

CHAPTER FIVE: THE MYSTERY OF GOD

TABLET OF THE BRANCH

He is Eternal in His Abhá Horizon!

Verily, the Cause of God hath come upon the clouds of utterances and the polytheists are in this day in great torment! Verily, the hosts of revelation have descended with banners of inspiration from the heaven of the Tablet in the name of God, the powerful, the mighty! At this time the monotheists all rejoice in the victory of God and His dominion, and the deniers will then be in manifest perplexity.

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

Enter, O people, beneath the shelter of the Word! Then drink therefrom the choice wine of inner significances and utterances; for therein is hidden the kawther of the glorious One and it hath appeared from the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the merciful, with wonderful lights.

Say: Verily, the ocean of pre-existence hath branched forth from this most great Ocean. Blessed, therefore, is he who abides upon Its shores, and is of those who are established thereon. Verily, this most sacred temple of Abhá—the Branch of Holiness hath branched forth from the Sadratu'l-Muntahá. Blessed is whosoever sought shelter beneath it and is of those who rest therein.

Say: Verily, the branch of command hath sprung forth from this root which God hath firmly planted in the ground of the will, the limb of which has been elevated to a station which encompasses all existence. Therefore, exalted be He for this creation, the lofty, the blessed, the inaccessible, the mighty!

O ye people! Draw nigh unto It, and taste the fruits of its knowledge and wisdom on the part of the mighty, the knowing One. Whosoever will not taste thereof shall be deprived of the bounty, even though he hath partaken of all that is in the earth—were ye of those who know.

Say: Verily a word hath gone forth in favor from the most great Tablet and God has adorned It with the mantle of Himself, and made it sovereign over all in the earth and a sign of His grandeur and omnipotence among the creatures; in order that through it, the people shall praise their Lord, the mighty, the powerful, the wise; and that, through it, they shall glorify their creator and sanctify the self of God which standeth within all things. Verily, this is naught but a Revelation upon the part of the wise, the ancient One!

Say: O people, praise ye God, for its Manifestation, for verily it is the most great favor

upon you and the most perfect blessing upon you; and through Him every moldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to Him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away from Him hath turned away from My beauty denied My proof and is of those who transgress. Verily, He is the remembrance of God amongst you and His trust within you, and His manifestation unto you and His appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereunto testifieth God, then His angels, then His messengers, and then His holy servants.

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

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

Hasten, O people, unto the shelter of God, in order that He may protect you from the heat of the Day whereon none shall find for himself any refuge or shelter except beneath the shelter of His Name, the clement, the forgiving! Clothe yourselves, O people, with the garment of assurance, in order that He may protect you from the dart of doubts and superstitions, and that ye may be of those who are assured in those days wherein none shall ever be assured and none shall be firmly established in the Cause, except by severing himself from all that is possessed by the people and turning unto the holy and radiant Outlook.

O ye people! Do ye take unto yourselves the Jebt as a helper other than God, and do ye seek the Taghoot as a Lord besides your Lord the almighty, the omnipotent? Forsake, O people, their mention, then hold the chalice of life in the Name of your Lord, the merciful. Verily, by God, the existent world is quickened through a drop thereof, were ye of those who know.

Say: In that Day there is no refuge for any one save the command of God, and no salvation for any soul but God. Verily, this is the truth and there is naught after truth but manifest error. Verily, God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause according to his ability. Thus hath the command been recorded by the finger of might and power upon the Tablet of majesty and greatness.

Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one quickening all the servants and the Lord shall bring him forth in the day of resurrection into the Ridván of oneness, adorned with the Mantle of Himself, the protector, the mighty, the generous! Thus will ye assist your Lord, and naught else save this shall ever be mentioned in this day before God, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers.

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

Say: O people, cause no corruption in the earth and dispute not with men; for, verily,

this is not worthy of those who have chosen in the shelter of their Lord a station which shall indeed remain secure.

If ye find one athirst, give him to drink from the chalice of Kawtha and Tasneen; and if ye find one endowed with an attentive ear, read unto him the verses of God, the mighty, the merciful, the compassionate! Unloose the tongue with excellent utterance, then admonish the people if ye find them advancing unto the sanctuary of God; otherwise abandon them unto themselves and forsake them in the abyss of hell. Beware lest ye scatter the pearls of inner significance before every barren, dumb one. Verily, the blind are deprived of witnessing the lights and are unable to distinguish between the stone and the holy, precious pearl.

Verily, wert thou to read the most mighty, wonderful verses to the stone for a thousand years, will it understand, or will they take any effect therein? No! by thy Lord, the merciful, the clement! If thou readest all the verses of God unto the deaf, will he hear a single letter? No! Verily, by the beauty, the mighty, the ancient!

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

KITÁB-I-'AHD

Although the Most High Horizon is devoid of trivial possessions of the earth, we have nevertheless bequeathed unto our heirs a noble and peerless heritage within the treasure-house of trust and resignation.

We have left no treasure nor have we added to man's pains.

By the Life of God! In earthly riches fear is hidden and peril is concealed. Consider, then take warning by what the God of Mercy hath revealed in the Qur'án:—"Woe unto those who malign and speak evil of their fellows; who hoard earthly goods and count their riches."

Earthly possessions are unstable; wherefore whatsoever passeth or suffereth vicissitudes is unworthy of regard except to a limited measure.

In bearing hardships and tribulations and in revealing verses and expounding proofs, it has been the purpose of this oppressed One to extinguish the fire of hate and animosity, that, haply, the horizons of the hearts of mankind be illumined with the light of concord and attain real tranquillity.

The light of the following utterance shineth from the horizon of the Divine Tablet, which should be observed by all: Oh people of the world! I counsel you to act in a manner which shall tend to elevate your stations. Cling to divine virtue and obey the divine law. Truly I say, the tongue is for mentioning that which is good; do not defile it by evil speech. "God hath forgiven your past ways." You must henceforth speak that which is worthy. Shun reviling, maligning, and whatsoever will offend your fellowmen.

Man's station is great. Ere this, the following exalted words have flowed forth from the

Pen of Abhá:

This is a Day great and blessed. Whatsoever was hidden in man is today being revealed. The station of man is great, were he to cling to truth and righteousness and be firm and steadfast in the Cause. Before the God of Mercy, a true man appears like unto heaven. The sun and the moon of that heaven are his sight and hearing and its stars are his shining attributes. His station is the highest and his signs are the educator of the world.

In this Day, every believer who discovered the fragrance of the garment and turned with a pure heart unto the most high horizon is indeed recorded in the Crimson Tablet as of the people of Bahá.

Hold the chalice of My grace in My name. Then drain it in My mention, the mighty, the wonderful!

Oh people of the world! The religion of God is to create love and unity; do not make it the Cause of enmity and discord. All that is regarded by men of insight and the people of the most lofty outlook as the means for safeguarding and effecting the peace and tranquillity of man, has flowed from the Supreme Pen. But the ignorant ones who are the victim of self and desire, are heedless of the consummate wisdom of the truly wise One, and their words and deeds are prompted by fancy and superstition.

Oh ye chosen of God and His trusted ones! Kings are the manifestors of God's power and the source of His majesty and affluence. Pray ye in their behalf. The government of the earth has been vouchsafed unto them. But the hearts of men He decreed unto Himself. He forbade conflict and strife—a rigid prohibition in the Book. This is the Decree of God in this most great Manifestation; and God hath preserved it from annulment and clothed it with the brodered garment of confirmation. Verily, He is the all-knowing, the all-wise!

It is incumbent upon all to support those rulers and chiefs of state who are adorned with the raiment of justice and equity. Blessed are the rulers and the learned in el-Bahá! They verily are My trustees amongst My servants, and the sources of My Decrees amongst My people. Upon them rest My Bahá, My mercy, and My grace which hath encircled the world!

Anent this matter, we have revealed in the Book of Aqdas the following words which radiate the light of divine mercy:

Oh my Branches! A mighty power and supreme potency is hidden and concealed in the world of being. Focus your gaze upon it and upon the direction of its unity, not upon the differences which are apparent therein.

God's Will and Testament enjoins upon the branches, the twigs, and the kinsfolk, one and all, to gaze unto the most great Branch. Consider what we have revealed in my Book of Aqdas, to Wit:

“When the sea of My Presence is exhausted and the Book of Origin hath reached its end, turn you unto him (‘Abdu’l-Bahá) who is desired by God—he who is issued from this ancient Root.”

The purpose of this sacred verse is the most great Branch. Thus have we declared the matter as a favor on our part, and we are the gracious, the beneficent!

God hath, verily, decreed the station of the great Branch next to that of the most great

Branch. Verily He is the wise ordainer. We have chosen el-Akbar after the el'A'sam, as a command on the part of God, the all-knowing, the omniscient.

All must regard the other Branches with affection, but God hath not decreed unto them any right to the people's property.

Oh my branches, my twigs, and my kinsfolk! I counsel you to manifest divine virtue, and to act in accord with the Law, and with whatsoever is befitting and will elevate your stations.

Truly I say, virtue is the greatest commander which leads the Cause of God to victory, and the legions which deserve this commander are pure, sanctified and praiseworthy deeds and attributes.

Say: Oh servants! Do not make the cause of order a cause for disorder, nor the means of unity a means for disunity. It is hoped that the people of Baha will observe the sacred verse: "Say, all are created by God." This lofty utterance is like unto water for quenching the fire of hate and hostility which is hidden and stored in men's hearts and minds. This single utterance will cause the various sects and creeds to attain the light of true unity. Verily He speaketh truth and guideth to the right path; and He is the mighty, the glorious, the omnipotent.

For the honor of the Cause and the promotion of the Word—it is necessary that all shall respect and have regard for the Branches. This command has been recorded once and again in the divine Book. Blessed is he who obeys whatsoever hath been ordained on the part of God, the ancient ruler. All shall also have respect for the women-members of Our household and for the Afnán and kinsfolk. We likewise counsel you to serve mankind and bring peace to the world.

All that leads to the quickening of the peoples and the salvation of the world hath been revealed from the kingdom of utterance by the Lord of mankind. Harken to the exhortations of the Supreme Pen with ideal ears. These are preferable unto you above all that is on the earth. Whereunto beareth witness my Book, the blessed, the glorious!

WHOSO LAYETH CLAIM TO A REVELATION

Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying impostor. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will, no doubt, forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will, assuredly, send down one who will deal mercilessly with him. Terrible, indeed, is God in punishing! Whosoever interpreteth this verse otherwise than its obvious meaning is deprived of the Spirit of God and of His mercy which encompasseth all created things. Fear God, and follow not your idle fancies. Nay, rather follow the bidding of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Wise.