

Additional Tablets, Extracts and Talks

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Convey warmest, most loving greetings to Mark Tobey on my behalf, and heartfelt affection to Marguerite Bull.¹ What a sacred task is hers, serving helpless children! I ask God to assist her.

As for thee, obey the Convention,² travel for a time, and teach. After that, work to perfect thine art. For it is incumbent upon thee both to obey the Convention, and to perfect thine art.

I rejoice to hear that thou takest pains with thine art, for in this wonderful new age, art is worship. The more thou strivest to perfect it, the closer wilt thou come to God. What bestowal could be greater than this, that one’s art should be even as the act of worshipping the Lord? That is to say, when thy fingers grasp the paintbrush, it is as if thou wert at prayer in the Temple.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Shouldst thou recite any of the revealed prayers, and seek assistance from God with thy face turned towards Him, and implore Him with devotion and fervour, thy need will be answered.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God!

O thou dear handmaid of God!

Thy letter dated 6 April 1906 hath been received. Thou hast written that Mrs. Mann hath regained her health. God be praised, this daughter of the Kingdom hath attained unto spiritual health. A disaster to the body, when spiritual health is present, is of no importance. That is the main thing. God be thanked, she hath attained that great bestowal; she hath taken on immortal life.

It is to be regretted, however, that her husband is still wrapped in the veils of his idle imaginings. If her dear daughter Margaret be trained according to the instructions of God, she will grow to be a peerless plant in the garden of the heart. It is incumbent upon the father to choose for his daughter the glory that dieth not. Nevertheless, this is up to him; he may educate her in any way he desireth.

As to what thou didst ask regarding the history of the philosophers: history, prior to Alexander of Greece, is extremely confused, for it is a fact that only after Alexander did history become an orderly and systematized discipline. One cannot, for this reason, rely upon traditions and reported historical events that have come down from before the days of Alexander. This is a matter thoroughly established, in the view of all authoritative historians. How many a historical account was taken as fact in the eighteenth century, yet the opposite was proved true in the nineteenth. No reliance, then, can be placed upon the traditions and reports of historians which antedate Alexander, not even with regard to ascertaining the lifetimes of leading individuals.

Wherefore ye should not be surprised that the Tablet of Wisdom is in conflict with the historical accounts. It behoveth one to reflect a while on the great diversity of opinion among the historians, and their contradictory accounts; for the historians of East and West are much at odds, and the Tablet of Wisdom was written in accordance with certain histories of the East.

Furthermore, the Torah, held to be the most ancient of histories, existeth today in three separate versions: the Hebrew, considered authentic by the Jews and the Protestant clergy; the Greek Septuagint, which is used as authoritative in the Greek and other Eastern churches; and the Samaritan Torah, the standard authority for that people. These three versions differ greatly, one from another, even with regard to the lifetimes of the most celebrated figures.

In the Hebrew Torah, it is recorded that from Noah's flood until the birth of Abraham there was an interval of two hundred and ninety-two years. In the Greek, that time-span is given as one thousand and seventy-two years, while in the Samaritan, the recorded span is nine hundred and forty-two years. Refer to the commentary by Henry Westcott,³ for tables are supplied therein which show the discrepancies among the three Torahs as to the birthdates of a number of the descendants of Shem, and thou wilt see how greatly the versions differ one from another.

Moreover, according to the text of the Hebrew Torah, from the creation of Adam until Noah's flood the elapsed time is recorded as one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years, while in the Greek Torah the interval is given as two thousand two hundred and sixty-two years, and in the Samaritan text, the same period is said to have lasted one thousand three hundred and seven years.

Reflect thou now over the discrepancies among these three Torahs. The case is indeed surprising. The Jews and Protestants belittle the Greek Torah, while to the Greeks, the Hebrew version is spurious, and the Samaritans deny both the Hebrew and the Greek versions.

Our purpose is to show that even in Scriptural history, the most outstanding of all histories, there are contradictions as to the time when the great ones lived, let alone as to dates related to others. And furthermore, learned societies in Europe are continually revising the existing records, both of East and West. In spite of this, how can the confused accounts of peoples dating from before Alexander be compared with the Holy Text of God? If any scholar expresses astonishment, let him be surprised at the discrepancies in Scriptural history.

Nevertheless, Holy Writ is authoritative, and with it no history of the world can compare, for experience hath shown that after investigation of the facts and a thorough study of ancient records and corroborative evidence, all have referred back to the Holy Scriptures. The most important thing is to establish the validity of God's universal Manifestation; once His claim proveth true, then whatsoever He may choose to say is right and correct.

The histories prior to Alexander, which were based on oral accounts current among the people, were put together later on. There are great discrepancies among them, and certainly they can never hold their own against Holy Writ. It is an accepted fact among historians themselves that these histories were compiled after Alexander, and that prior to his time history was transmitted by word of mouth. Note how extremely confused was the history of Greece, so much so that to this day there is no agreement on the dates related to the life of Homer, Greece's far-famed poet. Some even maintain that Homer never existed at all, and that the name is a fabrication.

A letter hath been addressed to Mr. Sprague, thou wilt find it enclosed.

It is my hope that through the favour and grace of the Abhá Beauty, thou wilt fully recover thy health, and engage in serving the Cause with all thy might. I am aware that thou art much afflicted, and in extreme distress; but if we taste a drop from affliction's cup, the Blessed Beauty drank down a sea of anguish, and once we call this to mind, then every hardship turneth into peaceful rest, and toil into merciful bliss. Then will a draught of agony be but

refreshing wine, and the tyrant's wound only a friend's most gentle balm. Greetings be unto thee, and praise.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Know thou that before maturity man liveth from day to day and comprehendeth only such matters as are superficial and outwardly obvious. However, when he cometh of age he understandeth the realities of things and the inner truths. Indeed, in his comprehension, his feelings, his deductions and his discoveries, every day of his life after maturity is equal to a year before it.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Know ye that the Torah is what was revealed in the Tablets unto Moses, may peace be upon Him, and in that which He was commanded to do. But the stories are historical narratives and were written after Moses, may peace be upon Him.... The glorious Book, the Mighty Decree, is what was in the Tablets which Moses, upon Him be peace, brought from Mt. Sinai, and that which He proclaimed unto the Children of Israel, in accordance with the explicit text of those Tablets.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

It is the wish of my heart and soul that the Sun of the divine heavens will shine with such splendour and beauty in that country that India will become a rose-garden.... India will sweeten the palates with delectable sweetness, will mingle ambergris and musk, and mix milk with honey.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Paris
The Friends of God,
Upon them rest the glory of God, the All-Glorious!

He is God!

O loved ones of 'Abdu'l-Bahá!

Praise be to God! The fragrances of holiness are spread abroad. The pearls of bounty are scattered everywhere. The light of guidance is resplendent. The morning-star of the Concourse on High ascendeth. The cloud of mercy raineth down. The sun of bestowal blazeth and dazzleth. The wind of providence bloweth, and the fragrances of the Abhá Paradise nourish souls in the North and South. The East is illumined, and the West scented with roses. The world is perfumed with musk. Blessed is he who hath illumined his eyes by beholding these splendours and whose soul hath become a garden through inhaling this musk-scented breeze.

O loved ones of God! Now is the time to be drunk with the cup of the Covenant. Rend your garments in love for the beauty of the All-Merciful. In the banquet of the Covenant seize ye the chalice of divine knowledge. Drunk and yearning, raise up a song of the purity and sanctity of the Living, the Almighty God, till East and West are bewitched, and North and South set ablaze.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

O flame of the love of God! The ray must shed light and the sun must rise; the full moon must shine and the star must gleam. Since thou art a ray, beseech thou the Lord to enable thee to give illumination and enlightenment, to brighten the horizons and to consume the world with the fire of the love of God. I hope that thou mayest attain such a station, nay, surpass it. Upon thee be His glory.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

It may be that letters addressed to the women believers do indeed contain certain passages written by way of encouragement, but the purpose of such passages is to show that, in this wondrous Dispensation, certain women have outshone certain men—not that all women have excelled all men! The members of the Spiritual Assembly should do all they can to give encouragement to the women. In this Dispensation one should not think in terms of “men” and “women”: all are under the shadow of the Word of God and, as they strive more diligently, so shall their reward be greater—be they men or women or the frailest of people.... As for the large number of Tablets addressed to women enjoining them to teach the Cause: since the letters arriving in the Holy Land come for the most part from women, and only rarely from men, it is natural that women should be written to more frequently than men....

As to thy question: “To whom should we turn?”—turn thou to the Ancient Beauty. God willing, a copy of His blessed portrait will in due course be despatched to thee so that when offering prayer thou mayest turn thyself in spirit towards that Holy Likeness, and not towards some mere figment of the imagination. Know thou, however, that at no time should His blessed portrait be hung in the *Mashriqu’l-Adhkár*.

As regards the question of young children and of weak, defenseless souls who are afflicted at the hands of the oppressor, in this a great wisdom is concealed. The question is one of cardinal importance, but briefly it may be stated that in the world to come a mighty recompense awaiteth such souls. Much, indeed, might be said upon this theme, and upon how the afflictions that they bear in life become a cause for them of such an outpouring of Divine mercy and bestowal as is preferable to a hundred thousand earthly comforts and to a world of growth and development in this transitory abode; but, if possible, God willing, all this will be explained to thee in detail and by word of mouth when thou arrivest here.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Know thou that the distinction between male and female is an exigency of the physical world and hath no connection with the spirit; for the spirit and the world of the spirit are sanctified above such exigencies, and wholly beyond the reach of such changes as befall the physical body in the contingent world. In former ages, men enjoyed ascendancy over women because bodily

might reigned supreme and the spirit was subject to its dominion. In this radiant age, however, since the power of the spirit hath transcended that of the body and assumed its ascendancy, authority and dominion over the human world, this physical distinction hath ceased to be of consequence; and, as the sway and influence of the spirit have become apparent, women have come to be the full equals of men. Today, therefore, there is no respect or circumstance in which a person's sex provideth grounds for the exercise of either discrimination or favour.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O ye sons and daughters of the Kingdom!

Your letter dated September 30 of this year hath been received, and from the contents it became clear and evident that the fire of the love of God hath burst into a flame in that region — a flame that can illumine the whole world and transform the East and the West into a field for the knights of the Kingdom.

Consider how all the peoples of the world are slumbering upon the couch of negligence, but praise be to God, ye have been awakened. All men remain sunk in heedlessness, but ye have become quick of apprehension. They are deprived of the blessings of the Kingdom, but ye are among the well-favoured. Neither the crow nor the raven can take part in the delights of a sparkling rose-garden; the charm and perfection of the rose are as nourishment to the impassioned nightingale endowed with a melodious voice. The realm of the Kingdom is like the fountain of life and ye are as the fish, sore athirst and restless.

Render ye thanks unto God, inasmuch as in the Day of the advent of the Kingdom ye have drawn so nigh unto His court and are so greatly favoured at the Threshold of the loving Lord. Therefore it behoveth you to strive with heart and soul so that the human world may shine resplendent, that the basis of hatred and antagonism may be wiped out from the earth and that all mankind may live together in unity and harmony, with the utmost love and fellowship.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

In ancient times the people of America were, through their northern regions, close to Asia, that is, separated from Asia by a strait. For this reason, it hath been said that crossing had occurred. There are other signs which indicate communication.

As to places whose people were not informed of the appearance of Prophets, such people are excused. In the Qur'án it hath been revealed: "We will not chastise them if they had not been sent a Messenger."⁴

Undoubtedly in those regions the Call of God must have been raised in ancient times, but it hath been forgotten now.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

The Bayán hath been superseded by the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, except in respect of such laws as have been confirmed and mentioned in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. The Book to which the Bahá'ís turn is the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, not the Bayán.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

I eagerly anticipate the day when New York will become a blessed spot from which the call to steadfastness in the Covenant of God will go forth to every part of the world, thus making that city outstanding from every point of view.

Bless Thou, O King of Kings, the city of New York! Cause the friends there to be kind to one another. Purify their souls and make their hearts to be free and detached. Illumine the world of their consciousness. Exhilarate their spirits and bestow celestial power and confirmation upon them. Establish there a heavenly realm, so that the City of Bahá may prosper and New York be favoured with blessings from the Abhá Kingdom, that this region may become like the all-highest Paradise, may develop into a vineyard of God and be transformed into a heavenly orchard and a spiritual rose-garden.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

The question of economics must commence with the farmer and then be extended to the other classes inasmuch as the number of farmers is far greater than all other classes. Therefore, it is fitting to begin with the farmer in matters related to economics for the farmer is the first active agent in human society. In brief, from among the wise men in every village a board should be set up and the affairs of that village should be under the control of that board. Likewise a general storehouse should be founded with the appointment of a secretary. At the time of the harvest, under the direction of that board, a certain percentage of the entire harvest should be appropriated for the storehouse.

The storehouse has seven revenues: Tithes, taxes on animals, property without an heir, all lost objects found whose owners cannot be traced, one third of all treasure-trove, one third of the produce of all mines, and voluntary contributions.

This storehouse also has seven expenditures:

1. General running expenses of the storehouse, such as the salary of the secretary and the administration of public health.
2. Tithes to the government.
3. Taxes on animals to the government.
4. Costs of running an orphanage.
5. Costs of running a home for the incapacitated.
6. Costs of running a school.
7. Payment of subsidies to provide needed support of the poor.

The first revenue is the tithe. It should be collected as follows: If, for instance, the income of a person is five hundred dollars and his necessary expenses are the same, no tithes will be collected from him. If another's expenses are five hundred dollars while his income is one thousand dollars, one tenth will be taken from him, for he hath more than his needs; if he giveth one tenth of the surplus, his livelihood will not be adversely affected. If another's expenses are one thousand dollars, and his income is five thousand dollars, as he hath four thousand dollars surplus he will be required to give one and a half tenths. If another person hath necessary expenses of one thousand dollars, but his income is ten thousand dollars, from him two tenths will be required for his surplus represents a large sum. But if the necessary expenses of another person are four or five thousand dollars, and his income one hundred

thousand, one fourth will be required from him. On the other hand, should a person's income be two hundred, but his needs absolutely essential for his livelihood be five hundred dollars, and provided he hath not been remiss in his work or his farm hath not been blessed with a harvest, such a one must receive help from the general storehouse so that he may not remain in need and may live in comfort.

A certain amount must be put aside from the general storehouse for the orphans of the village and a certain sum for the incapacitated. A certain amount must be provided from this storehouse for those who are needy and incapable of earning a livelihood, and a certain amount for the village's system of education. And, a certain amount must be set aside for the administration of public health. If anything is left in the storehouse, that must be transferred to the general treasury of the nation for national expenditures.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O ye beloved friends of God and handmaids of the Merciful!

Call ye to mind the blessed Name of our peerless Beloved, the Abhá Beauty, in an uplifting spirit of unbounded ecstasy and delight, then unloose your tongues in His praise in such wise that the realm of the heart may be purged from the woes and sorrows of the world of water and clay, that the great heights of spiritual perception may be unveiled before your eyes, that the glorious signs of His Divine Unity may shine resplendent, a fresh outpouring of His grace may stream forth, and a liberal effusion of celestial confirmations may be vouchsafed unto you.

His Name is indeed the healing medicine for every illness, and imparteth warmth unto those chilled with cold. It is the sovereign remedy and the supreme talisman. It is the source of life in both worlds, and of salvation unto such as have gone astray. Today this hallowed Name serveth as a shield for all mankind, and as a veritable refuge for the children of men. It is the wondrous accent of the Lord of Mercy, and His celestial melody.

Wherefore, O faithful friends, raise ye the triumphal cry of Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá! O ye who yearn after the Beauty of the Almighty! Lift up your faces toward the Supreme Horizon. Rest not, even for a moment. Breathe not a single breath save in remembrance of His love and in recognition of His grace, in the promulgation of His Utterances and the vindication of His Testimonies.

Verily, this is the Magnet of divine confirmations. This is the mighty Force which will surely attract heavenly assistance.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

The Ancient Beauty⁵ — may my life be offered up for His loved ones — did not to outward seeming meet His Holiness, the Exalted One⁶ — may my life be a sacrifice unto Him.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Praise be to God that ye are present in this radiant assemblage and have turned your faces toward the Kingdom of Abhá! That which ye behold is from the grace and bounty of the Blessed Perfection. We are as atoms and He is the Sun of Truth. We are as drops and He is the Most Great Ocean. Poor are we, yet the outpouring of the treasury of the Kingdom is

boundless. Weak are we, yet the confirmation of the Supreme Concourse is abundant. Helpless are we, yet our refuge and shelter is Bahá'u'lláh.

Praise be to God! His signs are evident.
Praise be to God! His light is shining.
Praise be to God! His ocean is surging.
Praise be to God! His radiance is intense.
Praise be to God! His bestowals are abundant.
Praise be to God! His favours are manifest.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Morn of Guidance hath dawned.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of Truth hath shone forth.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The breeze of favour hath wafted.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The showers of the clouds of divine bounty have poured down.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of the supreme horizon hath shed its radiance upon all the world with boundless effulgence.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The hearts of all are in the utmost purity.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! His all-encompassing splendour hath been revealed.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The celestial concourse is astir.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! Zion is rapt in ecstasy.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Kingdom of God is filled with exultation and joy.⁷

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

As for thy question concerning those righteous souls who passed away ere they heard the Call of this Revelation, know thou that those who ascended unto God ere they heard this Call, but who followed the precepts of Christ and walked in the Straight Path — these verily attained, after ascending to the Divine Kingdom, unto the Refulgent Light.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

The residence is under all conditions the property of the first-born son, irrespective of whether or not the deceased should have left behind him other property as well. The first-born son receiveth, moreover, his share of the remainder of the estate. This is that which God hath prescribed. The testator is, however, at liberty while still alive to dispose of his property in whatsoever manner he seeth fit. Likewise, the first-born son must himself, for the sake of God, take into consideration the other heirs, and be just and fair to them. In truth, it is obligatory for everyone, by the express requirement of the divine text, to draw up a will, so that it may be implemented after he hath passed away. This, verily, is the perspicuous truth. If, God forbid, he disobeyeth the divine command—faileth, that is, to draw up a will—then his estate must be divided up in the stipulated manner.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

As for the story of Adam, the Father of Mankind, which is recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, this requireth explanation and interpretation. By “genesis” is intended a spiritual creation and

heavenly existence; for otherwise the most cursory reflection would be sufficient to convince even a child that this boundless universe, the world of being—this infinite cosmos, this prodigious system, this mighty and primordial workshop—is far more than six thousand years old, as hath in fact been realized in this illumined age by scientists and men of learning, on the basis of decisive proofs and evidences founded on both reason and discovery. In recent times remains have come to light which have been definitely and conclusively established to be more than ten thousand years old. Through the science of geology this hidden secret hath been grasped—that the age of the world surpasseth man’s conception. The one true God hath ever been the Possessor of all Names and Attributes, and the necessary concomitants of these Names and Attributes have likewise ever existed and shall continue to exist throughout eternity. He Who is the “Creator” requireth a creation, while He Who is the “Provider” requireth some object to provide for. A king, to be a king, must have a realm, an army, the insignia of sovereignty, the retinue and entourage of kingship. The sovereignty of God is everlasting; from time immemorial it hath existed, and at no time hath it been suspended. For a king bereft of troops and territory is a person of no consequence; and were One Who is the ‘All-Possessing’ to be entirely destitute, know then that no richer harvest would be reaped from His existence than from a fruitless cypress tree.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

O pilgrim of the Sacred Dust!

Render a myriad thanks unto the All-Glorious, Who hath guided thee on this path and enabled thee to attain the threshold of the Omniscient Lord, to find refuge within the stronghold of His favours, and to obtain that which is the ultimate hope and desire of all His chosen ones.

Now, as thou returnest to Ishqábád, thou must take with thee armfuls of flowers as a gift from the heavenly rose-garden that their sweet scent may perfume the nostrils and stir the senses of the youth. For these lovely youth are the children of the realms above and the tender plants of the all-highest Paradise. They are flowers and fragrant herbs in the garden of certitude, the jasmine and eglantine of the All-Merciful Lord. They have been nursed at the breast of Divine unity and nurtured in the bosom of the wondrous Cause of God. They have become fresh and verdant through the outpourings of the clouds of loving-kindness.

O youth of this century of God! In this new age, this century of the Glorious Lord, ye must be so attracted to the Blessed Beauty and so enthralled by the Beloved of the World that ye may become the embodiments of the truth of this verse:

I am lost, O Love, possessed and dazed,
Love’s fool am I, in all the earth.⁸

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

O ye two pilgrims of the Holy Shrine!

The news of your safe arrival in Paris was received and rejoiced my heart, as did the description of the love and devotion of the friends in Paris, who met you with exceeding joy and radiance, and who show forth the utmost love, faithfulness, and sincerity.

Speak openly of all the signs of the Kingdom of God that ye have witnessed with your own eyes and share with the utmost happiness and exultation all that ye have heard of the divine teachings. I fervently supplicate God to bring assurance to your souls and to raise you up with such steadfastness that each of you may withstand an entire nation. May you become so inebriated with the wine of the love of God that ye may cause your hearers to dance with blissful rapture to the song and melody of the love of God.

This is the time for gladness, the day of joy and exhilaration, for, praised be God, all doors are opened wide through the bounty of the Abhá Beauty. But high endeavour and self-sacrifice are needed and the concentration of one's thoughts is required for the tree of hope to yield its fruit and results to be achieved.

Extract from a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Concerning the question of marriage and the stipulated period between the time of the engagement and the marriage, this is the decisive text of the Book of God and may not be interpreted. In the past, serious difficulties and problems arose when a long period of time elapsed between the engagement and the marriage. Now, according to the text of the Book, when marriage between the parties is arranged, i.e., when the parties become engaged, and it is certain that they will be married, not more than ninety-five days should elapse before the marriage takes place, during which period preparations for the dowry and other affairs may be made. The marriage ceremony must take place on the same night as its consummation, that is, there should be no interval of time between the ceremony and consummation. This is a clear text and is not subject to interpretation, so that the difficulties that arose in the past may not recur on account of interpretation.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O ye two honourable souls!

Your letter was received and its contents noted. My heart was saddened to learn that those two respected persons, who were even as one soul, should now be separated and their affection turned into estrangement.

Although divorce is permissible, yet it is strongly abhorred and condemned in the sight of God. Divorce may only take place when no alternative is left, when the two parties feel aversion for each other and are in torment. Now, if such is the case, perform the divorce. However, after divorce is decided upon, ye must wait for one year for it to be effected. Should affection be renewed during this year of separation, it would be highly pleasing.

The Glory of Glories rest upon you both!

If divorce taketh place, the spiritual love and affection between you should increase, and ye should become like a brother and sister.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

To the esteemed members of the Executive Committee of the Central Organization for a Durable Peace

Your reply, dated 12 June 1920, to my letter was received with the utmost gratitude. God be praised, it testified to the unity of thought and purpose that existeth between us and you, and expressed sentiments of the heart that bear the hallmark of sincere affection.

We Bahá'ís have the greatest affinity for your esteemed organization, and dispatched therefore two distinguished individuals to you in order to forge a strong bond. For in this day the cause of universal peace is of paramount importance amongst all human affairs and is the greatest instrument for securing the very life and felicity of mankind. Bereft of this effulgent reality, humanity can in no wise find true composure or real advancement but will, day by day, sink ever deeper into misery and wretchedness.

This last terrible war hath clearly proven that humanity cannot withstand the effects of modern instruments of warfare. The future can in no wise be compared to the past, for earlier weapons and armaments had but a feeble effect, whilst modern ones can, in a brief span of time, strike at the very roots of the world of humanity and surpass the limits of its endurance.

In this age, therefore, universal peace is like unto the sun, which bestoweth life upon all things, and it is thus incumbent upon all to endeavour in the path of this mighty cause. Now, we indeed share this common goal with you and strive toward it with all our strength, renouncing even our lives, our kindred, and our substance for its sake.

As ye have no doubt heard, in Persia thousands of souls have offered up their lives in this path, and thousands of homes have been laid waste. Despite this, we have in no wise relented, but have continued to endeavour unto this very moment and are increasing our efforts as day followeth day, because our desire for peace is not derived merely from the intellect: It is a matter of religious belief and one of the eternal foundations of the Faith of God. That is why we strive with all our might and, forsaking our own advantage, rest, and comfort, forgo the pursuit of our own affairs; devote ourselves to the mighty cause of peace; and consider it to be the very foundation of the Divine religions, a service to His Kingdom, the source of eternal life, and the greatest means of admittance into the heavenly realm.

Today the benefits of universal peace are recognized amongst the people, and likewise the harmful effects of war are clear and manifest to all. But in this matter, knowledge alone is far from sufficient: A power of implementation is needed to establish it throughout the world. Ye should therefore consider how the compelling power of conscience can be awakened, so that this lofty ideal may be translated from the realm of thought into that of reality. For it is clear and evident that the execution of this mighty endeavour is impossible through ordinary human feelings but requireth the powerful sentiments of the heart to transform its potential into reality.

Indeed, all on earth know that an upright character is praiseworthy and acceptable and that baseness of character is blameworthy and rejected, that justice and fairness are favoured and agreeable whilst cruelty and tyranny are unacceptable and rejected. Notwithstanding this, all people, but for a few, are devoid of a praiseworthy character and bereft of a sense of justice.

The power of conscience is therefore needed, and spiritual sentiments are required, that souls may feel compelled to evince a goodly character. It is our firm belief that the power of implementation in this great endeavour is the penetrating influence of the Word of God and the confirmations of the Holy Spirit.

We are bound to you by the strongest ties of love and unity. We long with heart and soul for the day to arrive when the tabernacle of the oneness of humanity will have been raised in the midmost heart of the world and the banner of universal peace unfurled in all regions. The oneness of humanity must therefore be established, that the edifice of universal peace may be raised in turn.

Your organization, which is a well-wisher of the world of humanity, is highly esteemed in the eyes of the Bahá'ís. Therefore kindly accept our highest regards and keep us ever informed of the progress of the cause of universal peace in Europe through your efforts. We hope that our communications will remain constant.

1 July 1920

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou Divine youth! Thou hast ever been present in my mind, and at all times am I occupied with thy remembrance. The days of our meeting have not been forgotten. Thy countenance and character are ever before my gaze. From the Kingdom of Signs I entreat for thee Divine confirmations, that day by day thou mayest become happier and sweeter, and mayest delight thy palate with the sweetness of the love of God, becoming a cause of the constancy and steadfastness of the precious friends, so that the tree of life may bear a fruit, and the prayers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá may produce an effect.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art attracted to the Beauty of God! On this blessed day, the birthday of the Day-Star of the world, the Resplendent Luminary,⁹ I thought of thee, and penned this festive greeting in order that the heart and soul of that lover of the countenance of the True One, the Beloved of the world, might be cheered and gladdened.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

He is God.

O true friend! Thou art ever before mine eyes, and dearly cherished; before my gaze, and highly respected. There is no mightier bond in the world of being than the attachment of the heart. Even a chain of steel hath not the same degree of strength. Praise be to God, that bond between the friends is firm and solid; is binding, capturing, and concentrating the Perspicuous Light; and is day by day becoming firmer and stronger. Wherefore, be thou happy and assured that thou hast an attachment of heart and soul, and that, beneath the shadow of the Omnipotent One, thou art the object of illimitable favours.

Do thou deliver the enclosed letter to Áqá Músá.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou servant of the True One! Sulphur is the fire of the love of God, and mercury is the quicksilver of the ocean of the knowledge of God. Combine then these twin noble elements, and harmonize and unite these twin soundest pillars, and so obtain the Noblest Stone—that is, the Jewel of Jewels, the Ruby of the Mine of the Kingdom—so that thou mayest discover the Most Great Elixir and find the Alchemy of Truth, and, casting it upon the copper and iron of men's souls, transmute them into purest gold.

Seekest thou the Mystery of Alchemy? It is this! Seekest thou the Inestimable Elixir? It is this! Seekest thou the Philosopher's Stone? It is this! While all else besides this is devoid of fruit or consequence, of benefit or useful outcome.

Heed thou my words: Seek thou this Most Great Elixir of the Kingdom!
The Glory of God rest upon thee.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou respected lady!¹⁰ Thy letter hath arrived. Thou art right in what thou hast written: It is incumbent upon the Bahá'ís to assist thee, for thou wishest well, and thine intention is to promote the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. At this time, however, the war and revolution have come to such a pass that it would be impossible, even in Europe, to make the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh the subject of a dramatic spectacle. All peoples and nations are occupied with bloodshed; nay, naught is to be seen but the flame of war, which hath ascended unto the very height of heaven! At such a time no one hath leisure for theatre-going. Should a certain figure be made the subject of a drama—even though he be among the world's most eminent personages—it would have no great attendance; and even should a few people attend it, their thoughts would be preoccupied with news of the war. For this reason, do thou for the time being set about publishing thy composition; the time for staging it will come. Although the Bahá'ís are distracted, and, for the most part, poorly circumstanced—except for a small number who are well endowed—yet assuredly they will lend thee assistance in the publication of thy book.

As for the dramatic representation of this book in the theatres of Europe, this will, in truth, have a considerable impact. In Iran, however, no representation of this kind will have any impact whatsoever. A prolonged period must pass ere Iran acquireth such readiness. For the moment no Bahá'í theatrical representation is possible, for most people are inimical to the Bahá'ís. Such is the frequency with which, night and day, passion plays and theatrical representations of the Imáms and Prophets of old have been staged, indulging in vast exaggeration—angels, for example, are shown descending from heaven—and relating highly embellished tales, that such representations have been reduced to the level of a mere childish sport, and have in consequence absolutely no effect.

I am hopeful that thy book will be staged in Europe, but at a time when safety and security, peace and tranquillity, prevail.

As for the question of the fruit of thy works: The greatest fruit is the good-pleasure of the Almighty, which is the foundation of eternal glory; the second fruit is illumination of heart and soul, which is the greatest Divine bestowal; the third fruit is renown in both the East and the West, which shall shine forth effulgently in times to come; and the fourth fruit is that thy book shall in future be greatly in demand. I beseech for thee the exaltation of the Kingdom, as I entreat for thee likewise heavenly illumination, nearness to the Court of Grandeur, eternal life, and spiritual effulgence.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou servant of the Sacred Threshold! Thou knowest not what a convulsion there is in these parts! All the people are dismayed and distraught, whilst the townsfolk wander without home or shelter in the mountains and villages; for they are fearful lest the ironclads should of a sudden burst into thunderous action, razing the cities to the ground. In brief, thou art well out of it, and free from all this grim clamour and commotion.

Although, inevitably, there are disturbances in those parts also, yet they cannot be of the same severity as those afflicting these parts; for thou art on the shores of the Caspian Sea, where no state but Russia hath warships, whereas we are on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, where all states have host upon host of fire-scattering destroyers, and the people are fearful lest they should of a sudden launch an attack.

For our part, however—praise be to God!—we are, under the shadow of the loving providence of the Blessed Beauty, occupied day and night, in the utmost tranquillity and assurance, with the protection of the Sacred Threshold; engaged in the remembrance of God; and transported by the utmost fellowship and love.

I beseech for the beloved of God the help of His grace.

A letter hath been received from Isabella Grinevskaya; please find enclosed both the original and the reply, so that—once having perused them—thou mayest send on the latter. If the respected lady wisheth to print and disseminate her book, then, should the beloved of the Lord provide her with some measure of assistance, and extend to her some degree of support, it would be a source of encouragement and stimulation to her.

People are not all on the same level: Some there are who perform their works solely for the sake of God, desiring for their endeavours no other recompense than to draw nigh unto the Threshold of Grandeur—and this is right and proper; yet others there are who belong to that party which is represented as entreating, “Render unto us on earth a favour, and in the world to come a favour likewise.”¹¹ One must deal with people compassionately, for otherwise matters will become fraught with difficulty.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! The news of the ascension of his honour Áqá Músá was a source of grief and sorrow, while the problems caused by his former spouse added further to the despondency thus engendered. That the late Áqá Músá was a Bahá’í is famed throughout the East and West, and known to the government. There is no doubt about the matter...

As for the letters of Áqá Músá that were in the possession of Áqá Mírzá Haydar-‘Alí, since a considerable time hath now elapsed, these have been lost.

The journey thou didst wish to undertake to the regions of the Caucasus, and other lands, in order to proclaim the Word of God is a most blessed enterprise. God willing, thou wilt undertake this journey with the utmost enthusiasm and rapture, joy and exhilaration, and become a cause of the exaltation of the Word of God.

The treatise thou hast composed relating the new ideas to the Divine teachings is very good. The “sharing” and “equality”, however, which are mentioned in the Divine Teachings

denote measures that are undertaken voluntarily;¹² in other words, should anyone of his own free will have mercy on the poor, and with the utmost gladness bestow upon them his wealth, such a person is favoured in the Court of Grandeur. And indeed, many of the loved ones of God have with the utmost joy and gladness bestowed their wealth upon the poor, practising voluntary sharing in the fullest measure—but of their own free will. As for the new thoughts current in some European countries, these have to do with compulsory, not voluntary, dispositions, which are destructive of the body politic, and a cause of chaos and confusion in all lands. By equality and sharing, as set forth in the Divine Teachings, however, is intended those actions which one putteth into effect of his own free will and with a goodly grace; and this is a sign of magnanimity, and a cause of the good ordering of the human world. It would be good if, in the second edition, thou couldst make this point, that the difference lieth in this, that while no one is entitled to covet, or dispose of, the property of others, yet souls who are detached from all save God, for the love of His Beauty have mercy on the poor and expend their substance on the destitute—nay more, with the utmost joy and pleasure bestow their whole wealth, or a part thereof, upon the poor. In other words, in their love for their fellow men they are self-sacrificial, preferring the interests and comfort of the generality of the people to those of a particular group; and this is voluntary, not compulsory, and a sign of magnanimity, not of coercion and violence.

Convey to the well-favoured handmaid of God, Fátimih Khánum,¹³ a most wondrous Abhá greeting....

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

4 July 1919

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! A letter was dispatched some days previously, containing a letter written to the spouse of Áqá Músá; a testimony was likewise composed, which was sent as an enclosure. God willing, they will arrive.

Thou didst write that even in times of hardship the friends are still engaged in teaching. Such indeed is the attribute of the well-favoured, and the characteristic of the sincere: that by no obstacle can they be obstructed, nor by any eventuality can they be deprived; nay rather, under the direst constraint and calamity, they continue to promote the teachings of the Kingdom on high, while under the threat of sword and fetter they raise the cry “How blessed are we!” and “How blissful is our lot!”

The vicissitudes of the age encompass friend and foe alike. It is not the fate of mortal man ever to attain unto tranquillity of heart and soul. For this reason, one must not attach importance to the changes and chances of the fleeting days of life; rather, he should arise to perform whatsoever it behoveth and beseemeth him to do, irrespective of whether he be reposing upon a couch of ease or threatened by the sword of his enemy.

Thou didst write concerning the progress of the friends of Bákú, reporting that in all worldly and heavenly respects they have charted a course of advancement and success, becoming one and all distinguished from all other communities.

As for the small number that have fallen a prey to the wicked-doers, this may be accounted for by the consideration that when the fire of sedition is kindled amid the dry jungle, it is inevitable that some verdant trees too will be consumed.

For this reason I wrote previously that the friends must hold aloof from all confessions in political affairs, and conduct themselves in an impartial manner. They should attend the gatherings of no party, nor seek fellowship with any faction. Praise be to God! Through the preservation of the teachings of the Blessed Beauty, in all parts of the world the friends have remained protected and preserved.

On behalf of these few souls who, by chance, have quaffed the cup of martyrdom—and likewise those souls who have suffered financial loss—fervent prayers and supplications were offered at the Threshold of Oneness, that the abundance of God’s grace might encompass all, and those souls who chanced to be slain might, in the Court of Oneness, be accounted martyrs. Such is the highest hope of this servant.

Áqá Músá—upon whom be the mercy of God, and His Divine good-pleasure—was not successful, during his lifetime, in founding and instituting in Bákú a *Mashriqu’l-Adhkár*; and I too, as thou knowest, accepted naught from him. If, however, he had erected this mighty structure, what an influence it would by now have exerted, alike in the kingdoms of earth and heaven!

Now the wealth is fallen into the hands of people who, as thou sayest, he would not have consented should enter his home, and whom he held in the utmost abhorrence. Take heed, then, O men of insight! Gracious God! The wealthy friends exert no endeavour, nor render any service, such is their attachment to these earthly riches. Yet then it chanceth that after death their wealth falleth into the hands of their enemies! These latter feast thereon, and, as the common people say, “recite the *Fátihih*.”¹⁴

Thou and some others had requested permission to come on a visit to the Holy Land. During these days, to come on such a visit would entail much trouble and many difficulties, such that ye might conceivably spend six months on the way. Do ye postpone the time of your visit to another occasion.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

14 July 1919

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou my companion! I sent thee a letter written in mine own hand, which assuredly hath by now arrived. Since telegrams from here cannot be received in the Caucasus, the letter was sent care of the friends. Now I am writing again to say that thou art permitted to come hither, and we are awaiting thine arrival. Dr. Dīyá,¹⁵ accompanied by the handmaid of God Zinat,¹⁶ arrived here two weeks ago and await thy coming.

Advise all the friends that no one should ever utter any derogatory word with regard to the new faction, all should preserve silence. This is extremely important.

Upon thee rest the Glory of God.

Deliver a most wondrous Abhá greeting to the handmaid of God, Fátimih *Khánum*.¹⁷

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

A prayer beseeching forgiveness for him recently ascended unto God, Áqá Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Nakhjavání, upon him rest the Glory of God, the Most Glorious

He is God.

O my God! O Thou Remover of adversities and Dispeller of afflictions! I, verily, implore Thee, as one beset by trouble imploereth the Almighty and Most Exalted King; and I beseech Thee, as one burdened with sin beseecheth the Lord of pardon and forgiveness, Him Who revealeth Himself through heavenly mercy, saying:

O my beneficent Lord! Verily, Thy servant 'Alí-Akbar hath believed in Thee and in Thy Signs; hath acknowledged Thine omnipotence and Thy sovereignty; hath been attracted by the fragrance of Thy sweet savours; hath become enkindled by the fire of Thy love, even whilst in the flower of life and the flush of youth; hath proclaimed Thy Name amongst his fellows; hath supplicated unto Thee with a heart intensely ardent; and hath summoned the people unto the kingdom of Thy grace, both in the daytime and in the night season, with a goodly manner, a gracious disposition, and a radiant heart, and with a breast dilated through the contemplation of Thy most resplendent signs.

Never, night or day, did he weary of Thy remembrance: His tongue would sing Thy praise at both dawn and dusk, whilst he was directed towards Thee and turning his face unto the quarter of Thy grace; and he would call upon Thee alike with his heart and his tongue, entreating Thy blessings and confirmations, wishing to reach the door of Thy mercy, and seeking to attain the wellspring of Thy grace. Ever was he thrilled by Thy sweet savours, and his breast dilated by the sight of Thy signs; and he would recite Thy words, guide the people unto the way of guidance, summon them unto piety and righteousness, and nurture them through Thy teachings, which are a light unto the eyes, a spirit unto the hearts, a boon unto the righteous, and life unto the hearts of the godly.

O my Lord! Verily, this Thy servant ever besought Thee, both privily and openly, and called upon Thee, with heart and tongue alike, saying:

O Lord my God! Long hath been the term of separation, and hard upon me the effect of deprivation! I, verily, yearn for the meads of Thy mercy even as a dove yearneth for a companion in its sylvan bower, wishing to behold Thy beauty in the World of Mysteries and to enjoy Thy pardon and Thy forgiveness in the Realm of Lights.

O Lord my God! I, verily, am athirst; give me then to drink from Twin Gushing Fountains, and cause me to enter the Twin Verdant Gardens.¹⁸ Forgive me my sins and dispel from me my griefs, O Thou Who art the Knower of things unseen!

O my Lord! Lowly am I; ennoble me through admittance into the Kingdom. Poor am I; enrich me from an imperishable treasure in the Divine Realm. Sick am I; heal me of my grievous malady. Cause me to enter Thy Most Exalted Paradise, O my All-Glorious Lord, and leave me not forlorn and lonely. Shelter me within the shelter of Thy Most Great Mercy, and deliver me from these besetting darknesses. Destine for me all good in the world to come, and supply me with Thy gifts and bestowals. Forgive me my sins, and pardon me my trespasses. Purify me from all passions, and cause me to enter into the garden of Thy Oneness with a luminous countenance and a heavenly disposition.

O Lord my God! I, verily, long to meet Thee, and yearn to abide for ever among the Concourse on High.

O my Lord! Disappoint not my hopes, pardon me my misconduct, and make me a sign of Thy bounty in the midst of Paradise, that I may burst into song like the birds upon the branches and, with a blissful conscience, celebrate Thy praise amidst the boughs.

Thou, verily, art the All-Bountiful; Thou, verily, art the Most Compassionate; and Thou, verily, art the Ever-Forgiving, the Ever-Pardoning, the All-Merciful.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Bákú For the attention of the beloved of God, upon them rest the Glory of God, the Most Glorious

He is God.

O ye who have quaffed an intoxicating draught from the cup of fidelity to the Covenant! Thanks be to His Holiness the Self-Subsistent that ye are come beneath the shadow of the Mighty Tabernacle, and arrived within the Abhá Paradise, in the Illumined Garden. Ye are transported by the wine of fidelity to the Covenant, and stirred into a tumult by the heat of the fire of the love of God. My hope is that, through the grace and bounties of the Abhá Beauty, ye may become leaders of the free and commanders of the company of the righteous; become a focal centre of the traces of Him Who is the Living, the Self-Subsisting, and a dawning-place of the effulgences of His Holiness, the Object of all knowledge; become signs of Divine Unity and manifestations of Heavenly Detachment; become shining stars and radiant lamps; and so kindle the fire of the love of God in the very summits of the earth and the midmost heart of the world that its flame may spread to all parts and regions, and the sweet savours of holiness may be wafted from the rose-garden of understanding throughout the whole of the Caucasus.

O my God! This is a city wherein the fire of Thy love hath blazed, and the lights of Thy knowledge have shone. Make then its precincts illumined, its environs fragrant, its courts spacious, and its happiness immense, through the light of Thy Divine Unity which shineth from that city in every direction of that region; and make Thou Thy loved ones therein the waves of the sea of Thy oneness, the troops of the hosts of Thy knowledge, the trees of the garden of Thy bestowal, and the fruits of the tree of Thy providence.

Thou, verily, art the All-Bounteous, the Most Exalted.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who hast believed in a Beauty that hath shone forth upon all regions! Although, to outward seeming, it is some while since correspondence and communication took place between us, yet mine inmost heart is thrilling with the remembrance of the loved ones of God, is stirring like unto the zephyr, and is surging like unto the mighty deep.

These days, the region of the Caucasus hath acquired an extraordinary receptivity. An effort must needs be exerted so that it may be proven that “Qáf, by the glorious Qur’án”²⁰ is the nest of the Divine Eastern Phoenix: Haply, the voice of the *Símurgh*²¹ of the Cause of God may be raised from those territories and regions, and the reflection of this luminous mountain fall in effulgence and splendour upon this illimitable expanse.

He said:

Phoenix of Truth! For thee have I yearned!
Yet praised be God, from Mount Qáf thou’rt returned!²²

Let it be seen what the power of the outstretched arm of the friends may now accomplish!

The Glory of God rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

*Bákú The Beloved of God and the Handmaids of the Merciful, the Glory of Glories
rest upon them, men and women alike*

He is God.

O intimates of the court of the Beloved! O adorers of the countenance of the Beloved! The entire region of Caucasia is regarded as attached to the Araxes River, which in the Qur’án hath been alluded to by the expression “the companions of Ar-Rass.”²³ A company of prophets, of whom all record hath been lost, were in ancient times raised up in that clime, and perfumed the world of humanity with the fragrant breaths of the All-Merciful.

Likewise, in more recent times, His Holiness the Exalted One—may my life be a sacrifice to Him—was banished to Chihríq and incarcerated within its confines. A savour thereof reached the nostrils of Háfiz of Shíráz, who recited this couplet:

O zephyr, shouldst thou pass by the banks of the Araxes,
Implant a kiss on the earth of that valley and make fragrant thy breath.

His Holiness Zoroaster too travelled and ministered awhile in those surrounds. The “Kúh-i-Qáf” (Mount Qáf) which is mentioned in the traditions and chronicles is this same Qafqáz (Caucasus). The Iranians believe it to be the shelter of the Simurgh, and the nest of the Eastern Phoenix. The hope is cherished, therefore, that this Phoenix, which hath spread the wings of sanctity over East and West—by which is meant none other but the wondrous Divine Cause—will make its nest and shelter in the Caucasus.

Praise be to God that the friends of Bákú were, throughout these years of war, at peace with all communities, and, in conformity with the Divine teachings, compassionate unto all. They evinced an ebullient enthusiasm in the Cause of God, and were intoxicated and transported by the wine of the Love of God. Now must they roar like the leviathan, make up for the years of war, and, with a rousing anthem and a rapturous refrain, stir that clime into an ecstasy of motion, in order that Divine illumination may so suffuse men’s hearts that the rays of oneness may shine forth, the shades of estrangement may be banished, and all communities may mingle happily together—may, in love and amity, shed forth an ineffable sweetness and engender such a tumult of rapture and elation that surrounding countries too will be stirred into an ecstasy of motion.

The Glory of Glories rest upon you—men and women alike.

3 July 1919

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the love of God! It is some time since I wrote a letter; yet at all times I have been fervently pleading at the Threshold of Oneness that thou mayest in all thine affairs become the embodiment of God’s bountiful favours, mayest with heart and soul expend thyself in the path of the Omnipotent One, and mayest occupy thyself with rendering services to Áqá Músá,²⁴ enabling his mind to be at rest.

Praise be to God, thou art assisted and confirmed, for he is to the utmost degree satisfied with thee, while his contentment is a source of happiness to the hearts of all, especially at this time when he hath been assailed by tests; yet praise be to God, despite such trials he remaineth patient and steadfast, and I fain would hope that, through the grace of the Almighty, his peace and composure may reach the point of perfection. For during the past year, Divine tests assailed everyone with the utmost severity and intensity; yet, through the help and favour of the True One, the friends all made firm their steps and evinced a prodigious steadfastness. Wherefore it is my hope that, by the leave of God, Áqá Músá will provide the friends with a goodly example, and one which, in occasions of adversity, they will all emulate.

A prayer hath been composed beseeching forgiveness for his late lamented son, who ascended unto a seat of truth:²⁵ thou must recite it, making clear and evident its purport.

Greeting and praise be upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou servant of the kindly Beloved, Bahá’u’lláh! I can find no nobler title than this wherewith to address thee. Only an hour ago I wrote thee a letter; and now, as I was sorting through my papers, the portrait of that loving friend fell out. When I beheld that adorable countenance, I bestirred myself again to write this present letter, in order that thou mightest know how dearly thou art cherished in these precincts. I fain would hope that at all times, through the grace and bestowals of the Blessed Beauty, that countenance may, through the lights of Divine confirmation, become the envy of the radiant moon, and be brightened and illumined by the rays of the Sun of Truth.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

Shouldst thou be able to convince that Armenian gentleman²⁶ to write the truth, and himself repudiate what he hath written—which is utter falsehood and pure calumny—it would be most agreeable. Exert thou the utmost effort in this regard.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! Thou didst trace a design for a Bahá’í emblem. It is wondrously well done! Yet the badge of the Bahá’ís must be such conduct, deeds, and manners as are in conformity with the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. This is the emblem of Him Who is the Traceless, the Brilliant Orb of the heavenly world.

Thou didst write concerning the Spiritual Assembly. Should I write aught, it would be a cause of sorrow to some. Wherefore do thou in an agreeable fashion endeavour that the Spiritual Assembly may be organized. This is the better way.

As for Count Tolstoy, when once that Armenian person²⁷ hath, thanks to thine endeavours, corrected his errors in his book, send thou a copy thereof to Count Tolstoy. It would be difficult, however, for Tolstoy to accept this Cause, for his aspiration is to be the unique and peerless figure of the age amongst men. In view of this prepossession and determination on his part, it would be most difficult for him to recognize the advent of a

Universal Manifestation from the Dayspring of Divine Unity during his days. Rest thou assured, however, that ere long thousands like unto Count Tolstoy will be gathered beneath the shadow of the banner of the one true God.

Deliver to all the friends a most wondrous Abhá greeting.
The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

Shouldst thou be successful in inducing that Armenian himself to repudiate his words, confessing that certain self-interested persons had misled him, it would be most agreeable, for, as thou hast observed, that which he hath written is utter calumny and sheer misrepresentation on the part of the Covenant-breakers.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou herald of the Covenant and Testament! Thy numerous letters have been received, and the contents of all were a cause of joy and gladness. Praise be to God that thou hast been thus aided and confirmed to render service, and hast arisen in such a manner to evince thy servitude to the Sacred Threshold. This is an abiding sovereignty, this is a perpetual bestowal! The response to thy missives hath been delayed, a delay occasioned by the severe disruptions, numerous preoccupations, and pressing concerns—among them the impending journey—leaving no opportunity to attend to the matter.

Now, since I have arrived from Haifa at Port Said—there being a surpassing wisdom in this journey, which shall be revealed hereafter—I am writing a brief response; God willing, I shall respond more fully later.

Convey to all the beloved of God a most wondrous Abhá greeting, saying: “O friends! The time hath come for you to devote yourselves with all your powers to the service of the Cause of God, to arise to spread abroad the sweet savours of God, and to make such a joyful noise that Caucasia—nay the whole of Russia—will be stirred into motion.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá hath with all his soul dedicated himself to sacrificial service: He cherisheth the hope of expending himself in this endeavour a hundred times more devotedly than heretofore, and each day longeth to hasten unto the field of martyrdom. The friends too must, in this service and endeavour, be my comrades and companions, my partners and peers: most especially Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar, who, with a godly power and a heavenly resolve, must sacrifice himself in the path of the Lord.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

Kindly deliver on my behalf to his honour Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar²⁸ the following message: “Time and again we suffered exile and banishment; for thee too a draught from this cup is needful, and a share of this most great bestowal is requisite, for thou art deserving of this bestowal and bounty.” The Glory of Glories rest upon him.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art dear to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá! Thy letter was received, and the report of Count Tolstoy was also perused. In truth, it is thanks to thine endeavours that the Count hath become more fair-minded, completely abandoning his former partiality. I hope that in all instances thou wilt be confirmed and assisted in rendering service to the Abhá Threshold—may my life be a sacrifice to His loved ones—and that thou wilt correspond with the aforesaid count. It would do no harm to send him the translation of certain Tablets that are appropriate to his circumstances and agreeable to his taste: yet not in such a manner that the Russian state would suspect that thou art in agreement and concert with him in all principles—even that of involvement in political affairs, for the aforesaid Count is extremely involved in political affairs.

Thou didst write concerning the Russian lady:²⁹ thou hast permission to come with her on a visit hither. I hope that in this journey thou wilt be blessed with the gracious favours and loving-kindness of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Most Great.

When once thou hast rendered the Hidden Words into Russian, shouldst thou print this, it would be most acceptable; and shouldst thou also translate *Some Answered Questions*, that too would be agreeable.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O true friend! The letter thou didst send hath been perused. In these last few days we have returned from the territory of the Franks—lovely as a rose garden!—to Alexandria, the homeland of the Copts. Behold “the disparity of the way—from whence we departed, and whither we are come!”³⁰ The tidings of the steadfastness of the friends, and of their service to the Divine Threshold, was a source of joy and gladness.

Madame Isabella hath truly, in the composition of her book, exerted an extraordinary endeavour. Convey to her on my behalf the utmost good-pleasure and satisfaction. God willing, she will be successful in representing and enacting these two dramas.

Thou hadst requested a teacher of the Cause. None is available in these parts; a message will be sent to Tīhrán.

As for the Theosophical Society, shouldst thou attend their gatherings and speak of the oneness of humanity; of the contents of the Divine Tablets; of the spirituality born of heaven; and of equality, concord, love, and harmony among the children of men; and consort with them with the utmost attraction, this will doubtless be beneficial.

Gulnár³¹ is in Egypt: When I came to Alexandria, she sent a telegram of felicitation on my arrival, and I too wrote her a reply. The thoughts of this lady are slightly distracted.

In fine, in Báku there is freedom of faiths and religions: If the friends exert an effort, the Faith will be greatly propagated, and the Divine fragrances will stir the people into motion.

That true friend is in truth exerting the utmost industry and diligence that he may render a service to the Sacred Threshold. My hope is that, through the gracious favours of the True One, he may prosper in all his affairs.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! The letter which thou didst compose after thy return hath arrived. In this journey, the Russian lady was, through the diligent endeavours of that faithful friend, guided unto the pathway of the Beloved.

The first book, she should assuredly correct; if she be successful in this, the harbinger of Divine bounty shall reach her and make of her an illumined candle. Concerning the enactment of her piece, to the extent possible no effort will be spared; thereafter the matter is in the hands of God.

The news of the unity and concord of the friends, and of the fellowship and oneness of Áqá Kishí³² and Ustád Áqá Bálá,³³ was a cause of the utmost joy and gladness. I hope that under all conditions thou wilt be assisted and confirmed.

Praise be to God, that Armenian gentleman³⁴ hath, in the Petersburg newspaper, made good his oversight in respect of what he had written in his first treatise, become apprised of the reality of the matter, and corrected the tenor of his address; and this too is thanks to your diligent endeavours.

Praise be to God, after thine arrival public gatherings were arranged and properly organized in Bákú, and this is as a result of Divine confirmations.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

O thou faithful stalwart! In truth, in the pathway of the Most Great Name, His Holiness the Glory of the heavens and of the earth, thou hast evinced—as thou dost still—the utmost degree of self-sacrificial devotion. Be thou assured of assistance and confirmation.

Praise be to God, thine honesty and trustworthiness are evident and proven in the eyes of Áqá Músá. In fine, in Bákú and Bálá-Khání—nay, throughout the whole of the Caucasus—some effective means must be adopted so that their inhabitants may benefit from the bounties of God and, having escaped from the darkness of waywardness and ignorance, become illumined beings.

If thou art able to establish a school for the youth, wherein, under the tuition of Áqá Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar,³⁵ they may study how to teach the Cause and become informed of the Divine proofs and testimonies, it would be most agreeable.

Gulnár the Russian³⁶ arrived in Alexandria, where she met me and experienced some mild spiritual sensations; yet since she was intending to return to Kazan, her thoughts were much preoccupied. She had absolutely no leisure. Do thou communicate with her: Perchance through thy guidance and that of the Russian lady³⁷ she will little by little be fully awakened.

For the rest, deliver unto each of the friends a most wondrous Abhá greeting; cleave unto that which is the cause of enkindlement and attraction, and hold the Nineteen-Day Feast.

Convey on my behalf to the heavenly Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar the utmost love, devotion, and kindness.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! The letter thou didst write hath been perused. Thou didst write concerning the diffusion of the Divine fragrances in that city. This was news such as to uplift the spirit. Assuredly thou hast by now brought together several of the friends, and been successful in dispatching teachers to outlying parts.

Convey to Madame Isabella the Russian my utmost love.

Should Mr. Browne³⁸ pass through Bákú, do thou assuredly extend to him the utmost love and kindness: Perchance he will forgo his present tendentious course and speak with fairness, for the Azalís have misrepresented the matter in his eyes.

With respect to Isabella's book, I wrote a letter to Paris, but this apparently hath not arrived. I shall write again.

In fine, my hope is that, through God's invisible assistance, thou mayest day by day render ever greater service, and conduct thyself with the utmost steadfastness, so that the Caucasus may become the nest of the phoenix of mystery,³⁹ Bákú may become redolent of musk, Tiflis may become a precious gem, Ganjih⁴⁰ may become a store of riches, and Shíshih⁴¹ may become a scintillating pure crystal.

The debt of Alexandria and Haifa hath been discharged, for the sum hath been received, and the receipts that thou hadst previously requested have been sent.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! Thy most recent letter hath arrived from Bákú. Likewise, a missive and accompanying printed composition have been received from Madame Isabella from Paris. From the contents of both letters it became evident that her intention is to stage in Paris a dramatic representation of the Cause of His Holiness the Exalted One. I have written her a letter, which is enclosed. After translating it, kindly send it on to her.

Do thou accord importance to the study of English; and should it be necessary to travel to London, that too is permitted.

Thou didst enquire concerning the deputies to the members of the consultative assembly. The deputies too must be elected by the people; that is, those persons who, after the elected members, have acquired the most number of votes must, with the cognizance of the consultative assembly, be appointed deputies. These matters are at the discretion of the consultative assembly. No one should directly, of his own accord, carry out any matter, even should it be in conformity with the approved constitution of the people and state; rather, it should for the present be carried out with the permission of the Spiritual Assembly, and thereafter through the intermediary of the government.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Bákú

He is God.

O thou who art firm in the Covenant! I am on the verge of setting out towards the West. For this reason I have not leisure to write at length. The speeches delivered in Europe have been collected and corrected—nay more, are in the process of being printed. Shouldst thou translate and publish whichever of these are suitable for the Theosophists, it would do no harm. I shall embark in two days' time. Shouldst thou have an intense yearning to be in attendance, permission is granted thee. Convey to all the beloved of God a most wondrous Abhá greeting.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O dear friends of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá! A message hath been sent verbally with Áqá Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Nakhjavání in a particular regard, which since it is involved, this pen hath not the opportunity to set it all down in writing. In question is the matter of confining the teaching work to Muslims. Ye should by all means treat this matter as important, and conduct yourselves accordingly, inasmuch as there is an all-embracing wisdom in such a course. Otherwise, those territories will become intractable—nay, more inimical than Iran. Ye must act with extreme caution: This is necessary and essential.

The Glory of Glories rest upon you.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou mine intimate and my confidant! In Montreal I could not be more busily occupied. The interactions and discussions during the day, and the nightly conversations, are extensive. Of all places, this is the best. There is a great deal to see, a small glimpse of which may be obtained from the newspapers. With respect to thyself, do thou carry out what I instructed thee. There is no opportunity to write more than this. Send thou the letter of Ahmadov,⁴² together with the details of the events that transpired.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! Thy letter hath arrived, and, for want of opportunity, I am now replying to it in brief.

The formation of a teaching council is most acceptable and beneficial. It is hoped that in days to come the desired outcome will become apparent.

The name of his Holiness the Purest Branch was Mihdí, and at the time of his ascension he was in his eighteenth year. The Leaves, or daughters, of the Blessed Beauty were three in number: the Greatest Holy Leaf, Furúghíyyih Khánum,⁴³ and Şamadíyyih Khánum.⁴⁴ The Greatest Holy Leaf was continually engaged in service to His blessed Person; nor had she an hour’s respite from her devoted labours. In the inner quarters, the Leaves were occupied with the remembrance of God, and with the exposition of questions relating to the Cause of God. Thus did the hours pass. The mother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá⁴⁵ was throughout her life, both night and day, engaged in fervent supplication and remembrance, and occupied with the mention of God and the exposition of religious questions and of proofs in vindication of the True One.

The difference between Bahá’í and other women is that, among the other communities of the East, the women are occupied either with the management of the life of the household, or with the pursuit of pleasure and diversion. Bahá’í women, however, while concerning

themselves as far as possible with the ordering of the affairs of life, devote the rest of their time to the exposition of Divine truths and mysteries.

As for the miracles that took place in the war of the children of Israel with the unbelievers, and are recorded in the Holy Bible, these have a figurative meaning and metaphorical interpretations; and yet withal the Bahá'ís do not hold the miracles of the Prophets to have been impossible of performance.

Concerning those souls who were formerly in the circle of Áqá Músá, and have now left it, this was as a result of the coercion and insistence of others. For this reason, allow no unseemly word about Áqá Músá to pass thy lips, but maintain towards him a respectful attitude. Almighty Providence will provide for those souls a source of livelihood, while they for their part must abide by the counsels of the True One and, with respect to Áqá Músá, by no means allow any word expressive of dissatisfaction to pass their lips.

Thou didst request that the questions of Áqá Mírzá Haydar-‘Alí be printed and disseminated. To print and circulate them among the Bahá'ís is permissible; but to do so outside the community is by no means permissible, for this would give rise to universal rancour and enmity. Should the friends, however, commit to memory these facts, verses, and traditions, and, in gatherings, question the ‘ulamá about them, then, the latter being unable to deliver a response, the people would become aware.

The friends must not—either with the people in general, or with the ‘ulamá—speak in a contentious fashion, but rather they should express themselves with the utmost consideration, kindness, and propriety. Nor must they allow any topic to lead to conflict and altercation, for contentious and polemical speech will never be productive of any useful result, but will rather engender rancour and enmity. Wherefore they should speak with the utmost kindness, self-effacement, humility, and lowliness, nor ever let a harsh word pass their lips, saying instead: “We have no quarrel or dispute with any group of people, nor hold them in contempt, but regard both ourselves and them as servants of the one true God. We are all the fruits of one tree, and grown from the same bough. The only difference is that some are searching for the truth, while others are calm and silent, and occupied with themselves and their own interests.”

Do thou have the *Narrative*⁴⁶ translated into German.

It is not at present permissible to publish the treatise to the Shaykh.⁴⁷

Permission is granted thee to travel with Áqá Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar⁴⁸ to Iran.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! Thy numerous letters have arrived. God willing, replies will be written to each one of them.

Thou didst write concerning the Russian official. It is evident that, thanks to thine endeavours, he hath become somewhat attracted to the Cause; God willing, he will come little by little to believe in it entirely. Shouldst thou have in thy possession a copy of the *Narrative*, send him thereof however much he wisheth, and write to him that Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl hath composed a treatise concerning this Cause, which hath been translated, and printed in America.⁴⁹ Let him request it of the friends in Paris, and likewise the book *Some Answered Questions*, which hath been rendered into the French and English tongues. If he is able, let him render the *Narrative* into the German tongue and likewise the translation of the Tablets

Ṭarázát, Tajalliyát, Kalimát, Bishárát, and Ishráqát. In fine, whatever books there are about this Cause may be found with Mr. Dreyfus⁵⁰ in Paris: Let him obtain them from him.

Convey to the Russian lady⁵¹ the utmost loving-kindness on the part of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and, so far as thou art able, strive to attract that respected personage to the Divine fragrances; for if once that virtuous matron becometh attracted and assured in faith and certitude, then, through the power of the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty, she will become in Western lands a brilliant candle.

Thou didst write concerning the disturbances in Bákú. Do thou have recourse to the government so that preventive measures may be taken; yet not in any adversarial fashion: rather, in a moderate manner state thou that such is contrary to justice and inimical to fellowship and love among all the subjects of the respected state.

In brief, I found myself exceedingly happy and satisfied with thee for thou hast arisen to serve the Cause of God. My hope is that thou wilt be assisted to perform outstanding services and become a means of exalting the Word of God.

Always extend to Count Tolstoy loving and heartfelt greetings and treat him with the utmost courtesy, as we are indeed commanded to behave in this way. Perchance he may become fair-minded. There are signs that his attitude hath improved and moderated. It is hoped that, God willing, it may improve further and that he may speak with justice about this Cause. It might be beneficial if thou wert to despatch to him, and others like him, the letter of this servant addressed to the believers of the East and the West⁵² which is translated and published in Russian.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! Thy letter hath arrived, and likewise the power of attorney which thou hadst sent for Áqá Mírzá Muḥsin.⁵³ He hath gone to Jerusalem. God willing, he will return to ‘Akká and take measures to purchase the land for thee.⁵⁴

Should Áqá Músá intend to travel to America, he must assuredly come to the Holy Land, and from here proceed to his destination.

Thou didst write concerning the arrival of Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar,⁵⁵ saying that this had been instrumental in generating a spirit of attraction. The hope of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is that, through the grace and bounty of the Blessed Beauty, he will raise aloft in that region the banner of “Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá!”, becoming the cause alike of the greater enkindlement of the friends, and the guidance of others. Thou didst write that three Russian persons had accepted the Faith. Ere long shalt thou witness all peoples and kindreds entering beneath the shadow of the tabernacle of the oneness of humanity.

Proceed nevertheless with rendering into Russian, and publishing and disseminating, the *Narrative* only if there is no harm in doing so. Yet shouldst thou translate the Epistle of East and West, and send it to Tolstoy, that would be most agreeable.

Convey to the beloved of God a most wondrous Abhá greeting.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! The letter dated the last day of the month of Dhi’l-Qa’dih hath arrived, its contents charged with firmness and steadfastness in the Covenant of the Wronged One.

Concerning the correction of the book of that Christian person,⁵⁶ shouldst thou be successful in this matter, it would be a great achievement, and a most necessary one. If and when he writeth the book he now hath in mind, let him then bring it with him. Pictures of the sites of ‘Akká have been drawn in America, and printed and disseminated there. We will send thee a copy thereof, so that thou mayest give it to him.

We beseech God graciously to grant a cure to Áqá Músá.

For the rest, convey to all the friends a most wondrous Abhá greeting.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! During the days when thou wast present here, and honoured to visit the Sacred Tomb, thou didst raise several questions. No opportunity was found at the time to reply to them; now a brief reply is set forth in writing.

The Mashriqu’l-Adhkár⁵⁷ must be sanctified from such matters as fund box and treasury; but if, for the sake of poor relief, a box be set in a special place, there is no objection. This decision resteth with the Universal House of Justice, and the receipts of the poor-box must be expended at the discretion of the House of Justice.

As regards the matter of the “Mahallu’l-Barakih,”⁵⁸ this is similar to other companies and is also subject to the decision of the House of Justice. A portion of the accruing interest should be expended upon charitable objects.

The term of service of the members of a consultative assembly, ere the convening of the House of Justice, is five years. When the House of Justice is convened, whatsoever its members deem fit must be obeyed by all.

For the present, members of consultative assemblies are at liberty to resign. When more than half the members of a consultative assembly gather together, they may take counsel together and arrive at a resolution.

The chairman of the consultative assembly enjoyeth the prerogative associated with this position, being entitled to cast two votes.

These matters are according to the principles and standards observed today. When, however, the Universal House of Justice is established, it will deliberate upon all these matters, both large and small, and, according to the exigencies of the time, issue a binding resolution.

Whatever hath been set forth in this sheet is not mandatory: At the present time, the course indicated is merely recommended.

A special letter hath been written to the members of the service council⁵⁹ through the intermediary of Áqá ‘Abdu’l-Kháliq.⁶⁰

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O spiritual friends! When Jináb-i-Nakhjavání was in this Divine Abode, he requested that letters be written to each one of you. Having now faithfully discharged his commission, he hath freed himself from reproach; yet I for my part am abashed, since, having no leisure, I am unable to write to each of you a separate letter. “Whoever is constrained by circumstances is excused, and exempt from the imputation of neglect.”⁶¹ I have accordingly composed a single letter, in which I have mentioned all the spiritual friends.

Ye are all the waves of one sea, the rays of one sun, the flowers of one garden, the lions of one thicket, the birds of one meadow, and the fragrant blossoms of one rose garden: wherefore ye are even as a single soul, and this letter is in reality written to each one of you.

Render thanks unto the grace and bounty of the Abhá Beauty for having lighted such a resplendent candle of unity whereby the human world hath been illumined. Whatsoever flaw there be in our unity and concord proceedeth from our own shortcoming; for otherwise, the outpouring of grace eternal hath gathered all beneath the shadow of a single tabernacle, breathing the breath of life eternal, and causing the fragrance of the oneness of the human world to perfume the nostrils of humankind.

Now, exert ye night and day a mighty effort that ye may become dawning-places of the lights of oneness, and daysprings of the splendours of detachment; and, with unsurpassed affection, so mingle together that the cloud of God’s loving providence may rain down its bounties, and the lights of His divine favour may shine forth refulgent. Each night and day, each dusk and dawn, I offer fervent supplications to the Kingdom of Mysteries, entreating Almighty God that ye may under all conditions show forth constancy and steadfastness, fellowship and love.

The Glory of Glories rest upon you.

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

In this day, no greater manifestation of love and kindness can be conceived in the world of existence than this, that, at the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh, one should call to mind a loved one, make mention of him, and offer prayers for his well-being. This is God’s mightiest favour, His greatest bounty, His highest gift, and the sign of His consummate bestowal.

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Notes

1. The English equivalent of this name written in Persian by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is not certain.
2. Probably the Eleventh Annual Convention of the Bahá’í Temple Unity, held at Hotel McAlpin, New York City, 26–30 April 1919, at which the Tablets of the Divine Plan were unveiled.

3. The English equivalent of this name written in Persian by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is not certain.
4. Qur’án 17:15
5. Bahá’u’lláh.
6. The Báb.
7. A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá chanted by Him, the recording of the latter part of which is played for Bahá’í pilgrims during their visit to the House of the Master in Haifa.
8. Marzieh Gail’s translation, published in Memorials of the Faithful, pp. 22, 30.
9. The Birthday of Bahá’u’lláh.
10. Isabella Grinevskaya.
11. Cf. Qur’án 2:201.
12. In the Bahá’í Writings, “sharing” (*muvasát*) and “equality” (*musávát*) denote, respectively, preferring others to oneself, and treating them equally to oneself.
13. The wife of Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Nakhjavání.
14. The opening Súrîh of the Qur’án; in other words, they pay lip service to the memory of the deceased, over whom the Fátîhîh would be recited at the time of interment.
15. Dr. Dîyá’u’lláh Baghdádî.
16. Dr. Dîyá’u’lláh Baghdádî’s wife, Zínat Khánum, the sister-in-law of Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Nakhjavání.
17. The wife of Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Nakhjavání, and elder sister of Zínat Khánum.
18. See Qur’án, súrîh 55.
19. 31 July 1921.
20. See Qur’án 50:1.
21. A mythical flying creature of Persian legend, sometimes equated with the griffin or the phoenix.
22. Jalálu’d-Dín Rúmî.
23. See Qur’án, 25:38 and 50:12.
24. Áqá Músá Naqíuv.
25. In allusion to Qur’án 54:55.
26. Sargis Mubagajian (“Atrpet”).
27. Sargis Mubagajian.
28. Presumably Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Qúchání.
29. Probably Isabella Grinevskaya.
30. The quotation alludes to a famous ode of Háfîz.
31. Olga Sergeyevna Lebedeva.
32. Karbilá’í Áqá Kishíy-i-‘Alíuv.
33. Ustád Áqá Bálá Karímuv.
34. Sargis Mubagajian.
35. Presumably Shaykh ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Qúchání.
36. Olga Sergeyevna Lebedeva.
37. Isabella Grinevskaya.
38. Professor E. G. Browne.
39. The Caucasus, identified with the fabled Mount Qáf, was the reputed home of the phoenix.
40. Ganja, Azerbaijan’s second largest city.
41. The intention is perhaps the city of Shusha.
42. Referring perhaps to one of the Ahmadov brothers, sons of Hájí Aḥmad-i-Mílání, who were resident in Tbilisi.

43. The daughter of Bahá'u'lláh's third wife Gawhar Khánum.
44. The daughter of Bahá'u'lláh's second wife Mahd-i-'Ulyá.
45. Navváb.
46. A Traveller's Narrative Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Báb, translated by E. G. Browne.
47. Epistle to the Son of the Wolf.
48. Presumably, Shaykh 'Alí-Akbar-i-Qúchání.
49. Probably *Hujaj'ul Beheyveh (The Bahai Proofs)*, translated by Ali Kuli Khan (New York: J. W. Pratt & Co., 1902).
50. Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney.
51. Probably Isabella Grinevskaya.
52. A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá known as the Lawḥ-i-Sharq va Gharb (The Tablet of East and West, *Makátib-i-Hadrat-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá*, vol. 1, pp. 307–24).
53. Áqá Mírzá Muḥsin Afnán.
54. A piece of land in Haifa which was bought in the name of Mírzá 'Alí-Akbar.
55. The one intended may be the martyr Shaykh 'Alí-Akbar-i-Qúchání, who, in 1327 A.H. (1909 A.D.), was directed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to take up residence in Bákú in order to nurture its burgeoning Bahá'í community.
56. Probably Sargis Mubagajian.
57. Projected for Bákú. Áqá Músá Naqíuv had volunteered, with the approval of the Master, to build a House of Worship in Bákú.
58. "Mahallu'l-Barakih" (literally "The Place of Blessing") referred to a community enterprise created by the Bahá'ís in Iran for the purpose of setting up a fund that could be used, among other things, for assisting the poor and needy, the education of children, and the propagation of the Bahá'í Faith.
59. The term "service council" (*majlis-i-khidmat*) was employed at this time to denote a committee of an Assembly which would attend to all practical, functional matters and details of the Assembly, its meetings, or the organized gatherings of the friends.
60. Presumably Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Kháliq-i-Ya'qúbzádiḥ.
61. Arabic maxim.