned in the Books of God. Blessed is he who attaineth to that which hath been commanded from the Presence of the Command, the Pre-Existent!

Respect is enjoined also for the ladies of the Household of God, and the Twigs and Relations. I enjoin you to the service of the nations and to the pacification of the world.

546. From the Kingdom of the Revelation of the Aim of the people of the world, is revealed that which

3 'Abdu'l-Bahá'.

is the Cause of the Life of the world and the Salvation of the nations. Hearken to the admonitions of the Supreme Pen with the true (inner) ear. To this beareth witness My Book, the Mighty, the Wonderful!

FROM KITAB-I-AQDAS

547. When the Ocean of My Presence hath disappeared and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn your faces towards Him ⁴ whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Pre-Existent Root.

O people of the world! If the Dove soareth from the Tree of Praise to the extreme Concealment turn for what ye do not understand in the Book to the Branch who is extended from this True Root.

548. He who claimeth a Cause (a Revelation) before the end of a full thousand years, he is lying and false apostle. We ask God that He, verily, may strengthen such a one to go back (to the Path); if he repenteth, verily, God is the Forgiver.

PART TWO
THE COVENANT OF GOD

549. Bring them together again, O Lord, by the Power of Thy Covenant, and gather their dispersion by the Might of Thy Promise, and unite their hearts by the dominion of Thy Love! Cause them to love one another so as to sacrifice their spirits, expend their money and give up their desires for each other's sake!

O Lord, make to descend upon them quietness and tranquillity! Shower upon them the clouds of Thy Mercy in full abundance, and make them to characterize themselves with the characteristics of the spiritual!

O Lord, hold us firm in Thy noble command, and bestow upon us Thy Gifts through Thy bounty, grace and beneficence!

Verily, Thou art the Generous, the Merciful, and the Benevolent.

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