The Tablet of the Báb, the Proclamation of the Cause, and the Manifest Sign[1]

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Introduction and Background:

The present Tablet, revealed sometime between late September 1846 and March 1847, is dated based on internal evidence within its text, namely the reference to the land of Ṣād—understood to denote Isfahan—where the Báb sojourned prior to His transfer to the fortress of Maku. The recipient of the Tablet remains unknown to the present author.

The Tablet opens with the proclamation that the Cause, once veiled in mystery, hath now been revealed; the Hour approaches, and the Moon hath been cleft asunder. It continues with a vivid depiction of human incredulity and scorn, expressed as if by those who reject the advent of divine truth: "Shall the Remembrance be cast upon thee among Us? Thou art naught but a lying, wicked soul." Through this third-person perspective, the Báb evokes the familiar pattern of opposition which hath met all the Manifestations of God.

A central allegory within the Tablet is the She-Camel, drawn from the Qur'anic narrative of the Prophet Salih, symbolizing both a divine test and a manifest Sign for those endowed with perception. The Tablet emphasizes that the advent of the Remembrance—the Báb Himself—brings guidance and manifest proof, while warning of the consequences of iniquity, as illustrated through the punishment of the obstinate. It further affirms that which cometh from the Lord—the awaited Imám, the Remnant of God—is better for His people.

Concluding with precise instruction, the Tablet directs that it be written according to the number of all things (361), conveyed to whomsoever is able, and inscribed to its end, entrusted to the recipient in the land of Ṣād. This not only situates the Tablet in its historical context but attests to its authority as originating from the Báb. In its entirety, the Tablet embodies the Báb's characteristic synthesis of proclamation, admonition, and esoteric precision, offering warning, guidance, and spiritual insight to all who possess the eyes to perceive.

The present paper offers a provisional English rendering of this Tablet, revealed in Arabic, based on the manuscript preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), Vol. 60, pp. 155–156.

[1] This Tablet bears no title in the original manuscript; the designation "*The Tablet of the Báb, the Proclamation of the Cause, and the Manifest Sign*" is assigned here by the present author, derived from the internal motifs and overarching message of the Tablet itself.

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Thus, Doth the Báb Reveal:

"In the Name of God, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the All-Subduing

The Cause, once veiled in mystery, hath now been proclaimed; the Hour is nigh, and the Moon hath been cleft asunder.[3] *Shall the Remembrance be cast upon thee among Us? Thou art naught but a lying, wicked soul.*[4]

When the Remembrance came, bringing guidance and manifest proof, the people fled as scattered locusts. He called unto them, saying: 'O My people! Have faith in that which I have brought unto you from the Book and the warnings.'

They shall know the Cause when We decree to render them like withered herbage, prepared to be consumed by the fire. Behold, then, an irrefutable Proof of the Truth, decisive and made easy for the Remembrance—will any take heed?[5]

Verily, We tested ye with a She-Camel[6] *from Us, a manifest Sign for those who truly perceive. That which cometh unto you from your Lord is better for you: the Remnant of God, the awaited Imám.*[7]

Wrong not yourselves by your own iniquity, lest a chastisement firmly established overtake you. They were summoned from the Lord, the Most Exalted: 'Woe unto you! How shall you escape My chastisement and My warnings?'

Then they sent forth the most wretched among them into her inmost depths, and they hamstrung her, as had those who disbelieved aforetime.[8] *They said unto Him,*[9] *with haughty mockery: 'Thou art but an arrogant scoffer! Naught hast thou brought us save enduring sorcery.'*

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[3] This opening proclamation heralds the imminent advent of the Báb, the Remembrance, the Cause long concealed in divine mystery, emphasizing the approaching "Hour" of His manifestation and invoking the Qur'anic image of the Moon's splitting as a cosmic sign of the unfolding of God's command.

[4] This line conveys, in the third person, the words and attitude of those who, like the disbelievers of old, would deny the advent of the Remembrance (the Báb), branding Him a false and wicked soul. It is a proclamatory reflection on the historical pattern of opposition to the Manifestations of God, underscoring the moral blindness of such denial and the inevitability of divine revelation.

[5] This line proclaims the Báb as the irrefutable Proof of God's Truth—decisive, manifest, and made accessible for sincere seekers—calling upon all to recognize and reflect upon His station as the Remembrance of God.

[6] The "*She-Camel*" alludes to the miraculous camel of God sent to the people of Thamūd (Qur'anic references: 7:73–79; 11:61–68; 91:11–15) as a test of their obedience and discernment. In the Báb's Tablet, it serves as a symbolic trial, a manifest Sign whose significance is fully apprehended only by those endowed with spiritual insight, representing the divine guidance that distinguishes the perceptive from the heedless.

[7] The title *"the Remnant of God"* (*Baqqiyyatu'lláh*) and the designation *"the awaited Imám"* refer here to the Báb Himself. In Shí'í Islamic expectation, these titles signify the promised Qa'im, the divinely guided Manifestation destined to renew religion and unveil the hidden truths of revelation. In His Writings, the Báb both assumes and reinterprets these eschatological designations, asserting that the long-anticipated guidance, formerly veiled in prophecy, hath been made manifest through His own Person.

[8] The pronoun *her* refers to the She-Camel mentioned in the preceding verse, a symbol of divine trial and a manifest Sign sent by God to test the perception and obedience of His followers. The word قَعْر ("inmost depths") signifies the deepest interior of the animal, emphasizing the severity of the transgression of those who harmed her. Thus, this verse not only narrates a historical or symbolic act but underscores the consequences of disbelief and impiety, illustrating that defiance of God's manifest signs leads to a fate akin to utter destruction, as experienced by previous disbelievers.

[9] The pronoun *Him* corresponds to the Prophet Salih in the Qur'anic narrative (Sūratu'l-A'rāf 7:73–77; Hūd 11:61–66; Al-Shu'arāʾ 26:141–159). In the Báb's Tablet, this story is invoked allegorically: the She-Camel symbolizes a divine sign and trial, while the mockery illustrates the rejection of God's proof by the disbelievers. The Báb employs this narrative to underscore the consequences of impiety and the spiritual blindness of those who deny divine guidance.

Then did the Lord, for their transgressions, smite them with overwhelming might, seizing them with the power of the Almighty, the All-Possessing. Then were they cast low upon the earth, as though they were the hollow, splintered trunks of palm-trees overturned.

A grace is bestowed, by the Name of God, the Merciful: that thou shouldst write this according to the number of all things[10] *and convey it unto whomsoever thou art able—on the condition that thou witness no sorrow—and inscribe it to its end, for this hath been entrusted unto me in Ṣād; ponder, then, O people of insight!"*[11]

[10] The phrase "*according to the number of all things*" (بِعَدَدِ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ) refers to the numerical value 19 × 19 = 361. It reflects the completeness and unity inherent in the divine order and exemplifies the Báb's esoteric method of structuring revelation.
[11] This passage constitutes the final section of the Tablet, providing explicit instructions to the recipient regarding the recording and transmission of its contents. It emphasizes the proper method for writing the Epistle according to the "number of all things," the conditions under which it is to be conveyed, and the notation to be inscribed at its conclusion. The language underscores both the sacred origin of the Tablet and the careful stewardship expected of its recipient, reflecting the Báb's characteristic attention to esoteric precision and ceremonial propriety in the dissemination of His writings.

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(According to a Typed Copy)

بسم الله العلي المتكبر القاهر
قد جاء امر فی حکم مستتر اقتربت الساعة و انشق القمر
ءالقی الذکر علیك بیننا ان انت الا نفس کذاب اشر
اذ جاء ذکر بالهدی والبینه الناس فروا کالجراد المنتشر
قال لهم یا قوم دینوا بالذي قد جئتکم من الکتاب والنذر
سیعلمون الامر حین امرنا بجعلهم مثل هشیم المحتضر
فهاکم حجة حق قاطع میسّر للذکر فهل مذّکر
انا بلوناکم بناقة لنا ذی ایة مبصرة لمن عبر
ما جائکم من ربکم خیر لکم بقیة الله امام منتظر
لا تظلموا انفسکم بظلمها فیاخذنکم عذاب مستقر
نودوا من الرب العلی ویلکم فکیف ما کان عذابی ونذر
فبعثوا اشقاءهم بقعرها فعقروها مثل من کان کفر
قالوا لهم مستکبر استهزء ما جئتنا الا بسحر مستمر
فدم دم الرب بما قد اذنبوا فاخذهم اخذ عزیز مقتدر
فاصبحوا مطروحة علی الثري کانهم اعجار نخل منقعر
مَنّ عَلی اسم الله الرَّحیم ان تکتبنَّ هذا بعدد کلّشئ و لتبلغنّ
الی من تستطع بشرط ان لا تشهد من حزن و لتکتبن الی
اخره بان هذا قد استملکته فی الصاد فاعتبروا ان یا اولی الابصار