

THE TABLETS OF VISITATION

*A Select Compilation from the Sacred Writings
of 'Abdu'l-Baha, the Bab and Baha'u'llah*

[for practical use and personal application]

Oneness of the Two Worlds

The unity of humanity as taught by Baha'u'llah refers not only to men still in the flesh, but to all human beings, whether embodied or disembodied. Not only all men now living on the earth, but all in the spiritual world as well, are parts of one and the same organism and these two parts are intimately dependent, one on the other. Spiritual communion one with the other, far from being impossible or unnatural, is constant and inevitable. Those whose spiritual faculties are as yet undeveloped are unconscious of this vital connection, but as one's faculties develop, communications with those beyond the veil gradually become more conscious and definite. To the Prophets and saints this spiritual communion is as familiar and real as are ordinary vision and conversation to the rest of mankind.

'Abdu'l-Baha says:

The visions of the Prophets are not dreams; no, they are spiritual discoveries and have reality. They say, for example: "I saw a person in a certain form, and I said such a thing, and he gave such an answer." This vision is in the world of wakefulness, and not in that of sleep. Nay, it is a spiritual discovery...

... Among spiritual souls there are spiritual understandings, discoveries, a communion which is purified from imagination and fancy, an association which is sanctified from time and place. So it is written in the Gospel that on Mount Tabor, Moses and Elias came to Christ, and it is evident that this was not a material meeting. It was a spiritual condition. ...

... (Communications such as) these are real, and produce wonderful effects in the minds and thoughts of men, and cause their hearts to be attracted. (*Some Answered Questions*).

(Excerpt from *Baha'u'llah and the New Era*)

TABLET OF THE POWERS

*(Answer to Question of a Physician
regarding
the sympathetic nervous system
of the human organism.)*

O Thou who art Conscious!

At last thou didst learn of the path of salvation and didst find the straight way. Now remain firm that thou mayest attain confirmation and victory.

The powers of the sympathetic nerve are neither entirely physical nor 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 normal.

When the material world and the divine world are well co-related, 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.

The exposition is brief. Ponder and thou shalt understand the meaning. Although, on account of lack of time, the answer is short, by close reflection it shall be made long.

THE TABLET OF THE SPEEDY RECOVERY

--'Abdu'l-Baha--

O Thou who art supplicating unto the Kingdom of God!

Rest assured in the mercy of thy Lord: Be rejoiced for my remembering thee! Gladden thyself by the appearance of the Kingdom of God! Be attracted by the fragrance of God and call out: "Ya Baha El-ABHA!"--from the depths of Thy heart with all meekness and supplication, attracted by the Fire of the Love of God. (Then anoint or rub all the parts of the body.)

Verily, I say unto thee: If thou attainest the Condition we demonstrate to thee (i.e., if thou followest the directions given) be confident in **The Speedy Recovery** through the favor of God.

TABLET OF THE WAY
(aka *Risalah fi's-Suluk ila Allah*)
--The Bab--

*“This is the Love of the Family of God which is the same as the Love of God...four divine signs appearing from the radiant self-manifestation of the Family of God in you and in your soul. Whenever these four signs are remembered within you and your heart is illumined, and your soul stirred, and your spirit moved and **your body quakes with longing**, then you are truly among the people of paradise and the companions of the Commander of the Faithful, upon him be peace...the Way of your Lord made smooth for Thee.”*

IN THE NAME of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Be steadfast, O seeker of piety, in the station of affirming the divine unity. As God, exalted be He, has said: “As for those who say ‘Our Lord is God’ then continue steadfast, the angels descend upon them saying ‘fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which ye were promised!’” (Q. 41:30; cf. 46:13).

Know ye that “the paths to God are as numerous as the breaths of the creatures” yet, there is no Soul but One and there is no Religion but the One Religion, and it is the Cause of God. And Our Command is but a Single Act!

So set Thou Thy face steadily to the True Faith--the Nature made by God--in which He has made men. There is no altering God’s Creation.[†]

Verily, Religion is supported by four pillars:

- 1) Affirming the Divine Unity (*tawhid*)
- 2) Prophethood (*nubuwwa*)
- 3) Guardianship (*walaya*), and
- 4) The Community of True Believers (*shi’a*)

These are four gates, none of which is of any use without the others.

[†] “Say: Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. Nature is God’s Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise. Were anyone to affirm that it is the Will of God as manifested in the world of being, no one should question this assertion. It is endowed with a power whose reality men of learning fail to grasp. Indeed a man of insight can perceive naught therein save the effulgent splendour of Our Name, the Creator. Say: This is an existence which knoweth no decay, and Nature itself is lost in bewilderment before its revelations, its compelling evidences and its effulgent glory which have encompassed the universe” (Baha’u’llah, *Lawh-i-Hikmat*).

And all of this is the Face of God which will never perish. And this is the Love of the Family of God which is the same as the Love of God. This is the Hidden Treasure to which the Prophet, upon Him and His family be peace, openly alluded when He said: "Above each good is another good until one loves Us, and when one loves Us there is no good higher."

So Love (*hubb*), Beloved (*habib*), Lover (*muhibb*), and The One Who is the Object of Love (*mahbub*) are four divine signs appearing from the radiant self-manifestation of the family of God in you and in your soul. Whenever these four signs are remembered within you and your heart is illumined, and your soul stirred, and your spirit moved and **your body quakes with longing**, then you are truly among the people of paradise and the companions of the Commander of the Faithful, upon him be peace.

Indeed, at such a time you are in conformity with the True Religion and the True Balance and the obvious and clear WAY (*al-sirat*). Above this station there is no good.

Thus one ascends unto the abode of the permanence of God.

There is no end to the love of God and no finish.

This is the guiding principle (*qtub*[‡]) of the search.

There can be no question, the Way of God (*sharia/torah*) in its entirety is one method in the quest of the servant for his Lord, but it must be according to the guiding principle (*qtub*) and goal as I have described.

As for the road to attaining *the guiding principle*--know that attainment to the station of your own sign is attainment to your Lord. And this is the station of pure piety towards God, exalted be He, as when one of the prophets asked of God, praised be He, "How can we attain to Thee?" God, may He be exalted, said, "Cast away Thyself and rise to Me."

And this is why the station of the novices is conditional upon denying the self what it passionately desires and forcing upon it what it detests because there is no veil more base for the servant than his own self.

By God! If you struggle against your self you will by and by send it to the station of nearness and remembrance and intimacy in the shade of your Beloved and adore Him above all else, to the extent that even if you were cut to shreds you would not be negligent of His station. Because, the knower is he whose heart is with God; such a one has no speech, thought, nor act except in, by, with and about God, exalted be He.

Neglect not your personal struggle (*ijtihad*) and thereby forfeit Thy portion in this world but do Thou good as God has been good to Thee.

And if you are neglectful it will be your great loss on the Day of the Return and you will say: "Ah! Woe is me!--in that I neglected my duty towards God!" (Q. 39:56).

[‡] Lit. "Axis of Love." See also Baha'u'llah 7 & 8 Valleys for the "Science of the Love of God."

So pass on whither we have been ordered and fear not the reproaches of those who find fault. This is the Grace of God which He will bestow on whom He pleaseth and God is the Owner of All Grace and the All-Knowing.

Flee from whatever distracts you from God. Indeed such is a deadly poison which will consume you in flames though you be unaware. Nay were you to know with Certainty of mind--you would be aware--you shall certainly see "Hell-fire." Again you shall see it with "Certainty of Sight" (Q. 102:5-7).

It is incumbent upon you to abandon the world and all that is in it. Indeed, it is the chief of all evils. And in your quest do not linger in any one station. Thus a dog of the Jews is better than the people of the marketplace because the people of the marketplace are the people of spiritual torpor. Verily, this lingering is the source of that negligence which bars access to God.

Verily, the world and the hereafter are two spiritual states. If you turn towards God, exalted be He, then you are in paradise and if you are occupied with your self then you are in hell and in the world. Therefore understand these allusions and sever thyself from all unworthy habits and lusts. Endure patiently the alienation of people and the blame of the companion and the *schdenfreude* of the enemy from among family and offspring.

And when you have begun your quest according to this Method of search, then the gate of God will open to your soul and you will request entrance into the realm of the holy one. For the people of insight these subtle allusions will suffice:

"Rend the veils of glory and allusions and efface the idle fancies and rend the veils and be attracted to the exclusive unity--the quality of affirming the Divine Unity until the light of dawn shines forth from" the sun of Thy reality and you enter the City of Unity while its people are unaware "and extinguish the lamp" of everything that has veiled you from God, exalted be He, so that you will attain to the praised station that God, exalted be He, has promised the people who glorify God at night--that is to say the turning towards the absolute Divine Unity in the midst of intense darkness, as in the verse: "It may be that Thy Lord will raise Thee up to a praiseworthy station."

And this **Tablet of the Way of Search**, is kept brief for those possessed of insight and in it is that which will be sufficient for the pure amongst the affirmers of the Divine Unity. The particulars have been fully written about by my mentor, my support, my teacher, the pilgrim Sayyid Kazim al-Rashti, may God lengthen his life and bring forth from it good results. So seek the Way of your Lord made smooth for Thee: "There cometh forth from their bellies a drink diverse of hues, wherein is healing for mankind and a mercy; while the oppressors increase only in ruin" (Q. 16:69).

TABLET OF PURE DELIVERANCE

--'Abdu'l-Baha--

“When she perceived that Baha’u’llah was to raise another call and shine forth with another radiance, she became even more enkindled and reached a state that can hardly be described. She forsook all patience and composure and well-nigh rent asunder the veil of concealment. Night and day she would at turns speak forth and cry out, laugh aloud, and weep bitterly...”

Question: Can you provide An account of Tahirih’s Deliverance from Qazvin, her arrival in Tihiran, her departure for Badasht, and the events that transpired there?

Answer: In brief, what happened is the following. Those were the early days of the Cause and no one was informed of the divine teachings. All followed the law of the Qur’an and regarded warfare, retribution, and retaliation as permissible. In Qazvin, Hāji Mulla Taqī[§] launched an attack from the pulpit and condemned those two resplendent stars, Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Aḥsa’i and Siyyid Kazim-i-Rashti. He cursed and reviled them vehemently, saying: “This affair of the Bab, which is unmitigated error, is a hellish fire that has blazed forth from the grave of Shaykh Aḥmad and Siyyid Kazim.” In sum, he uttered the most brazen words and repeatedly hurled insults and invective at them.

A believer from Shiraz^{**} was present at his sermon and heard it with his own ears. As he was unaware of the divine teachings that were yet to be promulgated and the principles upon which the religion of God was to be established, he concluded that it behoved him to act according to the law of the Qur’an, and thus he set out to settle the score. He went before dawn to the mosque of the said Hāji Mulla Taqī and concealed himself in an alcove. When at dawn Hāji Mulla Taqī came to the mosque, that individual stabbed him in the back and in the mouth with a spear-tipped cane. Hāji Mulla Taqī fell to the ground and his assailant fled. When the people arrived, they saw the cleric lying dead.

A great tumult erupted and throughout the city a hue and cry was raised. The dignitaries of the town decided in concert that the assassins were Shaykh Rasul-i-‘Arab and two other individuals, whom they viewed as being among the associates of Tahirih. They immediately arrested these three individuals, and Tahirih herself was subjected to severe restrictions. When that man from Shiraz saw that others had been apprehended in his place, he felt it unfit to remain silent and came of his own accord to the seat of the government to declare that Shaykh Rasul and his friends were entirely innocent of the wrongful accusations levelled against them, and that he himself was the murderer. He described in full detail what had transpired, and confessed, saying: “These people are innocent: Set them free, for I am the guilty one and it is I who must be punished.” They arrested him but kept the others captive.

Briefly, they brought these four people from Qazvin to Tihiran. No matter how much that man from Shiraz protested that it was he who was guilty and that the others were entirely innocent—explaining that he had committed the crime because the victim had openly cursed and reviled his

[§] The uncle and father-in-law of Tahirih.

^{**} Mulla ‘Abdu’llah; see *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 276.

master from the pulpit and that, outraged and unable to contain himself, he had therefore stabbed him in the mouth with a spearhead—no one listened. To the contrary, Ḥaji Mulla Taqi’s son clamoured before the ministers of the government for the death of all four. Ṣadru’l-‘Ulama, who was the head of the clergy, sought an audience with the Shah and said: “Ḥaji Mulla Taqi was an illustrious man, highly renowned in the eyes of all and deeply revered by the people of Qazvin. In avenging the murder of such a man, a single individual is of no consequence. All four men must be turned over to the heirs of Mulla Taqi and delivered to Qazvin, that they may be executed in that city and that its inhabitants may thus be placated.” Out of regard for Ṣadru’l-‘Ulama and the people of Qazvin, the Shah gave word that all four could be executed.

The man from Shiraz, seeing that the others had not been released in spite of his own arrest, escaped on a snowy night and went to the house of Riḍa Khan. Together they made a pact and departed for Shaykh Ṭabarsi, where they both met with martyrdom. As to Shaykh Rasul and his friends, they were taken to Qazvin, where the populace fell upon them and killed them in the most horrendous manner.

As a result, Ṭahirih met with the greatest hardship. No one would associate with her, and all her relatives—even her husband and two sons—showed the greatest enmity and would oppress and revile her. Baha’u’llah dispatched Aqa Hadiy-i-Qazvini from Ṭihiran and, by an elaborate stratagem, arranged for Ṭahirih to be rescued from Qazvin and brought directly to the private quarters of His house. At first no one knew of this, but when some within the inner circle of the believers were informed, they came to see her. I was a child, sitting on her lap and being held in her arms. The curtain was drawn, and those believers were seated in an adjoining room while she was speaking. The purport of her discourse, which was supported by a range of arguments, as well as by the Qur’an and the traditions of the Prophet, was that in every age an illustrious and distinguished Individual must be the focal Centre of the circle of guidance, the Pole Star of the firmament of the most excellent Law of God, and a perspicuous Leader; that all may defer to Him; and that in this day that illustrious and distinguished Individual is the Bab, Who has manifested Himself. Although her speech was eloquent, yet when she perceived that Baha’u’llah was to raise another call and shine forth with another radiance, she became even more enkindled and reached a state that can hardly be described. She forsook all patience and composure and well-nigh rent asunder the veil of concealment. Night and day she would at turns speak forth and cry out, laugh aloud, and weep bitterly.

Later Baha’u’llah sent her with a number of believers towards Badasht. Their first stop was a beautiful and verdant garden. Ṭahirih and the friends arrived there and were later joined by Baha’u’llah, Who rested the night there. In the morning He sent Ṭahirih and the friends with ample provisions to Badasht. After a few days, Baha’u’llah Himself went there. When He reached Badasht, Quddus had returned from Khurasan and he, too, came to Badasht, but he remained concealed.

In Badasht there was a field with a stream running through it and gardens to either side. Quddus remained concealed in one of the gardens, and Ṭahirih resided in the other. A tent had been pitched for Baha’u’llah on that field, and the other believers were also housed in tents erected on the same field. In the evenings Baha’u’llah, Quddus, and Ṭahirih would meet. Baha’u’llah made

a solemn agreement with them that the truth of the Cause would be proclaimed at Badasht, but no specific day was designated.

Then, by chance, Baha'u'llah fell ill. As soon as he was informed, Quddus emerged from his concealment and entered Baha'u'llah's tent. Tahirih sent a message saying: "Either bring Baha'u'llah to the garden where I reside or I will come myself." Quddus said: "Baha'u'llah is unwell and cannot come", which was a signal. Tahirih, seizing upon the opportunity, arose and, unveiled, came forth from the garden. She proceeded towards the tent of Baha'u'llah crying out and proclaiming: "I am the Trumpet-blast; I am the Bugle-call!"—which are two of the signs of the Day of Resurrection mentioned in the Qur'an. Calling out in this fashion, she entered the tent of Baha'u'llah. No sooner had she entered than Baha'u'llah instructed the believers to recite the Surih of the Event from the Qur'an, a Surih that describes the upheaval of the Day of Resurrection.

In such wise was the Day of Resurrection proclaimed. The believers were seized with such fear and terror that some fled, others remained bewildered and dumbfounded, and still others wept and lamented. Some were so dismayed that they fell ill, and Hāji Mulla Isma'il was so overcome with fear and terror that he cut his own throat. But after a few days, peace and composure were regained and the confusion and anxiety were dispelled. Most of those who had fled became steadfast again, and the episode of Badasht drew to a close.

THE TABLET OF DIVINE JUSTICE

--Baha'u'llah--

*“He shall give permission for attaining unto His presence as He willeth.
He, verily, is the Mighty, the Unrestrained.”*

O ALI! GIVE EAR to the Answers that have streamed forth from the Pen of God addressing Thy supplications:

Thou hast implored Us to preserve securely Thy love for thy Lord. We beseech God to protect you from the evil designs of Satan and to cause Thee to enter the seat of safety and security, beneath the shadow of His NAME, the All-Merciful. There is none other God save Him, the Mighty, the All-Glorified.

And Thou hast beseeched Us to protect Thee from the evil of the oppressors. Spread not disorder on earth after it hath been well-ordered, that haply the tyranny of contumacious oppressors may not overtake thee. Verily, shouldst thou spread disorder, *Thou wouldst Thyself* become a tyrant; and shouldst Thou become an oppressor, it behooveth God to set another tyrant over Thee. **This is Divine Justice**, would that Thou might perceive it.

And Thou hast beseeched God to give Thee the means by which men wage war against one another, that by such means Thou mayest render victorious thy Lord. Give ear and hearken! We, verily, have forbidden the rule of the sword and spear as an aid to our Cause and substituted for it the power born of the words proceeding out of the mouths of the people. He is He whose help is implored by all men.

And Thou hast implored Us to raise in Thee the courage of a lion. Know, verily, that We have made the hearts of those who have become detached from the world and have turned toward the court of My NAME, el-ABHA, to be as strong as brass—in such wise that nothing that is created between the heavens and the earth can frighten them. They are the lions of the forest of might and power. God hath constrained them with **the Chains of Purity**. Should it be His wish, He will free them by His command, and through them He shall conquer all who are in heaven and on earth. Verily. He hath power over all things.

And Thou hast asked that We make Thee truly unconstrained in Thy desire to attain the Presence of God, in such wise that whenever Thou chooseth Thou wouldst be free to journey towards the Court of Holiness. Know thou that, verily, by this request Thou hast regarded Thyself a partner of Thy Lord. He alone is the Sovereign, the Unconstrained. He hath not taken, nor will ever take, a partner unto Himself. He shall give permission for attaining unto His presence as He willeth. He, verily, is the Mighty, the Unrestrained.

TABLET OF VISITATION OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHA

*(This prayer, revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Baha,
is read at His Shrine. It is also used in private prayer.)*

*Whoso reciteth this prayer with lowliness and fervor
will bring gladness and joy to the heart of this Servant;
it will be even as meeting Him face to face.*

He is the All-Glorious!

O God, my God! Lowly and tearful, I raise my suppliant hands to Thee and cover my face in the dust of that Threshold of Thine, exalted above the knowledge of the learned, and the praise of all that glorify Thee. Graciously look upon Thy servant, humble and lowly at Thy door, with the glances of the eye of Thy mercy, and immerse him in the Ocean of Thine eternal grace.

Lord! He is a poor and lowly servant of Thine, enthralled and imploring Thee, captive in Thy hand, praying fervently to Thee, trusting in Thee, in tears before Thy face, calling to Thee and beseeching Thee, saying:

O Lord, my God! Give me Thy grace to serve Thy loved ones, strengthen me in my servitude to Thee, illumine my brow with the light of adoration in Thy court of holiness, and of prayer to Thy kingdom of grandeur. Help me to be selfless at the heavenly entrance of Thy gate, and aid me to be detached from all things within Thy holy precincts. Lord! Give me to drink from the chalice of selflessness; with its robe clothe me, and in its ocean immerse me. Make me as dust in the pathway of Thy loved ones, and grant that I may offer up my soul for the earth ennobled by the footsteps of Thy chosen ones in Thy path, O Lord of Glory in the Highest.

With this prayer doth Thy servant call Thee, at dawntide and in the night-season. Fulfill his heart's desire, O Lord! Illumine his heart, gladden his bosom, kindle his light, that he may serve Thy Cause and Thy servants.

Thou art the Bestower, the Pitiful, the Most Bountiful, the Gracious, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

THE TABLET OF VISITATION

(This Tablet is read at the Shrines of Baha'u'llah and the Bab. It is also frequently used in commemorating Their anniversaries.)

The praise which hath dawned from Thy most august Self, and the glory which hath shone forth from Thy most effulgent Beauty, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art the Manifestation of Grandeur, and the King of Eternity, and the Lord of all who are in heaven and on earth! I testify that through Thee the sovereignty of God and His dominion, and the majesty of God and His grandeur, were revealed, and the Day-Stars of ancient splendour have shed their radiance in the heaven of Thine irrevocable decree, and the Beauty of the Unseen hath shone forth above the horizon of creation. I testify, moreover, that with but a movement of Thy Pen Thine injunction "Be Thou" hath been enforced, and God's hidden Secret hath been divulged, and all created things have been called into being, and all the Revelations have been sent down.

I bear witness, moreover, that through Thy beauty the beauty of the Adored One hath been unveiled, and through Thy face the face of the Desired One hath shone forth, and that through a word from Thee Thou hast decided between all created things, causing them who are devoted to Thee to ascend unto the summit of glory, and the infidels to fall into the lowest abyss.

I bear witness that he who hath known Thee hath known God, and he who hath attained unto Thy presence hath attained unto the presence of God. Great, therefore, is the blessedness of him who hath believed in Thee, and in Thy signs, and hath humbled himself before Thy sovereignty, and hath been honoured with meeting Thee, and hath attained the good-pleasure of Thy will, and circled around Thee, and stood before Thy throne. Woe betide him that hath transgressed against Thee, and hath denied Thee, and repudiated Thy signs, and gainsaid Thy sovereignty, and risen up against Thee, and waxed proud before Thy face, and hath disputed Thy testimonies, and fled from Thy rule and Thy dominion, and been numbered with the infidels whose names have been inscribed by the fingers of Thy behest upon Thy holy Tablets.

Waft, then, unto me, O my God and my Beloved, from the right hand of Thy mercy and Thy loving-kindness, the holy breaths of Thy favours, that they may draw me away from myself and from the world unto the courts of Thy nearness and Thy presence. Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou, truly, hast been supreme over all things.

The remembrance of God and His praise, and the glory of God and His splendour, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art His Beauty! I bear witness that the eye of creation hath never gazed upon one wronged like Thee. Thou wast immersed all the days of Thy life beneath an ocean of tribulations. At one time Thou wast in chains and fetters; at another Thou wast threatened by the sword of Thine enemies. Yet, despite all this, Thou didst enjoin upon all men to observe what had been prescribed unto Thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

May my spirit be a sacrifice to the wrongs Thou didst suffer, and my soul be a ransom for the adversities Thou didst sustain. I beseech God, by Thee and by them whose faces have been illumined with the splendours of the light of Thy countenance, and who, for love of Thee, have observed all whereunto they were bidden, to remove the veils that have come in between Thee

and Thy creatures, and to supply me with the good of this world and the world to come. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Compassionate.

Bless Thou, O Lord my God, the Divine Lote-Tree and its leaves, and its boughs, and its branches, and its stems, and its offshoots, as long as Thy most excellent titles will endure and Thy most august attributes will last. Protect it, then, from the mischief of the aggressor and the hosts of tyranny. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. Bless Thou, also, O Lord my God, Thy servants and Thy handmaidens who have attained unto Thee. Thou, truly, art the All-Bountiful, Whose grace is infinite. No God is there save Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.