
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LOOM OF REALITY

786 Verily, if my Lord destine unto me and cause me to taste the sweetness of the cup of the great martyrdom, my greatest desire will be fulfilled. Fear not if this Branch be severed from the material earth and cast aside the leaves—nay, rather, its leaves will flourish, for this Branch will grow after it is cut from the earth, will ascend until it shelters the universe, its foliage will reach the Supreme Apex and bear fruits, imparting fragrance perfume into the world.

787 As to life, however, it has no beginning, nor will it have any end. The eternal grace of God has always been the cause of life. It has had no starting point and it will no approach any end. But concerning the degrees through which the soul has gone, these degrees are spiritual. Consider all the advancement of the world of humanity which is at present manifest and known. This has been realized through the spirit. The manifestation of the divine laws and disciplines which are essential to the realities of beings; and in the world of the Kingdom they are ideals which in the appearance of the holy Manifestations of God are realized.

788 The fruits of the deeds of man, i.e., the harvest of the reward of man's conduct, is gathered in the heavenly realm.

789 But as to evolution: it is true of both body and the spirit. Consider how many sciences, arts, discoveries and achievements have come into existence since the days of Moses till the present time through the progress of the human soul in knowledge and perfections. Similarly, how much the soul has evolved from the moral point of view.

When the body of man is perfected, physical evolution comes to an end, since nature does not seek to build a higher form than that of man. But the evolution of spirit continues until reason, the mental powers, and the emotional capacities are evolved in it. These are not produced by entities which pass from body to body, but by the universal or World Spirit of man. The results of each individual life-experience go to the general enrichment of humanity. As a hundred lamps may be lit from a

single flame, so the one World Spirit illumines the minds of countless men. Without this spirit, man's body, like the lamp, is lifeless matter.

790 Have full assurance that love is the mystery of the appearance of God; that love is the divine aspect of God; that love is spiritual grace; that love is the light of the Kingdom; that love is as the breath of the Holy Spirit in the spirit of man. Love is the cause of the manifestation of truth in the material world. Love is the essential bond of union which exists between God and all things in their ultimate reality. Love is the source of the greatest happiness of the material and the spiritual worlds. Love is the light by which man is guided in the midst of darkness. Love is the communication between truth and man in the realm of consciousness. Love is the means of growth for all who are enlightened.

Love is the highest law in this great universe of God. Love is the law of order between simple essences, whereby they are apportioned and united into compound substances in this world of matter. Love is the essential and magnetic power that organizes the planets and the stars which shine in infinite space. Love supplies the impulse to that intense and unceasing meditation which reveals the hidden mysteries of the universe.

Love is the highest honor for all the nations of men. To that people in whom God causes love to appear the Supreme Concourse, the angels of heaven, and the hosts of the kingdom of the Glorious One make salutation. When the hearts of a people are void of this Divine power—of the love of God—they will descend to the lowest estate of mortals, they will wander in the desert of error, they will fall into the slough of despair and there is no deliverance for them. They become like worms which delight in groveling in the earth.

O friends of God! be ye manifestations of the love of God and lamps of guidance in all horizons, shining by the light of love and harmony.

How beautiful is the shining of this shining!

791 Thou hast written that thou art a student in the progressive spiritual school. Happy is thy condition! If the various progressive schools join themselves to the universal university of the Kingdom, such knowledge and sciences will be brought into light that man will see the potentialities of the "Open Tablet" of existence are infinite; will realize that all the created things are as letters and words; will be instructed in the lessons of the degrees of significances; will perceive the signs of oneness in the primordial atoms of the earth; will hear the voice of the Lord of the Kingdom; will behold the confirmations of the Holy Spirit and will find such ecstasy and joy that, unable to contain himself in the vast area of existence, he will prepare

himself for the journey toward the Kingdom and will hasten to the immensity of the Realm of Might. As soon as a bird is fledged, it cannot keep itself on the ground; nay, rather it soareth up toward the Supreme Apex—except the birds whose feet are tied, whose wings are clipped, whose feathers are broken and who are soiled with water and clay.

792 O thou seeker of Truth! The realm of the Kingdom is a unit. The only difference lies in this: that when the season of spring dawneth, a new and wonderful motion and rejuvenation is witnessed in all the existing things; the mountains and meadows are revived; the trees find freshness and delicacy and are clothed with radiant and bright leaves, blossoms and fruits. In like manner the preceding Manifestations form an inseparable link with the subsequent dispensations; nay, rather, they are identical with each other. Since the world is constantly developing itself, the rays become stronger, the outpouring becometh greater and the sun appeareth in the meridian orbit.

793 O thou yearner after the Kingdom! Each Manifestation is the heart of the world and the proficient Physician of every patient. The world of humanity is sick, but that skilful Physician hath the healing remedy and He bestoweth Divine teachings, exhortations and advices which are the remedy of every ailment and the dressing for every wound. Undoubtedly the wise physician discovereth the needs of the patient at every season and prescribeth suitable medicine. Therefore, when thou wilt compare the teachings of the Beauty of 'Abhá with the requisitions and necessities of the present time, thou wilt conclude that they are to the sick body of the world the swift healing antidote; nay, rather, they are the remedy producing everlasting health. The prescription of the proficient physicians of the past and the future will not be the same; nay, rather, they will be in accord with the ailment of the patient. Although the medicine is changed, yet all of these changes are for the sole purpose of healing the sick. In former dispensations the sick body of the world could not bear strong and overpowering remedies. That is why His Holiness the Christ said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of the Comforter, who is sent by the Father, is come, He will guide you unto all truth." Therefore, in this age of lights, specific teachings have become universal, in order that the outpouring of the Merciful One environ both the East and the West, the oneness of the Kingdom of humanity become manifest and the luminosity of truth enlighten the world of consciousness. The descent of the New Jerusalem is the heavenly religion which secures the prosperity of the human world and is the effulgence of the illumination of the realm of God. In reality Emmanuel was the

forerunner of the second coming of His Highness the Christ and the herald of the path of the Kingdom.

This is self-evident, that the letter is an organic member of the word. This membership denoted subordination; that is, that the letter draws its life from the word and hath spiritual relationship with it and is accounted a part of it. The apostles were the Letters and His Highness Christ the Essence of the Word; and the significance of the Word, which is the Everlasting Outpouring, casts a splendor upon those Letters. Since a letter is a part of the word itself, it is intrinsically identical with the word.

I hope that thou shalt arise to perform all that which His Highness Emmanuel hath predicted. Know thou this of a certainty, that thou shalt become assisted. The confirmations of the Holy Spirit are descending uninterruptedly. The power of the Word shall penetrate in such wise that the Letter will become the reflective mirror of the Sun of the Word, and the radiation of the lights of the Word shall illuminate the whole earth. But the heavenly Jerusalem, which is established upon the apex of the world and the Holy of Holies of the Almighty, which hath hoisted its banner, comprehendeth and includeth in it all the perfections and teachings of the former dispensations. Likewise, it is the herald of the oneness of the world of humanity, the ensign of universal peace, the spirit of eternal life, the lights of divine perfections, the surrounding bestowal of the realm of existence, the adornment and grandeur of the world of creation, and the cause of the tranquillity of humankind.

794 Turn thy attention toward the holy Tablets.¹ Read and reflect upon the Tablets of Ishraqát, Tajallíyát, the Words of Paradise, the Glad Tidings, Tarazát and the Book of Aqdas. These divine teachings in this day are the remedy of the ailments of the world of man, and the dressing of the wounded body of existence; they are the spirit of life, the ark of salvation, the magnet of the everlasting glory, and the penetrative power in the reality of man!

¹ For quotations from the Tablets referred to here, see Contents.

795 The beloved of God must be the cause of spreading the Heavenly Love. They must impart spiritual concord; deal with all men in the utmost sincerity and kindness in accord with the commands and exhortations of the Merciful One. And they must treat all with benevolence. They must render devoted service to the friends, wish prosperity for enemies, show kindness to the bad tempered, and be affectionate toward the unjust. They must become a salutary water to thirsty ones, a swift healing to sick persons, a remedy to the ailing; comfort the minds of those afflicted with calamities; become the light of guidance to the erring, an affectionate guide to

the wandering, a seeing eye to the blind, a hearing ear to the deaf, an eternal life to the dead, and an everlasting joy to the dispirited.

796 Prayer and supplication are two wings whereby man soars toward the heavenly mansion of the True One. However, verbal repetition of prayer does not suffice. One must live in a perennial attitude of prayer. When man is spiritually free his mind becomes the altar and his heart the sanctuary of prayer. Then the meaning of the verse "He will lift up from before his eyes the veil" will become fulfilled in man.

797 People think religion is confined to an edifice, to be worshipped at an altar. In reality it is an attitude toward divinity which is reflected through life. The confirmations of the Spirit come to that man or woman who accepts his life with radiant acquiescence. Release comes by making of the will a door through which the confirmations of the Spirit come. By religion we mean those necessary bonds which unify the world of humanity. This has ever been the essence of religion, for this object have all the Manifestations come to the world. Alas! that the leaders of religion afterwards have abandoned this solid foundation and have fabricated a set of blind dogmas and rituals which are at complete variance with the foundation of divine religion.

798 Indifference breeds deterioration. Silence is the cause of retrogression. Thoughtlessness leads to forgetfulness. Passivity, inaction, produce oblivion. Consequently do ye not seek one moment of rest by day or by night. Nay, rather strive after composure of heart in the heaven of Unity. Do ye not for one moment obey the instinct of the worldly consciousness for ease. Seek ye divine happiness through the hardships and sorrows of this physical world, and behold spiritual well-being in the struggles of this fleeting existence. Distill sugar and honey from the bitter poison of suffering. Recognize the caress of divine favor in the arrows of misfortune. Consider the lowest degree of humiliation in the path of the Blessed Perfection as the highest station of Glory. Know descent to be identical with ascent, and consider death itself the essence of life.

799 The Word of God is the storehouse of all good, all power and all wisdom. The illiterate fisherman and savage Arabs through it were enabled to solve such problems as were puzzles to eminent sages from the beginning of time. It awakens within us that brilliant intuition which makes us independent of all tuition, and endows us with an all-embracing power of spiritual understanding. Many a soul after fruitless struggles in the ark of philosophy was drowned in the sea of conflicting theories of cause and effect, while those on board the craft of simplicity reached the shore of the

Universal Cause, aided by favorable winds blowing from the point of divine knowledge. When man is associated with that transcendent power emanating from the Word of God, the tree of his being becomes so well rooted in the soil of assurance that it laughs at hurricanes of skepticism violently attempting its destruction. For this association of the part with the Whole endows him with the Whole, and this union of the particular with the Universal makes him all in all.

800 Evil does not exist. Death is only the lack of life; therefore death does not exist. Darkness is only the lack of light. Evil is only the lack of good. Ignorance is only the lack of knowledge. Poverty is the lack of wealth. Misleading is the lack of guidance. Miserliness is the lack of generosity. The non-existence of light is darkness. The lack of sight is blindness. The lack of hearing is deafness. All these things are non-existent. God did not create any evil thing. God did not create a man poor. Poverty is only the lack of wealth. Guidance is the gift of God, and if a man is deprived of it, he will be misled; but he is not misled by God—it is only the result of the lack of guidance.

801 Everything save man has one condition, but man has two. The animal has one condition of nature, but man has the animal nature and the Divine nature. If the Divine nature predominates he will be good, but if the human nature predominates he will be evil. One will lift him up, but the other will send him to the lowest depths. Man can become so degraded that he will worship a stone, which is of the lowest kingdom; but the spiritual will raise him to the Supreme Realms. Jesus Christ had the same two conditions, the earthly and the heavenly; man has the same. Man has the power of knowledge which will exalt him to heaven, and the power of ignorance which will debase him to the lowest condition. The more a person advances in Divine matters, the more will he receive the attributes of light; and the more he retrogrades, the more he will receive the qualities of darkness. The world is dark and in darkness, but the spiritual world is light. This is the Heavenly Kingdom.

802 People must live for one another, and not live in seclusion as do the monks and nuns. People should not live solitary lives. Light is of no value in an empty room. A tree is of no service to any one on the summit of a mountain, but should stand in a place where it will give shade and where its fruits can be gathered. The believers should be together as much as possible. Two lamps in a room give more light than one.

803 Man must work, and in that work show the qualities of God and thus do good. His work, both material and spiritual, must reveal what he himself is. By his arts, sciences, inventions and all of his work, man must reveal his highest capacity.

804 9 is the last number and it is the greater number. 10 is simply the continuation of the number 1 because 10 is 1 and 100 is 1. Place the units up to 10 and we simply return to the number 1. The units end at 9. Number 9 is the highest, and from it all other numbers are made. The calculation of the word "Báb" is 5 and Bahá is 9. If you multiply 9 by 5 you have 45. Now 45 is the Arabic numerical value of the word Adam.

As Adam is the Father of humanity, and means the real man, therefore the product of the Báb and Bahá is equal to the number Adam. There is no great difference between the Greatest Name and the name of Adam. In their nature they are one. (The digits of 45 added equal 9.) Also, 1 plus 2 equals 3; 3 plus 3 equals 6; 6 plus 4 equals 10; 10 plus 5 equals 15; 15 is the number of Eve. By the physical marriage of Adam and Eve the race originated, and by the appearance of the Manifestation (Bahá'u'lláh) and the Báb, the Spiritual Generation had its origin. Therefore there is great knowledge and understanding when the two names are made into one, because if you add from 1 to 9 consecutively, the result is equal to the number of Bahá and the Báb multiplied together, which equals 45, and it is equal to the number of Adam; and this is the wisdom in it. The name of God which Christ gave to His disciples was the Name of the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. It was the same spiritually, but it was a Name which was never pronounced. All the Bible was written for Bahá'u'lláh. Everywhere, "Lord of Hosts" refers to the Manifestation.

805 The highest expression of the life of man on this planet in this age and many ages to come is Celestial: that is, to live and act in accord with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and to be steadfast in the love of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The principles of the Religion of the Blessed Perfection adorn the spirit with the highest attributes of the Kingdom of 'Abhá, illumine the heart with the Sun of the love of God, make him a servant of the world of humanity, a standard-bearer of Universal Peace, and an orb shining from the heaven of righteousness.

He forgets himself and lives in the flow of the love of the True One; he embraces all mankind with an ineffable tenderness, striving day and night to serve his fellowman. He becomes a herald of the Supreme Concourse and wins the good pleasure of the Lord of Hosts. He will be attracted with the love of the Beloved, and immerse his whole being in the ocean of humility and meekness. He will enlist himself in the army of human progress, to realize the limitless advancement of the human race. Through his zeal, he will sacrifice everything in the path of God, and quaff from the chalice of eternal life.

This is the most glorious bounty of this Age; this is the bestowal of the Bahá'í

Circle; this is the Light that illuminates every heart. This is the water that allays every thirst one; this is the Divine Elixir that changes man into the image and likeness of the Almighty.

806 To tamper with psychic forces while in this world interferes with the condition of the soul in the world to come. These forces are real, but are not to be active on this plane.

The child in the womb has its eyes, ears, hands and feet, but these powers are not in activity. The whole purpose of the womb-life is the coming forth into this world. So, the whole purpose of this matrix-world life is the coming forth into the world of Reality, where all these (psychic) forces will be active. They belong to that world.

This mineral and these trees have no knowledge of the animal and human worlds; they cannot imagine them, they deny their very existence. While the human world is helping the animal and developing the vegetable kingdoms, these kingdoms are unconscious of it. Similarly, the human world cannot comprehend the world of the Kingdom; it is absolutely ignorant of the Kingdom, while the heavenly spirits have influence in the human world.

Observe how clear this point is, yet the professors and philosophers of the world ignore this Reality! The psychic mediums, however, are speaking of the world of thought and not the world of Reality. But a heavenly soul who is conscious of the divine world, whose eye of discernment is open, who is severed from the world of nature, and has attained to spiritual power—this soul is cognizant of the divine world and the world of spirits. Reality is pure spirit, it is not physical. That is, it occupies no space.

807 By God, who is the only God, and there is no God but Him, this servant swears the masters did not come that man should adore them, or worship them, or acknowledge their prophethood. No! rather the masters of all time have suffered for no other purpose than this—that fleshly veils might be rent asunder and Reality become manifest.

808 There are before you so many temptations, trials, afflictions, calamities and difficulties because you have to be purified through fire and sifted through the sieve in order to separate the wheat from the tares. Verily, I say unto you: none will be saved but the believers, and from the believers only the sincere, and even those are in great danger, especially in such a time.

Consider ye! What calumny, slander, cruelty and oppression were brought down upon the Apostles by the Israelites for the sake of faith and assurance. They extended

the hands of pillage, they persecuted and tortured those sanctified souls. Therefore, there is no doubt but that you will become afflicted with trial, calamity and oppression in the Path of the Beauty of 'Abhá. But these trials are the essence of bestowal, and pure bounty, and the proofs of your acceptance at the Threshold of Oneness. Consequently, when the fire of trials is lighted, celebrate ye in joy, dance with overflowing emotions, rejoicing that, praise be to God, you have become the target of contempt in the Path of the Beauty of 'Abhá, and are hated by the people of passion and desire!

809 This Cause has become world-wide. In a short space of time it has permeated throughout all regions, for it has a magnetic power which attracts all intelligent men and women toward this center. If a person become informed of the reality of this Cause, he will believe in it, for these teachings are the spirit of this age.

The Bahá'í Movement imparts life. It is the cause of love and amity amongst mankind. It establishes communication between various nations and religions. It removes all antagonisms. And when this Cause is fully spread in Europe, warfare will be a thing of the past, universal peace will be realized, the oneness of the world of humanity will be recognized, and religion and science will work hand in hand.

The Bahá'í Movement bestows upon man a new spirit, a new light, and a new motion. It enlarges the sphere of thought. It illumines the horizon of the intellect. It expands the arena of comprehension.

This is the ultimate goal of human life. This is the fruit of existence. This is the brilliant pearl of cosmic consciousness. This is the shining star of spiritual destiny.

810 Though unity was produced in bygone centuries, still complete unity was not feasible, for the means and causes of union were wanting, and among the five continents of the world connection and communication did not exist. Moreover, even among the people of one continent, intercourse and interchange of ideas was difficult. Therefore intercourse, unity, connection and interchange of ideas among all the people of the world through one center was impossible. But now the means of connection are man, and the five continents of the world are really as one.

The connection of commerce, art, science and agriculture is now evident, and has absolute sway. Therefore union and harmony are possible to be produced among all. These means of connection are the wonders of this glorious century and great epoch. Former centuries were deprived of this possibility, for this enlightened century has another power, another splendor, another condition. That is why you see it daily bringing forth some new wonder. Finally it will ignite shining lights in the gatherings of the world. Like the aurora of the morning, the signs of these great lights

are already apparent on the horizon.

The first light is political union, and a little trace of this has already appeared.

The second light is harmony of ideas in regard to essential matters, and the effect of this will soon be apparent.

The third light is the union of freedom; that likewise will surely be produced.

The fourth light is the union of religion, and this is the essential foundation. The evidence of this union will appear in the gatherings of the world with divine power.

The fifth light is the union of nations. In this century the union of brotherhood will appear in absolute might—at last all the people of the world will consider themselves natives of one country.

The sixth light is the union of all classes. All the people of the world will be as one kind.

The seventh light is the union of one language. That is, a language will be made which all the people will learn and through it converse one with another.

These things which have been mentioned will surely come to pass, for they are confirmed by a heavenly power. Consider that in Persia there were so many different classes, antagonistic sects and diverse ideas that its conditions were the lowest in the world. But now through the breath of the Holy Spirit it has attained to such a degree of union and connection that these different people, antagonistic creeds and hostile classes are as one soul. You will see them associating, conversing and mingling with one another in perfect union, brotherhood and fraternity. In large meetings you can see Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Moslems associating in perfect union, brotherhood, love, freedom and joy.

Consider what the power of the Greatest Name has done!

811 As to your question regarding the stars: Know that these brilliant stars are numberless and their existence is not devoid of wisdom both useful and important.

Rather they are worlds, as is this world of ours. But they differ in their bodies, by the difference of elements, from this earthly body. They differ in formation. The beings existent upon these bodies are according to their formation.

As to the worlds whereunto Christ (unto whom be Glory) referred: They are spiritual, divine, heavenly, single, unlocated—souls know them. But, verily, the sight of the people of the Kingdom of El-Abhá perceives them, and the intellect of the people of the Supreme Concourse apprehends them.

812 The disease which afflicts the body politic is lack of love and absence of altruism.

In the hearts of men no real love is found, and the condition is such that unless their susceptibilities are quickened by some power so that unity, love and accord develop within them, there can be no healing, no relief among mankind. Love and unity are the needs of the body politic today. Without these no progress nor prosperity can be attained. Therefore the friends of God must adhere to that Power which will create this love and unity in the hearts of the sons of men. Science cannot cure the illness of the body politic. Science cannot create amity and fellowship in human hearts. Neither can patriotism or racial prejudice effect a remedy. It can be accomplished solely through the divine bounties and the spiritual bestowals which have descended from God in this Day for that very purpose.

This is an exigency of the times, and the divine remedy has been provided. The spiritual Teachings of the Religion of God alone can create this love, unity and accord in human hearts. Therefore, hold to these heavenly agencies which God has provided so that through the love of God this soul-tie may be established, this heart-attachment realized, the light of the reality of unity be reflected from you throughout the universe.

The secrets of the whole economic question are divine in nature, and are concerned with the world of the heart and spirit. In the Bahá'í Teachings this is most completely explained, and without the consideration of the Bahá'í Teachings it is impossible to bring about a better state.

813 Bahá'ís consider it more blessed and a greater privilege to bestow than to gain and receive. They believe that bestowing good upon one another is the greatest means of help to both. This is not the principle and practise of their calumniators, who make even religion a source of livelihood.

814 The body of man, which has been formed gradually, must similarly be decomposed gradually. This is according to the real and natural order and divine law. If it had been better for it to be burned after death, in its creation it would have been so planned that the body would automatically become ignited after death, be consumed and turned into ashes. But the divine order formulated by the heavenly ordinance is that after death this body shall be transferred from one stage to another different from the preceding one, so that according to the relations which exist in this world, it may gradually combine and mix with other elements, thus going through stages until it arrive in the vegetable kingdom, there turning into plants and flowers, developing into trees of the highest paradise, becoming perfumed and attaining the beauty of color.

Cremation suppresses it speedily from attainment to these transformations, the

elements becoming so quickly decomposed that transformation to these various stages is checked.

815

Now as to what thou askest concerning the Spirit and its return to this world of humanity, and this elemental space: Know that the Spirit in general is divided into five sorts, the Vegetable Spirit, the Animal Spirit, the Human Spirit, the Spirit of Faith, and the Divine Spirit of Sanctity.

The Vegetable Spirit is the virtue perceptive, resulting from the admixture and absorption of the vital elements generated in the heart, which apprehend sense impressions.

The Human Spirit consists of the rational faculty, which apprehends general ideas and things intelligible and perceptible.

Now these spirits are not reckoned as "Spirit" in the terminology of the Scriptures and the usage of the people of Truth, inasmuch as the laws governing them are the same laws as govern all other phenomenal being, in respect to generation and corruption and production and change and reversion, as is clearly indicated in the Gospel where it says: "Let the dead bury their dead." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit"; inasmuch as he who would bury these dead was alive with the vegetative, animal and rational human soul, yet did Christ (to whom be Glory!) declare such to be dead and devoid of life, in that this person was devoid of the Spirit of Faith, which is of the Kingdom of God.

In brief, for these three spirits there is no restitution or return, but they are subordinate to reversions and production and corruption.

But the Spirit of Faith, which is of the Kingdom, consists of the all-comprehending grace and the perfect attainment, and the power of sanctity, and the divine effulgence from the Sun of Truth on luminous, light-seeking essences, from the Presence of the Divine Unity. And by this Spirit is the life of the spirit of man, when it is fortified thereby, as Christ (to whom be Glory!) saith: "That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." And this Spirit hath both restitution and return, inasmuch as it consists of the Light of God and the unconditioned grace. So, having regard to this state and station, Christ (to whom be Glory!) announced that John the Baptist was Elias "who was for to come" before Christ. And the likeness of this station is as that of lamps kindled from one another: for these, in respect to their glasses and oil-holders, are different, but in respect to their Light, one, and in respect to their illumination, one; nay, each is identical with the other, without imputation of plurality, or diversity, or multiplicity, or separateness. This is the Truth, and beyond the Truth there is only error.

816 But as to the question of the Trinity: Know, O advancer unto God, that in each one of the cycles wherein the Lights have shone forth upon the horizons, and the Forgiving Lord hath revealed Himself on Mount Parán, or Mount Sinai, or Mount Seir, there are necessarily three things, the Giver of the Grace, the Grace, and the Recipient of the Grace: the Source of the Effulgence, the Effulgence, and the Recipient of the Effulgence; the Illuminator, the Illumination, and the Illuminated. Look at the Mosaic cycle—the Lord and Moses, and the Fire the intermediary; and in the Messianic cycle, the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost and the intermediary; and in the Muḥammadan cycle, the Lord and the Apostle, and Gabriel the intermediary. Look at the sun and its rays, and the heat which results from its rays; the rays and the heat are but two effects of the sun, but inseparable from it and sent out from it; yet is the sun one in its essence, unique in its real identity, single in its attributes, nor can anything possibly resemble it. Such is the essence of the truth concerning the Unity, the real doctrine of the Oneness, the undiluted reality as to the divine Sanctity.

817 In short, by religion we mean those necessary bonds which unify the world of humanity. This has ever been the essence of the religion of God. This is the object of divine teaching and laws. This is the Light of the everlasting Life. But a thousand times, alas! this solid foundation is abandoned and forgotten, and the leaders of religion have fabricated a set of blind dogmas and rituals which are at complete variance with the foundation of divine religion. As these dogmas differ from each other, they become oppositions, oppositions breed strife, and strife ends in war and bloodshed. Thus religion, which was destined to become the cause of friendship, has become the cause of enmity. Religion, which was to confer everlasting life, has become a fiendish weapon of death. Hence, these superannuated, tattered dogmas, which are current among present day religions, must be totally given up; and thus, free from past traditions, the people must investigate the real objects of divine religion—when the true religion of God shall become unveiled in the utmost beauty and sublimity in the assemblage of the world.

818 Search untiringly for truth and reiterate the teachings which harmonize with the crying needs of the hour. This will be the cause of the progress of man, the illumination of the Orient and the Occident. The important thing is to spread the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh in our own century. Whoever listens to these Teachings properly explained, will say: “Here is the Truth—that which will render life a greater thing!”

819 The days of human existence are like vanishing shadows. Compared to the world

of Reality, they are brought to a close with extreme speed. From amongst the world of humanity those who lead a heedless life are afflicted with manifest loss; for when the days of their life come to a sudden end, there is no trace, no leaves, no blossom, no fruit. They shall remain in the lowest degree, and no mention is left behind for them. From king to servant, all walk this fleeting path and live in this circle, but none shall endure save those who are freed from every tie. They are not greedy after comfort, nor do they seek flitting pleasures. They are not longing for honor, neither pursue the phantasmal imaginations of glory and wealth. They are the devotees, the tried soldiers of Bahá'u'lláh—wanderers over mountain and desert. In the state of complete renunciation they call the people to the Kingdom of God, and they are the cause of the guidance of souls. Like unto the candle, they are aflame with all the virtues of the world of humanity. This is everlasting glory. This is eternal life. This is true attainment. This is the divine sublimity of the creation of God.

820 Were it not for the favors of the Blessed Perfection, no one would have given us any importance. There are some who become proud and haughty and forget this fact. In their utter blindness they consider themselves to be important. Then they fall from their high pedestal, and great is the noise thereof.

Meekness and humility are the hallmarks of faith. As soon as a believer feels himself the least degree superior to others, the beginning of his spiritual decline has set in, all unaware to himself. There are no offices in this Cause. I do not and have not “appointed” any one to perform any special service, but I encourage every one to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy, and not theocracy. The difference between me and others is this: I confess and acknowledge my own inability, weakness and humility, and know that all these outward confirmations are the favors of the Blessed Perfection. There are some who imagine, and little by little come to believe, that their spiritual successes are by and through themselves.

821 There are two kinds of love, one universal and one individual. You must love humanity in order to uplift and beautify humanity. Even if people slay you, yet must you love them. Individual love cannot be forced, and you are not required to love anybody personally; but if they are in your lives, see to it that they are means to your development and that you are means to their development, through your universal love for them. We are creatures of the same God, therefore we must love all as children of God even though they are doing us harm. Christ loved his persecutors. It is possible for us to attain to that love. God manifested His Love by created man in His own image. Man must manifest this love by developing himself and others in the

image of God.

822 It is possible so to adjust oneself to the practise of nobility that its atmosphere surrounds and colors every act. When actions are habitually and conscientiously adjusted to noble standards, with no thought of the words that might herald them, then nobility becomes the accent of life. At such a degree of evolution one scarcely needs try any longer to be good—all acts are become the distinctive expression of nobility.

823 As there is no one who has not his place indicated in the world (for nothing useless exists on this earth), we must treat every one with respect and affection, for in each individual we can see a sign of the divine favor and power, that power which has been able to draw such a being out of matter, make of him a creature with sensorial faculties, and endow him with intellectual and spiritual potentiality. This is one of the proofs of the divine power. Let us respect these living proofs of God.

824 The centers of divine perfections are the Manifestations of God as seen in His prophets. In whichever country, or at whatever time they come, they are the center of the divine perfections; and as the sun in the material heavens develops the material beings, so do these spiritual suns develop the world of souls.

Let us turn toward the spiritual Sun and acquire a spiritual light which will render the world luminous, so that we may be freed from matter and acquire celestial qualities, that this limited existence may become eternal.

825 The Divine Reality is far removed from man. It is absolutely remote and independent in Its essence; abstract, limitless, impersonal beyond human comprehension.

Man is limited, weak, without power, helpless. The Divine Reality represents power absolute, capacity for all things, fulfillment for all the needs of man.

The Divine Reality is to man what the sun is to the earth. The sun is life, radiance, heat, power, energy. The earth is dead, inert, helpless, incapable of initiative or change.

The sun in its remoteness could never reach the earth—and the earth, wretched, helpless—could never attain to the glory and splendor of the sun. An intermediary there must be. In some way the radiant, life-giving power of the sun must be brought to the darkened earth, and this becomes possible through the media of light and heat. Through their means this dark ball of earth becomes the home of fragrant, blooming life.

As there must be an intermediary to transmit to the earth the life-giving power of the sun, so must there be an intermediary to bring God to man; and this is realized through the ever-present power of the Holy Spirit. As the media of light and heat carry fragrance and bloom to the earth, so the Holy Spirit brings to man perfection and inspiration. The earth alone is but a senseless clod—touched by the sun it becomes life and energy. So the Holy Spirit touches the heart of man and awakens him to eternal life. It gives to man all possibilities. The cause of life widens before his eyes; eternity opens to him and becomes his, and every moment it is his inviolable possession. Limitations disappear, and he becomes more and more sensitive to the teachings of the Holy Spirit. All things are his own.

Without the intermediary of the Holy Spirit, man would remain dull, helpless and deprived of attainment. But touched by that Divine Elixir he becomes tender, loving, responsive, and capable of every perfection of existence.

Turn your faces away from the contemplation of your own finite selves and fix your eyes upon the everlasting radiance, then will your souls receive in full measure the divine powers of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of the infinite bounty.

826 In the Bahá'í Cause, arts, sciences and all crafts are considered as worship. The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability, conscientiously concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God. Briefly, all effort and exertion put forth by man from the fullness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity. This is worship: to serve mankind and minister to people's needs. Service is prayer. A physician ministering to the sick, gently, tenderly, free from prejudice, and believing in the solidarity of the human race—he is offering praise.

827 When the teacher delivers an address, first of all his own words must have a supremely powerful effect over himself, so that others in turn may be affected; his utterances must be like a flame of fire, burning away the veils of dogma, passion and desire. Moreover, he must be in the utmost state of humility and self-effacement, that others may be rendered mindful. He must have attained the station of renunciation and annihilation. Then, and not until then, will he teach the people with the humility of the Supreme Concurrence.

828 Truthfulness is the foundation of all the virtues of the world of humanity. Without truthfulness, progress and success in all the worlds of God are impossible for a soul to attain. When this holy attribute is established in man, all the other divine qualities will also become realized.

829 Economy is the foundation of human prosperity. The spendthrift is always in trouble. Prodigality on the part of any person is an unpardonable sin. We must never live on others like a parasitic plant. Every person must have a profession, whether it be literary or manual, and must live a clean, manly, honest life, an example of purity to be imitated by others. It is more kingly to be satisfied with a crust of stale bread than to enjoy a sumptuous dinner of many courses, the money for which comes out of the pockets of others. The mind of a contented person is always peaceful and his heart at rest. He is like a monarch ruling over the whole world. How happily such a man helps himself to his frugal meals! How joyfully he takes his walks, how peacefully he sleeps!

830 The food of the future will be fruit and grains. The time will come when meat is no longer eaten. Medical science is yet only in its infancy, but it has shown that our natural diet is that which grows out of the ground. The people will gradually develop up to the condition of taking only this natural food.

831 Economics must commence with the farmer and thence reach out and embrace the other classes, inasmuch as the number of farmers is greater than that of other groups. Therefore it is becoming that the economic problem be solved for the farmer first, for the farmer is the first active agent in the body politic.

In brief: from among the wise men of every village a Board should be organized, and the affairs of that village should be under the control of the Board. Likewise, a general storehouse should be founded and a secretary appointed for it. At the time of the harvest, with the approval of the members of the Board, a determined percentage of the entire harvest should be appropriated for the storehouse.

This storehouse is to have seven revenues: tithes, taxes on animals, wealth without inheritors, all things whose owner cannot be discovered, a third of all treasure found in the ground, a third of the output of the mines, and voluntary contributions.

On the other hand, there are seven expenditures. First, the general running expenses of the institution, salaries, etc., and the administration of public safety, including a department of hygiene. Second, tithes to the general government. Third, taxes on animals for the State. Fourth, support of an orphanage. Fifth, support of cripples and incurables. Sixth, support of educational institutions. Seventh, supplying any deficiency in the expenses of the poor.

If anything is left in the storehouse, that must be transferred to the general treasury of the nation for general national expenses.

When such a system is established, each individual member of the body politic will live in the utmost comfort and happiness, and the degrees will be preserved. There will be no disturbance of these degrees whatsoever, for they are the essential needs of the body politic.

The body politic is like an army. An army needs a commander-in-chief, colonel, captain, lieutenant, and private. It is impossible for all to enjoy the same rank; preservation of degrees is necessary, but each member of that army must live in the utmost comfort and ease.

Likewise a city is in need of a mayor, judge, merchant, banker, artisan and farmers. Undoubtedly these degrees should be preserved, otherwise the public order would be disturbed.

The government of a country should make laws which conform to the divine law.

832 All the prophets were sent, all the books were revealed, that the law of love might be promoted. Let us have love and more love, a love that melts all opposition, that sweeps away all barriers, that conquers all foes, a love that aboundeth in charity, large-heartedness, tolerance, and noble striving, a love that triumphs over all obstacle, a boundless, an irresistible, sweeping love! Ah me! Each one must be a sign of love, a center of love, a sun of love, a star of love, a palace of love, a mountain of love, a world of love, a universe of love! Hast thou love? Then thy power is irresistible. Hast thou sympathy? Then all the stars will sing thy praise.

833 In whatsoever matter man wisheth to engage, he must first acquire some capability and make provisions and preparations therefore. In this day, whatever soul intendeth to raise the voice of the Kingdom, and to draw people under the Tree of Life in the ideal paradise, and to invite them to eternal life, must first be delivered from all attachments, must even shut his eyes to rest, quietude, and to the mortal existence of this world.

I hope that thou hast abandoned all such mortal things, and when thou hast attained to this great bounty, that is, when thou art delivered from the attachments of this mortal world, and hast intended to endure all calamities in the path of God—in such wise that reproaches on the part of the enemy will seem to thee as praise and glorification, and the blame of the people of hatred will appear like unto admiration and applause, and the bitterness of afflictions will taste as the honey of favor and all hardships be as sweetness—then canst thou step into the path of the Kingdom and become the herald of God.

Consequently, do thou show a steadfast and firm footing in this station, engage

in guiding the people and call them unto the Kingdom; then wilt thou find how the divine magnet—the power of the Word of God—will attract hearts and bestow ecstasy and enthusiasm upon souls!

When thou reachest this station, there shall remain no obstacles and no veil shall intervene, and all that is thy highest wish shall be realized.

834 In these times thanksgiving for the bounty of the Merciful One consists in the illumination of the heart and the awareness of the soul. This is the reality of thanksgiving.

835 Verily, know that the word of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and his speech, is a hidden mystery and concealed fact. No one is informed of its greatness and importance at this time, but in future centuries the signs thereof will be manifested, the lights will dawn forth, the fragrances will be diffused and the greatness and importance will be known. Know thou its value, and deem great its station.

836 The power of the sympathetic nerve are neither entirely physical nor entirely spiritual, but are between the two (systems). The nerve is connected with both. Its phenomena shall be perfect when its spiritual and physical relations are become normal.

When the material world and the divine world are well correlated, when the hearts become heavenly and the aspirations grow pure and divine, perfect connection shall take place. Then shall this power produce a perfect manifestation. Physical and spiritual diseases will then receive absolute healing.

837 Verily, I bow my face to the dust of the Threshold of El-Bahá and to Him who sitteth on the Throne, I petition as a suppliant captive, begging Him to make thee to behold His glorious face and to purify thine insight from aught else save Him among the people. Verily, He is the refuge of all and our great protection!

We are all poor at His door, weak before His power, lowly at His threshold, and we possess the power neither of good nor evil. He is indeed the Confirmer, the Strengthenener, the Benevolent!

Truly hath He opened before our faces the doors of the Kingdom, granted us the treasures of His mysteries through the divine bounty, and hath chosen us for His love, for attainment unto His lights, the study of His teachings, the spreading of His name, the guidance unto His path, and service in His great vineyard. I pray for confirmation in thy behalf, and thou shouldst pray for strength on my part. Thy prayers for me should be that I may attain martyrdom in His path, that my spirit

may be His sacrifice, and that my blood may be shed for His love.

Verily, I long for that cup, which is overflowing with the bounty of God, as a patient desiring to be healed, as a thirsty soul seeking water, as the poor in quest of wealth, and as one in separation yearning after the meeting of the beloved.

838 This period of time is the Promised Age, the assembling of the human race to the "Resurrection Day," and now is the great "Day of Judgment." Soon the whole world, as in spring, will change its garb. The turning and falling of the autumn leaves is past; the bleakness of the winter time is done. The new year hath appeared and the spiritual springtime is at hand. The black earth is becoming a verdant garden; the deserts and mountains are teeming with red flowers; while the birds are singing among the rose branches like the angels in the highest heavens, announcing the glad tidings of that spiritual spring, and the sweet music of their voices is causing the real essence of all things to move and quiver.

O my spiritual friend! Dost thou know from what airs emanate the notes sung by these birds? They are from the melodies of peace and reconciliation, of love and unity, of justice and security, of concord and agreement. In a short time this heavenly singing will intoxicate all humanity; the foundations of enmity shall be destroyed; unity and affection shall be witnessed in every assembly; and the lovers of the love of God at these great festivals shall behold their splendor.

Therefore, contemplate what a spirit of life God hath given that the body of the whole earth may attain life everlasting! The Paradise of El-Abhá will soon spread a pavilion from the pole-star of the world, under whose shelter the beloved shall rejoice and the pure hearts repose in peace.

839 You ask if, through the appearance of the Kingdom of God, every soul hath been saved. The Sun of Reality hath appeared to all the world. This Luminous Appearance is salvation and life; but only he who hath opened the eye of reality and who hath seen these lights will be saved.

840 When the people of Bahá desire to enter the sacred union of matrimony, eternal connection, ideal relationship, spiritual and physical association of thought and conception of life must exist between them; so that in all the grades of existence and all the worlds of God this union may continue forever; for this real union is a splendor of the light of the love of God.

The bridegroom must, before the bridesman and a few others, say: "Verily, we are content with the will of God." And the bride must rejoin: "Verily, we are satisfied with the desire of God." This is Bahá'í matrimony.

841 What thou hast written was perused. Thou hast questioned how thou canst accept this divine Cause, for thou art a member of the church. Know thou: in the day of the Manifestation of Christ, many souls became portionless and deprived because they were members of the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem. According to that membership, they became veiled from his brilliant Beauty. Therefore, turn thy face to the Church of God, which consists in divine instructions and merciful exhortations. For what similarity is there between the church of stone and cement, and the Celestial Holy of Holies?

Endeavor that thou mayest enter this Church of God. Although thou hast given oath to attend the (material) church, yet thy spirit is under the Covenant and Testament of the spiritual divine temple. Thou shouldst protect this. Although they consider the wine and the bread in the church as the blood and body of Christ, yet this is but appearance and not reality. The reality of Christ is the words of the Holy Spirit. If thou art able, take a portion thereof.

842 The performance of the celebration of baptism would cleanse the body, but the spirit hath no share; but the divine teachings and the exhortations of the Beauty of 'Abhá will baptize the soul. This is the real baptism. I hope thou wilt receive this baptism.

843 O friends! It is the wish of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that the friends may establish general unity and not a particular meeting of unity. You must have great consideration of this fact, for while during past cycles such events were, in the beginning, a means for harmony, they became in the end the cause of trouble.

We are all servants of one Threshold, attendants at one Court, waves of one sea, drops of one river, the dust before one door, and plants of one garden. There must arise no trouble to deprive one from that which is the real purpose.

To organize assemblies is praiseworthy and acceptable, but these must be established for certain matters. For example: assemblages for teaching, gatherings for the spread of the fragrances of God, gatherings for the relief of orphans, gatherings for the protection of the poor, assemblages for the spread of learning and, in a word, there must be assemblages for matters which concern the well-being of men, such as organization of a society of commerce, societies for the expansion of agriculture. To be brief, similar societies are very acceptable and praiseworthy, and concern all in general and not a particular number.

In a word: that which is conducive to the development of the people is acceptable, and whatever is the cause of disaffection is blameworthy. I hope all the friends of the East and West shall rest in the same assemblage and adorn one gathering, appearing

with all the heavenly attributes and virtues in the world of humanity.

844 If thou wishest to find the Truth, then compare the days of the Manifestation of the Beauty of 'Abhá with the days of Christ; consider that this day is identically like that, and the same doubts and oppositions are put forth (by the deniers).

845 Thou hast written regarding Buddha and Confucius.

Now is not the time when we discuss the stations and positions of those who have passed away. We must concentrate our attention upon the present. What hath transpired in a former time is past. Now is the time when we restrict our discussion to the most great luminary of peace and salvation in this age, to talk of the Blessed Perfection, and to voice His exhortations, behests and teachings. Buddha and Confucius were kings in bygone ages who have disappeared. Their sovereignty in this world is ended and their cycle fulfilled.

846 This world resembles the human body and the Kingdom of God is like the spirit of life. Think how narrow and dark is the material world of man, how afflicted with disease and maladies; but how bright and spacious is his Spiritual World! Through this illustration thou mayest comprehend in what manner is the Spiritual World portrayed in this earthly world and in what degree is its power effected. Though the Spirit is concealed, its power is manifested and clear in the phenomenal world; and so with the Kingdom of God, though it is veiled from the eyes of ignorant people, to men of perception it is discernible and evident. Therefore, thou must become utterly heavenly that thou mayest forget the earthly conditions and be immersed in the perception of Divinity to such a degree that thou wilt be unconscious of the surrounding material existence.

847 Thou hast asked regarding the phrase "He is God!" written above the Tablets. By this Word it is intended that no one hath any access to the Invisible Essence. The way is barred and the road impassable. In this world all men must turn their faces toward "Him-whom-God-shall-Manifest." He is the "Dawning-place of Divinity" and the "manifestation of Deity." He is the "Ultimate Goal," the "Adored One" of all and the "Worshipped One" of all. Otherwise, whatever flashes through the mind is not that Essence of essences and the Reality of realities; nay, rather, is it pure imagination woven by man and is surrounded, not the surrounding. Consequently, it returns finally to the realm of suppositions and conjectures.

848 Know thou verily:

My throne is my mat.

My glorious crown in my servitude toward God.

My standard is the commemoration of God.

My hosts are the knowledge of my Master.

My sword is the guidance of God.

My dominion is my humility, my submissiveness, my lowliness, my abasement, my supplication and my beseeching unto God—this is that permanent reign which no one is able to dispute, gainsay or usurp!

849 This day is not a day of seclusion and solitude, but a day of proclaiming the manifestation of the light of the Beauty of thy Supreme Lord.

Therefore, abandon silence and seclusion and solitary nooks, and go forth into the arena of explanation. Convey the Message of thy Lord with clearest speech and most complete elucidation. This is better for thee than solitude.

The season for seclusion in quiet nooks is the season of winter when the cold and the winds increase. But during the spring, the wafting of gentle breezes, the passing of fragrances from the rose, the state of equilibrium in the atmosphere and the green hue of valleys and prairies, it is best for man to leave solitude and enjoy the blessings of the outdoors.

850 Thank thou God that thou hast stepped into the arena of existence in such a blessed Age and hast opened ears and eyes in such a Day of Promise.

851 Although a person of good deeds is acceptable at the Threshold of the Almighty, yet it is first “to know,” and then “to do.” Although a blind man produceth a most wonderful and exquisite art, yet he is deprived of seeing it. Consider how most animals labor for man, draw loads and facilitate travel; yet, as they are ignorant, they receive no reward for this labor and toil. The cloud raineth, roses and hyacinths grow; the plain and meadow, the garden and trees become green and blossom; yet they do not realize the results and outcome of all these. The lamp is lighted, but as it hath not a conscious knowledge of itself, none hath become glad because of it. Moreover, a soul of excellent deeds and good manners will undoubtedly advance from whatever horizon he beholdeth the lights radiating. Herein lies the difference: by faith is meant, first, conscious knowledge, and second, the practise of good deeds.

852 The spirits of men are not at all annihilated—they are immortal. The spirits of heavenly souls will find eternal life, that is, they will attain the highest and most great stations of perfection; but the spirits of the heedless souls, although eternal, are yet in a world of imperfection, concealment and ignorance. For instance: No matter

how much the mineral has existence and life, yet in comparison to man, it is entirely non-existent and deprived of life. For where (a heedless) man is translated from life to death, his comparative station will be that of a mineral existence.

853 The Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is the same as the Cause of Christ. It is the same temple and the same foundation. Both of these are spiritual spring-times and seasons of the soul-refreshing awakening and the cause of the renovation of the life of mankind. The spring of this year is the same as the spring of last year. The origins and the ends are the same. The sun of today is the sun of yesterday. In the coming of Christ, the divine teachings were given in accordance with the infancy of the human race. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh have the same basic principles, but are according to the stage of the maturity of the world and the requirements of this illumined age.

854 One of the requirements of faithfulness is that thou mayest sacrifice thyself and, in the divine path, close thine eye to every pleasure and strive with all thy soul that thou mayest disappear and be lost, like unto a drop, in the ocean of the love of God.

855 Organize ye spiritual assemblies; lay ye the foundation of union and concord in this world; destroy ye the fabric of strife and war from the face of the earth; construct ye the temple of harmony and agreement; enkindle ye the light of the realm of the oneness of humanity; open ye your eyes; gaze and behold ye the other world! The kingdom of peace, salvation, uprightness and reconciliation is founded in the invisible world, and it will by degrees become manifest and apparent through the power of the Word of God!

The Spirit of Truth is soaring on the Supreme Apex, like unto a bird, in order that it may discover a severed heart and alight therein and make its nest.

856 There are prophecies concerning this Manifestation in the Buddhistic books, but they are in symbols and metaphors, and some spiritual conditions are mentioned therein, but the leaders of religion do not understand. They think these prophecies are material things; while those signs are foreshadowing spiritual occurrences.

Unless man maketh spiritual progress in the world of spirit, intellect, and heart, he cannot gather universal results from material advancements. Now you must gird up the loins of endeavor, and reflect duty, so that you may quicken the people of Japan through the Spirit of God.

857 There are two ways of healing sickness, material means and spiritual means. The first is by the use of remedies, of medicines; the second consists in praying to God and in turning to Him. Both means should be used and practised.

Illness caused by physical accident should be treated with medical remedies; those which are due to spiritual causes disappear through spiritual means. Thus an illness caused by affliction, fear, nervous impressions, will be healed by spiritual rather than by physical treatment. Hence, both kinds of remedies should be considered. Moreover, they are not contradictory, and thou shouldst accept the physical remedies as coming from the mercy and favor of God, who hath revealed and made manifest medical science so that His servants should profit from this kind of treatment also. Thou shouldst give equal attention to spiritual treatments, for they produce marvelous effects.

Now, if thou wishest to know the divine remedy which will heal man from all sickness and will give him the health of the divine Kingdom, know that it is the precepts and teachings of God. Guard them sacredly.

858 The real brotherhood is spiritual, for physical brotherhood is subject to separation. The wars of the outer world of existence separate humankind but in the eternal world of spiritual brotherhood separation is unknown. Material or physical association is based upon earthly interests, but divine fellowship owes its existence to the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual brotherhood may be likened to the light while the souls of mankind are as lamps. The lamps are many, yet the light is one.

859 The aim of the Theosophists is to attain to Truth, but the Truth is unattainable except through the favor of the Holy Spirit. The light hath a center, and if one desire to seek it otherwise than from the center, he can never attain unto it. In this solar system the source of light is the sun, and ever light is acquired from the sun; even the lamps of the night are ignited through the sun, for if there were no sun the trees would not grow nor the mines develop so that oil be extracted from those trees and mines, and the lamps of the night be lit by it. Is it possible that one attain to the light in the globular sphere without the mediation of the sun? No, by the life of God! To suppose it, is pure imagination. But the Truth is this: The main source of the lights is the Sun and the rays are shed from it upon all the regions.

860 Arise to serve the Cause of God in the vineyard of God, and water the developed and flourishing trees with the waters of the mysteries which are deposited in the innermost parts of the words of the Books; and be assured that the fountain of assurance will gush out in the hearts of the firm and steadfast believers, and the divine graces will strengthen them from all sides, and the Lord will enable them to diffuse the fragrances. And He will make them manifest signs, beaming stars, shining lights, fruitful trees, flowing fountains, perfect words and mature proofs. Then know thou that verily 'Abdu'l-Bahá is between the fangs of the dragon of afflictions and in

the grasp of dangers night and day.

861 Know thou, verily, insight seeth that which sight seeth not and apprehendeth that which the body perceive not, inasmuch as the sight seeth the mirage as water, the images pictured in the mirror as a reality and genuine, and it seeth the earth as stationary, and the great stars as though they were small. But the insight correcteth the mistake of the sight and apprehendeth the reality and seeth that the mirage is not water, that the images pictured in mirrors are naught else save reflections, that the earth is moving and the distant stars are large. Consequently, the truth of insight, its effectiveness and power, is proven, as well as the weakness of sight, its inefficiency and defects.

862 Then know thou that the power of the Word of God is effective both in the spirit and the body, and the influence of the Spirit of God is predominant over the material as well as over the essential and spiritual. And that, verily, God is powerful in all things, and that the signs (or verses) have exoteric and esoteric meaning, and neither their outward preventeth their inward, nor doth their inward prevent their outward meaning.

863 It behooveth him to seek only the divine bounties and subjects which lead to the real knowledge of the invisible, through the mediation of the Holy Spirit. Then he will perceive the reality of the triune powers in man, through his innate perception. For, verily, the signs of these triune powers which exist in mankind are spirit, mind and soul. The spirit is the power of life, the mind is the power which apprehendeth the reality of things, and the soul is an intermediary between the Supreme Concourse and the lower concourse. The soul hath two phases: the higher aspireth to the Kingdom of El-Bahá, and the lights of the mind shine forth from that horizon unto its higher sphere; the other phase inclineth to the lower concourse of the material world and its lowest sphere is enveloped in the darkness of ignorance. But when light is poured upon this phase, and if this phase of the soul is capable of receiving it, then “truth hath come and falsehood vanisheth, for falsehood is of short duration”—otherwise, darkness will surround it from all directions and it will be deprived of association with the Supreme Concourse and will remain in the lowest depths.

864 As to the manifestation of the Greatest Name (Bahá'u'lláh): This was the Divine Manifestation which appeared in the earthly world. This is He whom God promised in all His Books and Scriptures, such as the Bible, the Gospels and the Qur'án. All of these Books indicate this fact, and the least doubt cannot possible occur to the minds concerning this clear fact, as is recorded in detail in the heavenly Books, especially in

the brilliant and holy Tablets. But notwithstanding this fact, if there is any one who hesitates therein, do not dispute with him, nay, rather, prove this to him with all joy and fragrance, lest he may be obstinately compelled to rebellion.

865 Shouldst thou come with the whole of thy being to God and be attracted to the lights of the Kingdom of God, and be enkindled by the fire of the love of God, then wilt thou see that which thou canst not see today, wilt comprehend the inner significances of the Word of God and thoroughly understand the mysteries contained in the holy Books.

But as to the Jewish doctors, Christian priests and monks who read those Books, verily, they know the letter only and they utter the words, like parrots, without understanding their inner meanings. They comprehend them not, because they are engrossed in worldly desires and lusts, and their hearts are attached to mundane allurements. Verily, are they not heedless of God, and understand nothing, and find not the right path?

866 Deliver the glad tidings in the following manner: "The Promised One of all the nations of the world hath become apparent and manifest! Each community and religion expecteth the coming of their Promised One, and His Highness Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all! Therefore, the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is conducive to harmony, raiseth the canopy of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity upon the apex of the contingent beings and unfurleth the ensign of universal brotherhood and ideal commonwealth upon the summit of the mountains and hills!"

867 The Temple is the most great foundation of the world of humanity, and it hath many branches. Although the Temple is the place of worship, with it is connected a hospital, pharmacy, pilgrims' house, school for the orphans, and a university for the study of higher sciences. Every Temple is connected with these five things. The Temple is not only a place for worship; nay, it is perfect in every way.

868 As to human souls: Unless they acquire the light, they are unable to shine upon other individuals. But when a man ariseth to expound the arguments of God and invite people to enter into the religion of God, and when he uttereth those arguments and advanceth consummate proofs concerning the appearance of the great Kingdom, then intense love shall become manifest in his heart. This love causeth the development of his spirit by the grace of the beneficent Lord.

869 Know thou that prayer is indispensable and obligatory, and man under no pretext whatsoever is excused from performing prayer unless he be mentally unsound,

or an insurmountable obstacle prevent him. The wisdom of prayer is this: That it causeth a connection between the servant and the True One, because in that state man with all heart and soul turneth his face towards His Highness the Almighty, seeking His association and desiring His love and compassion. The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing; that is why with every soul who is attracted to the Kingdom of God, his greatest hope is to find an opportunity to entreat and supplicate before his Beloved, appeal to His mercy and grace and be immersed in the ocean of His utterance, goodness and generosity.

Besides all this, prayer and fasting are the cause of awakening and mindfulness and conducive to protection and preservation from tests. The obligatory prayer is revealed from the Supreme Pen and is translated in America.

870 Verily, I address thee with all spiritual love and gladness from this my residence at the base of Mount Carmel, which is blessed through all ages by the prophets, as recorded in the ancient Books. And I beseech His Highness the Merciful One to ordain thee a faithful footing in the Kingdom of God and to provide for thee all things by which thy mind may be brightened, thy tongue become eloquent, and that whereby the doors of the meanings hinted at in the sacred Books and Tablets be opened to thy mind. Verily, the people are veiled from comprehending the meanings of the Gospel, the Bible and the Qur'án, and know not the interpretation of the scriptures of God, except those whose eyes are opened by the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Thou shalt behold men-servants and maid-servants of Bahá in those far distant lands and wide countries, speaking the secrets of the Gospel and the mysteries of the Bible and the allusions of the Qur'án and the explanation of the Words of the Merciful One. Those are the servants to whomsoever God hath assigned His mercy which overfloweth existence.

871 If one possesses the love of God, everything that he undertakes is useful, but if the undertaking is without the love of God, then it is hurtful and the cause of veiling one's self from the Lord of the Kingdom. But with the love of God every bitterness is changed into sweetness and every gift becometh precious. For example: a musical and melodious voice imparteth life to an attracted heart but lureth toward lust those souls who are engulfed in passion and desire.

With the love of God, all sciences are accepted and beloved, but without it, they are fruitless; nay, rather, they are the cause of insanity. Every science is like a tree; if the fruit of it is the love of God, that is a blessed tree. Otherwise it is dried wood and finally food for fire.

872 Every great Cause in this world of existence findeth a visible expression through three means; first, intention; second, confirmation; third, action. Today on this earth there are many souls who are the spreaders of peace and reconciliation and are longing for the realization of the oneness and unity of the world of man; but this intention needs a dynamic power, so that it may become manifest in the world of being. Today the divine instructions and lordly exhortations of Bahá'u'lláh promulgate this most great aim, and the confirmations of the Kingdom are the supports and defenders of this eminent intention. For the power of the Word of God is penetrative and the existence of the divine Kingdom is uninterrupted. Therefore, ere long it will become evident and clear that the ensign of the Most Great Peace is the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. For the intention, the power and the action, all the three essential elements are brought together and the realization of everything in the contingent world dependeth upon these three principles.

873 Whatsoever question thou hast in thy heart, turn thou thy heart toward the Kingdom of 'Abhá and entreat in the Threshold of the Almighty and reflect upon that problem, then unquestionably the light of truth shall dawn and the reality of that problem will become evident and clear to thee. For the teachings of His Highness Bahá'u'lláh are the keys to all doors. Every hidden secret will become discovered and every hidden mystery will become manifest and apparent.

874 The various sects who today consider themselves servants of the world of humanity are possessed of good intention, but they are inert, not active; captive, not free; silent, not eloquent; slow, not fast. They have sluggish movement and great intention. These two do not agree.

875 Verily, I say unto thee, that if for the appearance of that Divine Essence thou desirest to have a definite proof, an indisputable testimony and a strong, convincing evidence, thou must prepare thyself to make thy heart empty and thine eye ready to look toward the Kingdom of God. Then, at that time, the radiance of that widespread effulgence shall descend upon thee successively, and that motion rendered thee by the Holy Spirit shall make thee dispense with any other strong evidence that leadeth to the appearance of this Light, because the greatest and strongest proof for showing the abundance of the Spirit to the bodies is the very appearance of its power and influence in those bodies.

Think thou deeply of this in order to know the reality of my explanation and demonstration.

876 I now assure thee, O servant of God, that if thy mind become empty and pure

from every mention and thought, and thy heart attracted wholly to the Kingdom of God, forgetting all else beside God and coming in communion with the Spirit of God, then the Holy Spirit will assist thee with a power which will enable thee to penetrate all things, and a dazzling spark which enlightens all sides, a brilliant flame in the zenith of the heavens, will teach thee that which thou dost not know of the facts of the universe and of the divine doctrine. Verily, I say unto thee, every soul which today ariseth to guide others to the path of safety and infuse in them the Spirit of Life, that soul the Holy Spirit will inspire with evidences, proofs and facts, and the lights will shine upon it from the Kingdom of God. Do not forget what I have conveyed unto thee from the breath of the Spirit.

877 To the sincere ones, tests are as a gift from God, the Exalted, for a heroic person hasteneth, with the utmost joy and gladness, to the tests of a violent battlefield, but the coward is afraid and trembles and utters moaning and lamentation. Likewise, an expert student preparereth and memorizeth his lessons and exercises with the utmost effort, and in the day of examination he appeareth with infinite joy before the master. This test is just as thou hast written: it removeth the rust of egotism from the mirror of the heart until the Sun of Truth may shine therein. For no veil is greater than egotism and no matter how thin that covering may be, yet it will finally veil man entirely and prevent him from receiving a portion from the eternal bounty.

878 Praise be to God! According to the commandments and exhortations of Bahá'u'lláh, we are the well-wisher of all governments and act toward all the nations of the world in peace and love. We have no intention but that which is good and no desire but the good pleasure of God. We mean well toward every people and seek to have sincerity and good will toward every government. In return for arrows and swords, we present milk and honey, and we heal the deadly poison with the swift healing antidote. Night and day we are in action and exertion, in order to dress the wounds and cure the pain, to care for the afflicted and comfort even the ill-natured ones, so that, through the assistance and favour of God, this darkness of selfish prejudice shall vanish, and the error of folly and ignorance shall be changed into divine guidance.

879 To me, prison is freedom; to me incarceration is an open court; to me humility is identical with glory; to me adversity is a gift and death is life. I hope that thou also wilt take a portion from this sea and seek a reflection from these lights, becoming an ignited lamp so that the winds of contradiction will not blow it out, and day by day more revelation and vision may descend, and thou be enkindled more than before with the fire of the love of God.

880 All the people have formed a god in the world of thought, and that form of their own imagination they worship; when the fact is that the imagined concept is comprehended by the mind which is the comprehended, for imagination is accidental (effect), while mind is essential (cause). Surely the essential is greater than the accidental.

Therefore consider: All the sects and peoples worship their own thought; they create a god in their minds and proclaim him to be “the creator of all things,” while that form is a superstition. Thus people adore and worship illusion.

The Essence of the Divine Entity and the Unseen of the Unseen is holy above imagination and beyond thought. Consciousness doth not reach It. Within the capacity of comprehension of a created reality that Ancient (uncreated) Reality cannot be contained. It is a different world; from it there is no information; arrival thereat is impossible; attainment thereto is inaccessible and prohibited. This much is known: It exists, and Its existence is certain and proven—but the condition is unknown.

All the philosophers and sages knew that It is, but they were perplexed in the comprehension of Its existence and were at last discouraged, and left this world in great despair. For the comprehension of the condition and mysteries of that Reality of realities and Mystery of mysteries, there is need for another power and another sense. That power and sense is not possessed by mankind, therefore they have not found any information. For example: If a man possess the power of hearing, the power of tasting, the power of smelling and the power of feeling, but no power of seeing, he cannot see. Hence, through the powers and senses present in man the realization of the Unseen Reality, which is pure and holy above the reach of doubts, is impossible. Other powers are needed and other senses required. If those powers and senses are obtained, then information can be had; otherwise, not.

881 As for the symbol of the cross, appointed in former times: Know verily, that the cross form is a wonderful figure and consists of two right lines placed crosswise—one perpendicular to the other— and this figure exists in all things.

Meditate upon these words and pay attention to the tissue in all existing substances, either plant, animal, or man, and thou wilt see that they all are formed of the cross figure or two crosswise lines. Consider this intently with true meditation. Then thou wilt be taught by the Holy Ghost that it is for this reason that God hath chosen this symbol to be displayed as the token of sacrifice in all periods of the ages.

I will explain to thee, in future time, the mystery of sacrifice. There is nothing more beautiful than this tree united with the cross. Verily, this tree is a type of the

Tree of Life in conjunction with the cross; in this, the mystery of sacrifice.

882 As for the crescent: It hath reference to the beginning of the religion of God which shall grow to be a full moon.

883 Know thou, verily, the Kingdom is a magnet of the divine world, and it attracteth the iron of pure hearts which are capable of the bounties of the Lord of Might.

884 O my dear one! This day is the day of purification, the day of sanctification, the day of turning toward God, the day of severance from all save God, the day of lowliness and humiliation, the day of serving the beloved ones of God, the day of becoming utterly destitute of and free from egotism and desire, and the day of purity and sacrifice in the path of God. This is incumbent upon thee, so that thou mayest be accepted in the court of the Almighty and praised in His lofty Threshold of Holiness.

885 Verily, I say unto thee, the Covenant of God and His Alliance is a Lamp diffusing lights from the Supreme Concourse unto the horizons of earth and heaven. Whosoever hath this Divine Lamp before his face, his forehead shall glisten with manifest light and his speech shall take effect in all minds and spirits, and God shall assist him by the power which penetrateth the essences of things.

886 Why art thou sad and sorrowful, disappointed and grieved! Praise be to God! the eternal bounty is in succession, the divine glory is apparent and manifest, the display of Providence and the light of guidance is glistening and shining from the Kingdom of 'Abhá and the appearance of the Greatest Sun is clear and evident. If thou art outwardly far, yet thou art near in spirit, and if thou art absent in body, thou art present in heart and spirit. Arise and wash thy body, wear a pure gown, and, directing thyself to the Kingdom of God, supplicate and pray to Him. Sleep in a clean, well prepared and ventilated place, and ask for appearance in the world of vision. Thou wilt have visions which will cause the door of doubts to be closed, which will give thee new joy, wonderful dilation, brilliant glory. Thou wilt comprehend realities and meanings.

887 Happiness consists of two kinds; physical and spiritual. The physical happiness is limited; its utmost duration is one day, one month, one year. It hath no result. Spiritual happiness is eternal and unfathomable. This kind of happiness appeareth in one's soul with the love of God and suffereth one to attain to the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity. Therefore, endeavor as much as thou canst in order to illumine the lamp of thy heart with the light of love.

888 Know that the pure hearts upon which the mysteries of the Kingdom of God are printed and pictured, are reflectors one to another, and thus the one can discover the secrets of the other, because such hearts are only mirrors confronting each other on which the secrets of unity, affinity and concord are printed and reflected. Accordingly, it would be possible that a certain servant of the servants of the Merciful might discover a treasured mystery or a preserved sign, whatever his shortcomings or defects might be; yet we do indeed rely upon God, the Forgiver.

889 O ye friends! O ye maid-servants of the Merciful! Those Assemblies are the emblems of the Supreme Concourse and the prototypes of the congregations of the spirits in the Kingdom of 'Abhá. Avail yourselves of the opportunities of this time, neither let the occasion slip by unheeded.

890 Concerning the one thousand years as recorded in the Book: It signifieth the beginning of this Manifestation until the end of its predominance throughout the contingent world; because this Cause is great, its powers are growing and its signs are dazzling. It shall continue in elevation, exaltation, growth, promulgation and promotion until it shall reach the apex of its glory in one thousand years—as the day of this Manifestation is one thousand years. Thou shalt see its conquering power, its manifest dominion, its eternal might and its everlasting glory.

891 As to the question of “after my departure” to the neighborhood of the mercy of my Lord: Know that there shall appear wonderful traces; the breath of God shall pass by; the fragrance of God shall spread and the Spirit of God shall run in the body of the contingent world both before and after my departure; but I supplicate God that He may grant the greatest spirituality in these days.

892 O ye beloved of God, be not grieved when people stand against you, persecute you, afflict and trouble you and say all manner of evil against you. The darkness will pass away and the light of the manifest signs will appear, the veil will be withdrawn and the Light of Reality will shine forth from the unseen Kingdom of El-Abhá. This we inform you before it occurs, so that when the hosts of people arise against you for my love, be not disturbed or troubled; nay, rather, be firm as a mountain, for this persecution and reviling of the people upon you is a pre-ordained matter. Blessed is the soul who is firm in the path!

893 Souls are like unto mirrors, and the bounty of God is like unto the sun. When the mirrors pass beyond (the condition of) all coloring and attain purity and polish, and are confronted with the sun, they will reflect in full perfection its light and glory. In

this condition one should not consider the mirror, but the power of the light of the sun, which hath penetrated the mirror, making it a reflector of the heavenly glory.

894 I know, verily, that the universal, never ending, eternal, bright and divine establishments are only the diffusing of the breaths of God, and the spreading of the instructions of God, and all that are beside these, though they be the reigning over all regions of the earth, or the construction of railroads from the earth to the heavens, or means of transportation with the rapidity of rising lightning from the globe of earth to the globe of the sun, all are but mortal, perishing, demolishing and disadvantageous, in comparison with the divine establishments. Because the latter are intrinsic matters, while the former are but metaphorical matters; the latter are truth, while the former are imaginary.

895 Communication is not confined to writing. This is a trace, while the spiritual message is fruitful and effective. That is the essential, and without it communication is useless.

896 Verily, I read thy letter, which expressed thy surprise at some of the commandments of the law of God, such as the concerning the hunting of innocent animals. Be not surprised at this. Ponder over the contingent realities, their mysteries, wisdom, connection and relations. The world is harmonious in all things and the connection therein is mighty and nothing is missing. All things are eaters and eaten in the physical creation. The plant sucks from the mineral, the animal eats and swallows the plant, and the human eats the animal. Then the mineral (in turn) eats the human body. Physical bodies are transferred from death to death and from life to life. Therefore, all things are subject to transformation and change except the Cause of existence, which cannot be changed or transferred, because it is the foundation for life in all kinds and species and in all possible realities in the world of creation.

If thou observest closely through a microscope, the water which man drinks and the air which he breathes, thou wilt see that in every breath which man breathes, that breath contains numerous animals, and in every draught of water great number of animals exist. This could not be prevented, because the contingent beings are eaters and eaten and, by this, existence is caused; otherwise, the relations between existent things would cease. When a thing decomposes and decays, being bereft of life, it becomes promoted to a world of life greater than the former. For instance, it ceases in a mineral life and is elevated to that of the animal; then leaving the animal life it advances to the human, and this is on account of the favor of thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement.

I ask God to strengthen thee in comprehending the mysteries deposited in the reality of existence.

897 The nineteen-day fast is a duty to be observed by all. All should abstain from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset. This fast is conducive to the spiritual development of the individual. The Greatest Name should be read every day.

898 As to those souls who are preaching the Word of God, it behooveth them to shake the dust of every land through which they have passed from their shoes and to be with God and without need of the rich—although their bed be the soil, their light be the stars of the sky and their food the herbs of the desert—because theirs is the wealth of the Kingdom, the honor of the realm of might and the bounty of the divine world; and they are not in need of this world and its cares. Their throne is the mat of humility, their honor is in suffering every lowliness in the path of the Loving Lord, their wealth is being empty-handed of the pomps of the world and its vanities, and their provision is trusting in God and being severed from all that is on the earth and its wealth.

899 It is New Year; that is to say, the rounding of the cycle of the year. A year is the expression of a cycle of the sun; but now is the beginning of a cycle of Reality, a New Cycle, a New Age, a New Century, a New Time and a New Year. Therefore it is very blessed.

I wish this blessing to appear and become manifest in the faces and characteristics of the believers, so that they, too, may become a new people, and having found new life and been baptized with fire and spirit, may make the world a new world, to the end that the old earth may disappear and the new earth appear; old ideas depart and new thoughts come; old garments be cast aside and new garments worn; ancient politics whose foundation is war be discarded and modern politics founded on peace raise the standard of victory.

900 The mystery of sacrifice is that man should sacrifice all his conditions for the divine station of God. The station of God is mercy, kindness, forgiveness, sacrifice, favor, grace and giving life to the spirits and lighting the fire of His love in the hearts and arteries.

901 The human spirit hath an impression and effect in the world, but the divine spirit giveth life to the souls and conferreth eternal life upon those who are attracted to the fragrances of God. This is the Great Cause from the Kingdom of thy Lord.

902 Know thou, verily, there are many veils in which the Truth is enveloped: gloomy veils; then delicate and transparent veils; then the envelopment of light, the sight of which dazzles the eyes, as doth the sun which is enveloped only in its own light and, as we look at it, the sight is blinded and the eyes are dazzled.

903 From the spiritual point of view, there is no difference between women and men. "The nearer we draw to God, the nearer He comes to us" without regard to whether the person be a man or a woman.

904 The House of Justice, however, according to the positive commandments of the Doctrine of God, has been specialized to the men, for a reason or exercise of wisdom on the part of God, and this reason will presently appear, even as the sun at midday.

905 Now the day has arrived in which the edifice of God, the divine sanctuary, the spiritual temple, shall be erected in America! I entreat God to assist the confirmed believers in accomplishing this great service and with entire zeal to rear this might structure which shall be renowned throughout the world.

Whosoever arises for the service of this construction shall be assisted with a great power from His Supreme Threshold and upon him spiritual and heavenly blessings shall descend, which shall fill his heart with wonderful consolation and enlighten his eyes by beholding the glorious and eternal God!

906 You have asked me two questions: "That if the same spirit is manifest in all the Manifestations and Prophets, then what is the distinction or difference between Christ (or rather, Jesus) and the other Prophets; also between Father and Son?"

Know that the human spirit is one, but it manifests itself in various members of the body in a certain (measure or) form. The human spirit is existent in the sight; it is also existent in the brain, which is the location of great functions and powers; it is also existent in the heart, which organ is largely connected with the brain or the center of the mind; and the heart, or that center which is connected with the brain, has a distinct and separate function, effect and appearance.

Figuratively speaking, the Father is the center of the brain and the Son is the center of the heart; the rest of the Prophets are members and parts.

907 When thou desirest and yearnest for meeting in the world of vision; at the time when thou art in perfect fragrance and spirituality, wash thy hands and face, clothe thyself in clean robes, turn toward the court of the Peerless One, offer prayer to Him and lay thy head upon the pillow. When sleep cometh, the doors of revelation shall be opened and all thy desires shall become revealed.

908 Know thou, verily, the brilliant realities and sanctified spirits are likened to a shining crescent. It has one face turned toward the Sun of Truth, and another face opposite to the contingent world. The journey of this crescent in the heaven of the universe ends in becoming a full moon. That is, that face of it which is turned toward the divine world becomes also opposite to the contingent world, and by this, both its merciful and spiritual, as well as contingent, perfections become manifest.

909 Thank God for that He hath awakened thee from thy sleep, found thee after thy being lost and quickened thee after thy death. Verily, I beseech God to confirm thee by a power by which thou mayest be enabled to worship God and to serve His Cause and to be submissive and lowly before the beloved of God.

910 By God, the True One, verily pure hearts are as clear and brilliant mirrors which imprint the one on the other, and hearts discover the secrets of hearts. Therefore, they chant the verses of longing and recite the odes of glorification and praise. Consequently, the recourse is to pages of hearts, not to pages filled with written lines.

911 O thou maid-servant of God! Be tranquil and know, verily, that the Holy Ghost in this glorious age reacheth every soul that is sincerely faithful, firm and drawn to the Kingdom of the Great Lord. Verily, I address thee with a heart overflowing with the love of God.

912 Thou has asked, very humbly, for certain things and all were worthy to be coveted. Especially the rescue from self-love. This is a strange trait and the means of the destruction of many important souls in the world. If man be imbued with all good qualities but be selfish, all the other virtues will fade or pass away and eventually he will grow worse.

913 Know that the return of Christ for a second time doth not mean what the people believe, but, rather, signifieth the One promised to come after Him. He shall come with the Kingdom of God and His power (or reign) is in the world of hearts and spirits and not in that of matter. For the material world is not comparable to a single fly's wing, rather is less in the sight of thy Lord, wert thou of those who know! Verily, Christ came with His Kingdom from the beginning which hath no beginning and will come with His Kingdom to the eternity of eternities, inasmuch as in this sense Christ is an expression of the divine reality, the simple essence and heavenly entity which hath no beginning or ending. It hath appearance, arising and manifestation and setting in each of the cycles.

914 (As to the significance of the inscription upon the Bahá'í ring): The Inscription is

composed of two “Bá” and of four “Há.” The explanation of “Há” has been written in the commentary upon “Bism’illáh, al-rahmán, al-rahím”; it is very detailed, and not suitable for this letter: you must refer to the commentary.

The repetition of the “Bá” refers to the Invisibility and to the Presence.

With regard to the four “Há” which are the four columns of the Temple of Unity, their perfect number is ten: one plus one equals two; two plus one equals three; three plus three equals six; six plus four equals ten, and ten with this signification is found in the Qur’án, where it is said: “And we have made it (or him) perfect in the figure ten.” Furthermore, “Ha” has the value of five, and there “Há” is the Divine Essence and Reality. That is clear and visible for the number five, which is the number of the Báb.

It is because of this that upon the stone of the noble ring, the “Bá” has been combined with the “Há” and in the same way the Greatest Name appears in the inscription, for the number is nine. If you multiply nine, which is the number of Bahá, with that of the Báb, which is five, that makes nine times five or forty-five. And in the same way if you multiply five, which is the number of the Báb, with nine, which is the number of Bahá, that makes forty-five, and this number is equal to the number of Adam. Similarly, if you add together the units of nine, that also makes forty-five. If now you add together the units of the number of the Báb, that makes fifteen, which is equal to the number of Eve, and is in conformity with the Ḥadīth: “I and ‘Alí, we are the Father and Mother of this people.”

“Adam” signifies the overflowing Reality, distributive, active, which represents the appearance of the Names and Qualities of God, the Divine conditions (or stations); whereas Eve is the passive Reality, taking, dependent, receptive, existing through the Divine Names and Qualities. Briefly, such are the least of the mysteries of the composition of the Greatest Name upon the stone of the Divine ring.

Observe also that the three planes represent the world of God, the World of Command, and the World of Creation, which are the sources of the signs. The world of God is the source of Glorious Bounty; the world of Command is the pure and luminous Mirror which depends upon the Sun of Truth; and the world of Creation is the source of the acquisition of Lights which is due to the Supreme Conjunction: To take from God; to give to the creatures.

In brief: the true “Bá,” which is the universal Reality, once descended and distributed into the third degree from the Supreme Grade, to the inferior creatures, becomes the collector and creator of all the worlds.

Upon the horizon of Eternal Glory two luminous stars have arisen in brilliance:

one to the right and one to the left. This supreme mystery is the two diagrams placed to the right and to the left of the Greatest Name upon the stone of the noble ring: this is the mystery of the appearance of the Beauty of 'Abhá and of the Supreme Highness (the Báb). And though these two diagrams at the right and the left have the form of stars, they also represent the body of man, with the head, the two arms and the two legs, since this diagram has five points.

915 One of the teachings is that love and faithfulness must so prevail in the hearts that men may see the stranger as a friend, the sinner as an intimate fellow, may count enemies as allies, regard foes as loving comrades, call their executioner the giver of life, and consider the denier as a believer and the unbeliever as a faithful one—that is, men must behave in such a manner as may befit the believers, the faithful, the friend and the confidant. If this lamp may shine in a befitting manner in the assemblage of the world you will find that the regions will become fragrant and the world will become a delectable paradise, the surface of the earth will become an excellent garden, the world will become as one home, the different nations will become as one kind, and the peoples and nationalities of the East and West will become as one household. I hope such a day will come and such lights may dawn and such a Countenance may appear in the utmost beauty.

916 Verily, I say unto thee that the gifts of thy Lord are encircling thee in a similar way as the spirit encircles the body at the beginning of the amalgamation of the elements and natures in the womb; the power of the spirit begins then to appear in the body gradually and successively according to the preparation and capacity to receive that everlasting abundance. I ask God to help thee that the spirit will carry out its power in thee as desired and wished.

917 Know thou, verily, man before reaching (spiritual) maturity passes his days and only apprehends trivial things which are clear on account of their exoteric indications, but when he attains full development, then he grasps the realities of things and their esoteric facts. Every day after maturity is equivalent to one year before it, on account of (man's) perception, understanding, apprehension and discoveries.

Now, thou hast reached development and apprehended the degree of maturity: Gaze at the grades of the existence, the realities of things, the allegories in the epistles of God, and the mysteries in the Old and New Testament. By the life of Bahá, the covering will be removed from thee, and thou will be informed of that which all the philosophers and wise men are unable to apprehend. Verily, this is a gift which God assigns only to such of His chosen servants as He willeth. Verily, Thy Lord will

inspire thee with the mysteries of God, the Protector, the Self-subsistent.

918 Observe the pages of the universe and discover the traces which appeared! Hast thou seen or heard in any of the previous centuries or generations that which is manifested in this Glorious Age? If the writings of the previous centuries, the middle centuries and the later centuries, be compared with that which is manifested in this one century, they will not weight against it! Nay, rather, they are as drops of water in comparison with the ocean. Magnified is He, who hath crowned this century with the appearances of His Kingdom!

919 Consider the past, so that thou mayest become informed of the mysteries which shall be disclosed in the future. When the disciples were calling in the name of Christ, the Jews scoffed, scorned and laughed at them. They were saying: "They are taken with madness, and madness is made an art." They even beat them with whips, threw stones at them, prevented the people from approaching them, and were saying: "This man (Christ) is naught but a sorcerer, he blasphemeth God and is possessed of a devil."

Then observe how that persecution and scorn were changed to glory, honor and reverence. Ultimately, the Jews honored their sublime stations and acknowledged their loftiness, which was exalted, promoted and glorified in the center of the horizons until it reached the degree of exaggeration in deeds. They made for them likenesses and pictures, decorated with jewels shining in the eyes; they placed these likenesses or pictures in the temples, churches and monasteries built on the tops of the mountains, and worshipped them with respect, glory, majesty and reverence. This is the condition of the neglectful ones who are deprived of the Truth (the Manifestations of God) at the day of their existence among them. After the ascension of their (prophets') spirits unto the Center of purity and pity, then the negligent ones repent and return, making likenesses and pictures according to their own ideas, which do not bear resemblance (to the Reality), and they worship the same. This is the station of the ignorant ones who are as animals, following every croaker and shaken by every wind. "Forsake them to play in their shallow waters."

920 There is many a young child who is mature and grown, and many an aged one who is ignorant and stupid. Growth and maturity are in intellect and understanding, and not in age and duration of life.

921 Thou hast written concerning the impersonality of the Divinity. Personality is in the manifestation of the Divinity, not in the essence of the Divinity. The reality of the divine world is purified and sanctified from limits and restriction. But the pure

Mirror, which is the manifestor of the Sun of Truth and in which the Sun of Truth is manifest in full appearance—that Mirror is restricted, and not the Lights. The soul pervadeth throughout the entire body, and its commands are effective in all the parts and limbs of man. Notwithstanding its utmost sanctification (or abstraction) this soul is manifest and evident in all its grades, in this material form. By “seeing God” is meant beholding the Manifestation of Himself; for witnessing the sun in its entire splendor, in a clear glassy surface, is identical with witnessing the essence of the sun itself.

When the souls of the sincere depart, then their unreal vision is changed into a vision of reality. Even as man, when in the age of childhood and imperfection, though he seeth things, yet that vision is superficial and external. But when he reacheth the world of perfection and becometh endowed with reasoning faculty and discrimination and comprehension, then that vision of his is a vision of reality and not appearance.

It is evident that the divine nearness is an unlimited nearness, be it in this world or the next one. This is a nearness which is sanctified from the comprehension of minds. The more a man seeketh light from the Sun of Truth, the nearer he will draw. For instance, a clear body is near unto the sun, and a black stone is far from the sun. This nearness dependeth upon clearness, purity and perfection, and that remoteness is due to density, dullness and imperfection.

922

As to the question whether souls will recognize each other in the spiritual world: This fact is certain; for the Kingdom is the world of vision, where all the concealed realities will become disclosed. How much more the intimate souls will become manifest. The mysteries of which man is heedless in this earthly world, those will he discover in the heavenly world, and there will he be informed of the secret of truth; how much more will he recognize or discover persons with whom he has associated. Undoubtedly, the holy souls who find a pure eye and are favored with insight will, in the kingdom of lights, be acquainted with all mysteries, and will seek the bounty of witnessing the reality of every great soul. They will even manifestly behold the Beauty of God in that world. Likewise will they find all the friends of God, both those of former and recent times, present in the heavenly assemblage.

As to the difference and distinction between Lazarus and that “rich man”: The first was spiritual, while the second was material. One was in the highest degree of knowledge and the other in the lowest depths of ignorance. The difference and distinction will naturally become realized between all men after their departure from this mortal world. But this distinction is not in respect to place, but it is in respect to

the soul and conscience. For the Kingdom of God is sanctified (free) from time and place; it is another world and another universe. But the holy souls are promised the gift of intercession. And know thou for a certainty, that in the divine worlds, the spiritual beloved ones will recognize each other, and will seek union, but a spiritual union. Likewise a love that one may have entertained for another will not be forgotten in the world of the Kingdom. Likewise, thou wilt not forget the life that thou hast had in the material world.

O thou maid-servant of God! Hold fast to the most strong handle, and be thoroughly attracted to the Kingdom of 'Abhá, until thou mayest at every instant find a new confirmation and attain to a wonderful gift and become a cause for the guidance of souls.

923 If thou art desirous of health, wish thou health for serving the Kingdom. I hope thou mayest attain a perfect insight, an inflexible resolution, a complete health and spiritual and physical strength in order that thou mayest drink from the fountain of eternal life and be assisted by the spirit of divine confirmation.

Engage thou in commemorating God at every morn and turn unto the Horizon of Mercifulness.

Take some honey, recite Yá Bahá'ul-'Abhá, and eat a little thereof for several days. For these thy prevailing disease are not on account of sins, but they are to make thee despise this world and know that there is no rest and composure in this temporal life.

924 That substance which is the cause of the moderation and perfection of the body is that perfect moderate temperament which is produced by the organization and admixture of constituent elements; that substance is material, not spiritual. But reason, which comprehends the realities of things, is a spiritual reality, not material. Therefore the animal is deprived of reason, and it is specialized to mankind.

925 No one hath any way to the Reality of Deity except through the instrumentality of the Manifestation. To suppose otherwise is theory and not fact.

926 Leave thou the "New Thought" and seek after the New Kingdom. The "New Thought" is a part of the New Kingdom. When thou hast found the latter, thou hast found the former; nay, rather, thou hast found all things.

927 The end of every (material) work is without result, because it is perishable and inconstant, but the first (real) work is attraction to the fragrances of God, enkindlement with the fire of the love of God, reading the verses of unity and

beholding the lights from the dawning-place of mystery. After that cometh the training of the soul, purification of character and service to humanity. If thou art able to accomplish any one of these, the result is eternal and the fruit everlasting.

928 Know thou, verily, all the doors are closed except the door of the Kingdom of God! All the trees are without fruit except the tree of life planted in the paradise of God! All the winds are disquieting to the soul except the breeze of God! All the cups are bitter except the cup of the love of God! Every benefit vanisheth except the food of heaven. It is incumbent upon thee to partake thereof.

929 O maid-servant of God! The Spirit knoweth the spirit, the Spirit addresseth the spirit and the Spirit associateth with the spirit.

930 Thou hast asked: "Is it possible that this new and living Cause is to take the place of the dead religion of England when there hath been organized certain sects who have arrived at high stations of spiritual knowledge and to exalted degrees of merciful powers, and have become distinguished in virtue over all predecessors: notwithstanding this, is it possible that this new Cause will attract the attention of such people to such a degree as to unite their hearts and gather them under its overshadowing protection?"

O thou dear friend! Know thou that the distinguished individual of every age is according to the virtues of that age. The distinguished personage who was in the former age, but in this brilliant age and divine cycle, the noble personage, the radiant star, the distinguished one, will manifest with virtues which will eventually amaze the peoples, for He is in spiritual virtues and divine perfections loftier than all the individuals; nay, rather, He is the source of divine benediction and the center of the Radiant Circle. He is certainly comprehensive. There is no doubt that He will reveal Himself to such a degree as to bring all under His overshadowing care.

When thou considerest carefully thou wilt find this order and system to be established in all things. The whole attracteth the part, and the center of the circle is the axis of the compass. Consider His Holiness the Spirit (Christ): since He was the center of spiritual power and the origin of divine benediction, although in the beginning He gathered but few under His power, yet later, through that conquering power, He ushered all sects under the shadow of the Christian tabernacle. Compare the present with the past, see the great difference. By this thou canst measure and reach the reality, and know for a certainty that the difference among the sects of the world is due to the difference of comprehensions. As long as the perceptive powers differ, surely the opinions and thought differ also. But if one great perceptive Power

which comprehendeth all, cometh to the center, the differing opinions become united, and ideal unity and oneness are revealed.

931 As to the question of translating the Books and Tablets of the Blessed Beauty: it will soon be done in all languages with the utmost of eloquence and excellence. When the Tablets of His Holiness (Bahá'u'lláh) are translated in accordance with the original, with excellence and eloquence, then the lights and significances will dawn and brighten every eye. Endeavor thou with all thy power to make the translation as the original.

932 Know thou that the Kingdom of God hath pitched its tents, hoisted its banner and uplifted its pavilions in this extensive space. The hosts of the angels of God have come down with standards of signs; marched off towards all horizons; opened the cities of the hearts by the power of thy Lord, the Generous; and have blown the great trumpet. The Holy Spirit hath freely given eternal life to every pure heart, and the souls become attracted through the effulgence of the beauty of the glorious Kingdom and through the brilliancy of the light of truth over all regions. The clamor of the spiritual people hath risen with praise and glory to God, the All-glorious!

933 By the life of God! Verily, the gift of guidance, during this great century and this age of lights, is greater than reigning over the earth and all that is therein.

934 The wisdom of all these tribulations that poured successively upon thee was this—that thou shouldst be prepared and made ready for this Cause, that thou mightest expect the attainment to the greatest guidance, for all these trials were but a preparation for thine entrance into the most exalted paradise and the beginning of obtaining this most great benefit.

935 The prophets also acknowledge this opinion, to wit: That education hath a great effect upon the human race, but they declare that minds and comprehensions are originally different. And this matter is self-evident; it cannot be refuted. We see that certain children of the same age, nativity and race, nay, from the same household, under the tutorship of one teacher, differ in their minds and comprehensions.

No matter how much the shell is polished, it can never become the radiant pearl. The black stone will not become the world illumining gem. The calocynth and the thorny cactus can never by training and development become the blessed tree. That is to say, training doth not change the human substance, but it produceth a marvelous effect. By this effective power all that is registered, in latency, of virtues and capacities in the human reality will be revealed.

It is for this reason that, in this new cycle, education and training are recorded in the Book of God as obligatory and not voluntary.

936 Tell them they should do as they think best in these matters. Should they marry, divorce, leave their homes, move to other places, etc.,—all these matters pertaining to their material affairs—‘Abdu’l-Bahá says: “They must do as they wish; they must solve their own problems; they are grown-ups. We do not like to tell people what they should do in these matters. My work is universal; my time and thoughts are for the whole world on the most important problems relating to affairs that concern the spiritual welfare of nations and individuals. When the believers are insistent, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá must give them answers, and it is their wish always that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá grants them. He knows what their wish in reality is. They must make mistakes to learn, and to unfold the higher which is within themselves. The initial wish does not come from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. It comes from them. It is generally clothed with such words as these: ‘We only wish to do that which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ wishes us to do.’ And they are sincere in this, for they do not know the subtlety of the ego of man. It is the Tempter (the subtle serpent of the mind), and the poor soul not entirely emancipated from its suggestions is deceived until entirely severed from all save God.”

937 If thou wishest the divine knowledge and recognition, purify thy heart from all beside God, be wholly attracted to the ideal, beloved One; search for and choose Him and apply thyself to rational and authoritative arguments. For arguments are a guide to the path and by this the heart will be turned to the Sun of Truth. And when the heart is turned unto the Sun, then the eye will be opened and will recognize the Sun through the Sun itself. Then one will be in no need of arguments, for the Sun is altogether independent, and absolute independence is in need of nothing, and proofs are one of the things.

938 Hypnotism hath a weak influence over the bodies, but hath no result. But the power of the Kingdom of God is great. If thou canst, endeavor to obtain a share of that power.

939 O ye cohorts of God! Today in the world of existence, each community is wandering in a wilderness, moving in accord with some passion and desire, and running to and fro in pursuance of its own imagination. Among the communities of the world, this community of the “Greatest Name” is free from every thought, keeping aloof from every project and scheme, arising with the purest designs and intentions, and striving and endeavoring with the utmost hope to live in accordance with the divine teachings in order that the face of the earth become the delectable paradise, the

nether world become the mirror of the Kingdom, the universe become another universe, and the human race attain to higher morals, conduct and manners.

Through the protection and help of the Blessed Perfection—may my life be a sacrifice to His beloved!—you must conduct and deport yourselves in such a manner that you may stand out among other souls distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun. If any of you enters a city he must become the center of attraction because of the sincerity, faithfulness, love, honesty, fidelity, truthfulness and loving-kindness of his disposition and nature toward all the inhabitants of the world, that the people of the city may all cry out: “This person is unquestionably a Bahá'í; for his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature and his disposition are of the attributes of the Bahá'ís.” Until you do attain this station, you have not fulfilled the Covenant and the Testament of God. For according to the irrefutable texts, He has taken from us a firm covenant that we may live and act in accord with the divine exhortations, commands and lordly teachings.

O ye cohorts of God! Now is the time when the signs and perfections of the “Greatest Name” become manifest and clear in this golden cycle in order that it may become demonstrated and established beyond doubt that this period is the period of the Blessed Perfection, and this cycle is distinguished from all other cycles and epochs.

O ye cohorts of God! In the moment of catastrophe, find ye patience, resignation and submission.

The more the calamities are intensified the less become ye disturbed. Withstand ye, with perfect assurance, the flood of trials and calamities, through the power of His Highness, the Almighty.

940 Thou hast asked in regard to the 10th verse of the 21st chapter of Revelation, and to the 17th verse:

Know that the firmament of the bright sun of the world of possibilities is divided into twelve sections (according to mathematical principles) which are called the twelve constellations; likewise the Sun of Truth manifests and pours forth His bounty in twelve constellations of holiness. By these constellations are meant holy souls who are the manifestations of purity and the dawning points of the lights of Unity. Observe that in the day of His Holiness the Interlocutor of God (Moses), there were twelve holy souls who were the leaders of the Truth. In like manner, in the cycle of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ), note that there were twelve apostles under the shadow of the light of the Most High, and the Sun of Truth was manifested through those bright dawning places like unto the phenomenal sun. Likewise, in the time of His Holiness Muḥammad, consider that there were twelve dawning points of holiness

who were the manifestations of confirmation. Such is the case.

Accordingly, St. John, the divine, declared in his vision regarding the twelve doors and the twelve foundations. By the great and holy city of Jerusalem, which is descended from heaven, is meant the sacred law of God. This subject has been repeatedly explained in many Tablets and in the Scriptures of the ancient Prophets. For example, it is said in one place: "I beheld Jerusalem marching on to the wilderness." The purport is that this heavenly Jerusalem has twelve doors through which the advancing souls enter into the City of God. These doors are the souls who are the stars of guidance and doors unto bounty and knowledge. "At the gates twelve angels stood." By "angel" is meant the power of the confirmation of God; that the candle of the power of the divine confirmation shines forth and is illumined in those souls. That is to say, that each one of those souls will be confirmed by the mightiest power. Those twelve gates surround the whole universe. This signifies that all existence is under the shadow of those souls; also, that these doors are the foundation of the city of God, the divine Jerusalem; that upon each of these foundations the name of one of the Apostles of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ) is written. That is to say, the manifestation of the perfections, glad tidings, virtues and high attributes of that holy soul.

In brief, it is said that: "And he that talked with me had a golden rod to measure the city and the gates thereof and the walls thereof." The purport is this, that certain souls guided with a rod of the plant, that is, a reed wherewith he shepherded the sheep, like unto the rod of Moses; others trained with a rod of iron and drove them, as in the time of Muḥammad. In this Greatest Day the rod of the plant and the rod of iron are changed into a rod which is of pure gold and is from the endless treasuries of the Kingdom of God.

By the instrumentality of this, all people shall be trained. Observe the difference: in a certain time the teachings of God were like unto the twigs of a tree, and by them the signs of God were spread, the law of God promulgated and the religion of God founded. Later a time came when the rod of the divine Shepherd was like iron; and now in this blessed and glorious cycle that rod is become like unto pure gold. What a great difference exists between them! Therefore know that the law of God and the divine teachings show a great advance in this day. They have reached a degree of supremacy, compared with former ages. Nay, rather, this is pure gold, while that was iron and wood.

Praise be to God that thou hast found guidance, sought illumination and turned thy face toward the Kingdom of the True One.

This turning the face toward God is the healing of the body, the mind and the soul. When this advancement toward God has become complete, one is able to overcome passion and desire, become protected from sin and transgression and be delivered from heedlessness. It will bestow eternal life and grant the imperishable gift.

Therefore sacrifice all thy talents at the feet of that heart-enkindling Beloved, and characterize thyself with such deeds and words that thou mayest become the cause of the guidance of others, and remain steadfast and firm in the Testament and Covenant.

942 The Hosts of the Kingdom of 'Abhá are drawn up and filed in battle array on the plain of the Supreme Apex and are expecting that a band of volunteers will step upon the field of action with the intention of service, so that they may assist that band and make it victorious and triumphant.

943 A fire from the Kingdom hath been kindled in the heart of the world,—in the Blessed Tree, whose flame shall ere long set aglow the pillars of the world and its rays illumine the horizons of nations. All the signs have appeared, all the prophetic references become clear, all that was revealed in Books and Scriptures hath become fully manifest. There is no ground for any one to hesitate in regard thereto. Some people of former times and sects avoided certain others as strangers. But now the glorious Beloved One hath ridden upon His swift coursing steed, circling about in the arena of truth, and all that was hidden hath become manifest. Let there be no more silence or reticence, taciturnity or negligence. The Candle is lighted—yet the moths continue motionless and melancholy behind the veils. ... The time is too short, and the Divine Courser moves swiftly on.

944 Unless the Holy Spirit become intermediary, one cannot attain directly to the bounties of God. Do not overlook the obvious truths. For it is a self-evident fact that a child cannot be instructed without a teacher, and knowledge is a bounty from the bounties of God. The soil is not covered with grass and green without the rain of the cloud, therefore the cloud is the intermediary between the divine bounties and the soil. A body does not develop and grow without the soul, therefore the soul is the medium of the spiritual life.

I hope that through the breath of the Holy Spirit the mysteries may become disclosed to thee, for without this channel it is impossible and unattainable.

945 It is becoming of a weak one to supplicate to the Strong One and it behooveth a seeker of bounty to beseech the Glorious Bountiful One. When one supplicates to his Lord, turns to Him and seeks bounty from His Ocean, this supplication is itself a

light to his heart, an illumination to his sight, a life to his soul and an exaltation to his being. By these attractions one's ability and capacity increase. When the vessel is deepened the water increaseth, and when the thirst groweth the bounty of the clouds becometh agreeable to the taste of man.

This is the mystery of supplication and the wisdom of stating one's wants.

946 You had asked concerning the disclosure of spirits after the dissolution of bodies. Undoubtedly the other world is a world of disclosure and vision, for there the veil will be removed and the human spirit will witness the souls above it, beneath it, or of an equal rank with it. ... The spirits of the believers at the time of their appearance in the world of bodies are equal, and are all pure and unsullied. But in this world they will find distinction. Some attain to a lofty station, some seek an intermediate grade, some stagnate in the early stages. This equality is in the original state of their being, and this distinction is after their ascension from this earthly life.

947 The Supreme One hath said "He loveth them and they will love Him." If God had not filled His Servant with His love, love would never have been realized in this creation.

All is then from Him, and is His—man in himself possesses absolutely nothing.

The rays of love having shone from the True One unto the creation, the great signs thereof are imprinted upon clear and luminous hearts, and as these mirror-hearts meet, reflecting this sublime light, love, it becomes manifest from creature to creature. "God hath put harmony in their hearts."

948 In this prohibition (from visiting Haifa) there is a providence which will become manifest before long. But know ye with the utmost certainty that this disappointment is regarded in the Threshold of the Manifest Light as greater than a visit to that magnificent station. For the substance of the grief is the essence of the visit, and the burning of the fire of zeal is the sweet water of the union. This distance is the nearness itself, this separation the reality of union.

949 In this day if any one lives in accordance with the heavenly teachings and instructions, he shall become a spiritual physician to the world of humanity and the trumpet of Israel to quicken the dead. For the confirmations of the Kingdom of 'Abhá are uninterrupted, and the victory of the Supreme Concourse is the associate of every one who is pure in heart.

950 It is known and clear that today the unseen divine assistance encompasses those who deliver the message. And if the work of delivering the message be neglected, the

assistance shall be entirely cut off. Under all conditions the message must be delivered, but with wisdom. The friends should be engaged in educating the souls and should become instruments in aiding the world of humanity to acquire spiritual joy and fragrance. If every one of the friends were to establish relations of friendship and right dealing with one of the negligent souls, associate and live with him with perfect kindness, and meanwhile, through good conduct and moral behavior, lead him to divine instruction, to heavenly advice and teachings, surely he would gradually arouse that negligent person and would change his ignorance into knowledge. Souls are liable to estrangement. Such methods should be adopted that the estrangement be first removed; then the Word will have effect.

If, by this method, every one of the friends of God were to try to lead one soul to the right path, the number of the believers would be doubled every year.

951 With regard to the formation of benevolent associations; surely this subject should receive due attention. The disciples of His Holiness Christ (may My life be a sacrifice unto Him!) were only eleven persons, and they had established a benevolent fund. So the establishment of the fund had that degree of importance.

952 O ye friends of the Beauty of 'Abhá! O ye firm ones in the Testament of the Covenant of Bahá!

O ye servants of the Holy Threshold of His Highness the Eternal One! Praise ye the Greatest Name and the Self-subsistent, Eternal and Pre-existent Beauty for that He hath, through His great kindness, made ye true friends, steadfast in the Covenant and firm in the Testament of God. He made you brilliant lamps and sufficient stars, signs of oneness and standards of singleness, trees of the paradise of the Covenant, and lights of the sanctity of God.

Therefore in thanksgiving for the great favor, ye should endeavor to promote peace, union, harmony. Ye are immersed in one sea and receive radiance from one sun. Ye are drawing from one horizon, radiating from one source, and receiving bounties from one point. Ye are soaring in one Atmosphere and looking to one center. This is the essence of oneness and the reality of singleness.

Whosoever proves firm, his breath is the Breath of God. Whosoever slightly doubts and wavers, his whisperings are contaminated, no matter who he may be.

953 What is the Truth? Truth is the Word of God which gives life to humanity. It restores sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf; it makes eloquent those who are dumb, and living beings out of dead beings; it illumines the world of the heart and soul; it reduces into nothingness the iniquities of the neglectful and erring ones.

Beauty, perfection, brilliancy and spirituality in this existence comes from or through the Word of God. For all it is the supreme goal, the greatest desire, the cause of life, light, instruction. The road to attain to this Truth is the love of God. When the light of the love of God is burning in the mirror of the heart, that flame shows the way, and guides to the Kingdom of the Word of God.

As to that which causes the growth of the love of God—know that it is to turn one's self towards God.

954 As to progress after death: know that after death it is the divine world. Progress is possible, but it depends upon the generosity of God, and not upon the efforts and struggles of man. In other words, progress becomes possible only through grace, because the progress from one rank to another depends entirely upon divine generosity, whereas on the contrary, progress toward perfection is obtainable through man's effort. For example, the progress of a mineral reality to the rank of a vegetable is to be obtained only through generosity; likewise the passage of a vegetable reality to the rank of animal reality to the rank of the human is also due to mercy and generosity; likewise the passage of a human reality to the world of the Kingdom depends entirely upon generosity. What I mean to say is this: that the passage from one rank to another depends wholly upon grace, whereas the acquiring of perfections is dependent upon man's efforts and struggles. Take mankind: God created man from the mineral enabled him to attain to his present station; now by his efforts and struggles, he can acquire human perfections and seek to increase in virtue and purity. It is therefore clear that the passage from one rank to a higher rank depends entirely on generosity, whereas the acquiring of virtues is possible through effort and will-power. In consequence, after the passage through this corporeal world into the divine world, the traversing of ranks is possible, but only through the grace and bounty of God.

955 As to the significance of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh: know that everything which belongs to the universal welfare is divine, and all that which is divine is certainly for universal good. If it is the truth, it is for all, otherwise it is for no one. Therefore, a divine cause for universal good cannot be limited to the Orient or to the Occident; because the flame of the Sun of Truth illumines the East and the West, and its heat is felt in the South as well as the North,—there is no difference between the two poles. In the time of the Manifestation of Christ, the Romans and Greeks thought that the Cause was especially for the Israelites; they thought they themselves had no need of it, because they saw that according to appearances, they possessed a perfect civilization, wherefore they did not need the instructions of Christ. This false

supposition was the cause of depriving many people of its grace.

Also know that the principles of Christianity and the commandments of Bahá'u'lláh are identical, and that the roads are the same. But every day there is progress. There was a time when the divine institution was in an embryonic condition; then it became a newly-born infant, then a child, afterward an intelligent adult. Today it has reached maturity; its capacities, its body, is ever the same identity—but today it is resplendent with the greatest beauty and brilliancy.

This explanation is clear and sufficient. Happy is he who penetrates the mysteries, and who takes his share from the world of Light. The sun could shine a hundred thousand years and shower its heat upon a stone or hard piece of earth; they will not become luminous gems, a ruby or a pearl.

956 Perchance, God willing, ye may be helped and confirmed to arise and serve in a befitting and worthy manner, and be assisted to do that which is required; and associate with the people with sanctity, purity, virtue and holiness, so that every one who is near may inhale the fragrance of the delectable Paradise, every intimate one may behold the traits of the most wonderful creation, and all people testify that the Bahá'ís are the shining lamps of the regions and the rays of the dawning-place and effulgence; recognizing a Bahá'í through the quality and not the name, knowing him through the amiable nature and not the physical body. Should we become as such, the manifest light will shine in our brow. Otherwise, woe unto us, for that which we have neglected as duties enjoined upon us by God!

957 Know that the blessings of the Kingdom of 'Abhá are not dependent upon the capacity and the worthiness of any one; the blessings themselves are the worthiness. As the action itself, when it reaches the thing acted upon, makes that thing the action,—so the blessings themselves then become identical with worthiness. In like manner, when the action itself descends upon the recipient, the recipient becomes the action. For example, when an object becomes broken, the action becomes realized in it. Under such circumstances, the recipient and that which is received—or capacity and blessings—are one. Therefore the blessings of the Kingdom of 'Abhá are not enchained by any fetters. The Kingdom gives the drop the influence of the sea, and the mote that of the sun. As thou hast already beheld, God has arisen, and some souls who were less than drops become like the waves of the great sea and manifested a storm equal to that of the ocean: in such cases worthiness is of no importance.

958 Every one of the friends of God has two stations; on the station of mankind and the other the station of spirituality. The spiritual station is unseen, while the material

station, the personal station, is seen. It is like the horizon and the sun; the Sun of Truth shines forth from the horizon; and now the Sun of Truth has shone with perfection from the horizon. We call these effulgences the descending grace. The horizon receives all divine protection through the outpouring of that bounty, and the bounties which the horizon receives from the unseen Light, He gives to mankind and to creation. The station by which the horizon gives those bounties to mankind, which He has taken from the Sun of Truth—the station of giving those bounties to mankind is called the station of sacrifice. I will tell you an example to distinguish between the giver of the bounties of mankind: suppose the grain which you put in the earth—when the grain desires to be changed into a tree, of course it sacrifices all of itself to the tree in order that the tree may be produced. Christ said: I have given my life in order that ye may live. When Christ came into the world He gave all His bounties to mankind in order that they might see their bounties therein; and this was the way He sacrificed His life to the world.

When we want to know and judge whether such a matter is complete in this world, we must distinguish between its outward grace and its inward grace. If we find these two graces equal to each other, we will know that this matter has been accomplished. What a man lives in his heart, he must be appearance live; and if he live a something in his heart and does not show it in his life, then we will judge that his life is not complete.

It is the same with the Cause of God. If we would know whether this Cause is complete and in full perfection, we must see whether all its conditions or grades are complete and consistent. All Divine Manifestations give up all personal conditions, considerations and grades in the Cause of God to such an extent that there is nothing judged of their personality; that is, they sacrifice their personality entirely in the world; their life is only the life of God, their thought is the thought of God and their grades are those chosen by God. They have nothing. They sacrifice everything in the way of God. They suffer every sort of affliction and calamity in the world—that is, the afflictions and calamities in addition to those suffered spiritually—in order to show that the spiritual equals the material in consecration and sacrifice. They sacrifice spiritually in the way of God, and so they sacrifice all apparent and outward conditions in order to show the perfection and completeness of the truth of their manifestation.

This is the station of simple radiance which shines forth and makes them separate from all worldly things, and this leads them to such a condition that while they are walking on the earth, they are moving in the supreme Horizon. They have cut themselves off entirely from worldly conditions, and while they are on the earth they

never see it, but look to the Horizon. They close their eyes to their material ease and to all else, and hasten with all joy and fragrance to martyrdom in the Cause of God.

As long as one has not taken a portion of the mystery of sacrifice, it is impossible for him to attain to the Kingdom of God. So long as you do not have the cup free from every sort of liquor, is it possible that you can put good and pure water therein?

The most earnest hope and desire of those who have drawn nigh to God is this—to receive a cup from this ocean. I hope that in the service of God I may gain such a station as to put those who are in the way of God in the way of attaining the grace of self-sacrifice, that they may wholly forget their own personality and their ego. So long as the surface of the mirror is not clean from rust and dust, the radiance and effulgence of the sun shall never be imprinted on it. The more the body is lightened, the sooner it ascends.

959 Those who looked at the material body of Christ and saw Him enduring all the hardships and trials, marveled that He was the Messiah because He was in this lowly condition. As they were considering His physical being, they failed to see the light shining within it. But those who looked to the spiritual and the real existence of the Spirit in Christ, they firmly believed in Him. We must not look at the lantern, but at the light—the candle inside the lantern. We must not look at the worldly condition, but at the truth within it—the divine truth—because if we look only at the outward form of man, how can we distinguish man from animal, because we find them eating and doing the same things; but when we consider the spirit in man, we find it to be far different from the animal. When you look at water, salt and sweet, you cannot tell the difference, but when you taste the water, then you can distinguish.

This is one of the tests of God. That is why Jesus told all people to supplicate and beseech God not to let them fall into these tests. For God does not tempt us—God tests us. Temptation is from the satanic, or negative, quality of man.

960 By the term “angels” spiritual powers is sometimes meant, and other times you will find that the term means pure and holy souls. Where it is said “I will give My angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways,” it means pure souls and true believers. In one station “angel” means those spiritual and divine powers given by God to the body of man which change mankind toward good. These are the “angels” which confirm man.

Sometimes we understand by “angel” those beings and souls who are sanctified from all earthly stations—that is, who have cut themselves from all worldly things and drawn nigh unto God with all resignation and devotion. If we find a man who has cut himself from all animal and worldly stations and approached nigh to the

heavenly conditions, we will say “This being is an angel,” because he has nothing to do with earthly things.

All beings of the contingent world have to undergo change: the only thing which is unchangeable is the identity of God. The angel is one of the created beings of God and must undergo changes. Were these beings not to change, they would possess the unity or nature of God. When we want to judge something which is contingent, we look at its changes and understand its nature.

Man is not a pre-existent being, but a newly produced and created being, consisting of two aspects or portions, the spiritual and material, which may be likened to hell and paradise; and he does not know whether he will be in hell or paradise. For instance, man is composed of evil as well as good, of darkness as well as light, of guidance as well as misleading; the most evil character is to be found in man, while the greatest and most excellent character is also found in him. We must see that the good qualities gain victory over the bad. If so, the man will become an “angel,” but if the bad qualities conquer the good ones, then he will become a “devil.” If the light conquers the darkness in man, of course he will be true light, and if the darkness conquers the light, he will be of the material.

961 He who knows nothing of the wind, when he sees trees shaken does not know it is the wind which causes them to shake. Since the beginning of the Cause, there have been at least ten thousand men who went with gladness to suffer martyrdom, and people who saw them suffering this martyrdom thought it was through their own power, and did not know that a breeze had shaken them. In the days of other Prophets there were people who suffered martyrdom in the Cause of God, but in this day there are more, and these have been more sincere. The histories of this time will record their witness to the things which have happened in this day—to those who have suffered martyrdom. How many mothers have been happy to see their children suffer martyrdom! How many wives have rejoiced when their husbands suffered martyrdom; how many sisters have wept with joy when their brothers died in the Cause of God! Now, it is not possible for one to have joy under these circumstances unless he is shaken by a breeze from the garden of God.

962 The station of the Prophets is as a lighted lamp; all the Prophets offered themselves as lamps. Those men around them who heard their voice were such as were capable and desirous of hearing them.

If you speak with a magician about the Zodiac, he understands you because he is a learned man, but if you speak of it to a carpenter he will say it is nonsense—“How is it, a live man in the skies, or a ship!”

With this man the interpretation of the Bible will be the same—if you repeat all these spiritual things to him, he will think it nonsense. For instance, when you read the Revelation of St. John to the unlearned in spiritual matters, they do not understand it, and it is only because you tell them it is the Bible that they do not call it nonsense. There are many meanings in each word of the Apocalypse.

Iron attracts iron, and as you approach the Kingdom of God, you will be attracted by the things of the Kingdom. Worldly people are not of the kind to be affected by the magnet of the divine.

963 Everything in existence is good, and only the lack of goodness make a thing evil. The being is created good, but when the lack of good is to be seen in it, then it becomes bad. Evil is not created by God. For example, light is created by God, but when you put away the light from a room, the room becomes dark. Darkness is not created by God—the lack of light is called darkness. God has created guidance; misleading is lack of guidance. When you turn yourself from guidance, you place yourself in misleading. There is no existence in evil. Nothing proceeds from the True One but good, and everything belonging to the beings of existence is animated by their God. I will give you an example: the Governor sent here from Constantinople possesses full authority and power from the authority and power of the Sultán. But this man is capable of doing both justice and injustice by this power given him by the Sultan. If he exercises injustice and oppression in the city and the Sultán punishes him, can he answer that he has done these evil things through the power given from the Sultán? The Sultán will tell him that he has given him power to use in a good way and not for oppression.

There is no difference in the bounties of God; a profusion of bounties are outpoured continually upon all sorts of land, but when the precious shower falls on a barren land, it causes weeds and thorns to grow. The same bounty and the same shower causes a good, fertile land to bear roses and grass and useful fruits.

964 The more you love, the nearer you will be to God. Love is one of the bounties of God. Therefore to love one another is good.

The bounties of God are: to love each other, to speak the truth, to sever our hearts from the world, to be reverent, to be humble, to be hospitable. By these things you know the faithful servant of God. How do we know the light? By its rays. So when you see these qualities, you will know that the servant of God has received the regeneration. You must be thus reborn. You must pray and supplicate, and the more you pray and supplicate, the nearer you will be to God.

When a dead body is thrown into the ocean, the waves will throw it back upon

the shore. So it is with the Ocean of Truth—it will not accept a dead body; and if a believer has not these bounties of God, the sea will roll until he is finally cast out.

The people of God have no dependence upon the conditions of this world; they neither become bittered with the bitterness of the cup, nor do they become intoxicated if the cup be sweet.

The people of God are like the birds, who satisfy themselves with a few crumbs, and sit the whole time on the branches of the tree singing the praises of God.

965 The greatest gift of man is universal love, for this love is the magnet which renders existence eternal, attracts reality, and diffuses life with infinite joy. If this love penetrates the heart of man, all the forces of the universe will be realized in him, for it is a divine power which transports him to a divine station; and man will make no real progress until illumined by this power of love. Strive to increase the love-force of reality, to make your hearts greater centers of attraction, to create new ideals and relationships.

Alas! Alas! The world has not discovered the reality of religion hidden beneath the symbolic forms!

966 Advance always in the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh; occupy thy heart always by the mentioning of Bahá'u'lláh; take heed that only in your eyes is Bahá'u'lláh, in your heart is Bahá'u'lláh—in your inmost heart is Bahá'u'lláh! If you fall into trouble, say, “Yá Bahá'ul ‘Abhá!” If any one oppose you, say, “Yá Bahá'ul ‘Abhá!” Even while at your work, mention “Yá Bahá'ul ‘Abhá!” Thou wilt be blamed for My sake; people will attribute to thee infidelity for My sake; thou wilt bear trouble for My sake. Be encouraged, and do not fear. It happened like this also in the time of Jesus Christ.

Know the greatness of these days!

967 All the meetings must be for teaching the Cause and spreading the message, and suffering the souls to enter into the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. Look at me. All my thoughts are centered around the proclamation of the Kingdom.

I have a lamp in my hand searching through the lands and seas to find souls who can become heralds of the Cause. Day and night I am engaged in this work. Any other deliberations in the meetings are futile and fruitless. Convey the message! Attract the hearts! Sow the seeds! Teach the Cause to those who do not know.

I enter all meetings, all churches, so that the Cause may be spread. When the most important work is before our sight, we must let go the important one.

If the meetings or Spiritual Assembly has any other occupation, the time is spent

in futility. All the deliberations, all consultation, all the talks and addresses must revolve around one focal center and that is: Teach the Cause! Teach! Teach! Convey the message! Awaken the souls!

Now is the time of laying the foundation. Now we must gather brick, stone, wood, iron and other building materials! This is not the time of decoration. We must strive day and night and think and work. What can I say that may become effective? What can I do that may bring results? What can I write that may bring forth fruits?

Nothing else will be useful today. The interests of such a glorious Cause will not advance without undivided attention. While we are carrying this load we cannot carry any other load!

968 Will is the center or focus of human understanding. We must will to know God, just as we must will in order to possess the life He has given us. The human will must be subdued and trained into the will of God. It is a great power to have a strong will, but a greater power to give that will to God. The will is what we do, the understanding is what we know. Will and understanding must be one in the Cause of God.

969 Now the time has come when we must part, but the separation is only of our bodies; in spirit we are united. Ye are the lights which shall be diffused; ye are the waves of that sea which shall spread and overflow the world. Each wave is precious to me, and my nostrils shall be gladdened by your remembrance. Another commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another even as I love you. Great mercy and blessings are promised to the people of your land, but on one condition; that their hearts be filled with the fire of love, that they live in perfect harmony and kindness like one soul in different bodies, like one soul in different bodies. Never forget this; look at one another with the eye of perfection; look at me, follow me, be as I am; take no thought for yourselves or your lives, whether ye eat or whether ye sleep, whether ye are comfortable, whether ye are well or ill, whether ye are with friends or foes, whether ye receive praise or blame; for all these things ye must care not at all. Look at me and be as I am; ye must die to yourselves and to the world, so ye shall be born again and enter the kingdom of heaven. Behold the candle, how it gives light. It weeps its life away drop by drop in order to give forth its flame of light. The time has come when we must part, but the separation is only of our bodies; in spirit we are united forever.

970 I say unto you that any one who will rise up in the Cause of God at this time shall be filled with the spirit of God, and that He will send His hosts from heaven to

help you, and that nothing shall be impossible to you if you have faith. And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a Covenant between you and me: that ye have faith; that your faith be steadfast as a rock that no storms can move, that nothing can disturb, and that it endure through all things even to the end; even should ye hear that your Lord has been crucified, be not shaken in your faith; for I am with you always, whether living or dead; I am with you to the end. As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the standard—this is the standard—this is the standard.
