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Lawḥ-i-Qarn (Tablet of the Centennial)

Shoghi Effendi Rabbání
Walí 'Amru'lláh

A provisionally translated Tablet of the Guardian

Translator's preface

At the same time as that incomparable book, *God Passes By*, was authored by the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and given as an inestimable gift to the world, he also wrote a most beautiful and eloquent Epistle in Arabic and Persian, known as the Lawḥ-i-Qarn [Tablet of the Centennial (1944 or BE 101)]. It was read and memorized by many wonderful souls in the East. The Hand of the Cause, Mr Khádím, talked about it at length in the book, *The Vision of Shoghi Effendi*, published in North America.¹

At the request of a personal friend, this servant will attempt an approximate and provisional translation. Maybe the subject matter will be of interest to some on this list [although I am reminded of the words of the Guardian in the beginning of the *Book of Certitude*, i.e. the unattainable goal of a befitting rendering of Bahá'u'lláh's matchless utterance]. I am also certain that pens abler than mine will produce better translations in the future after I leave this world.

The Arabic/Persian text² in my possession is 104 pages long. Each page contains 18 lines, and each line, 12 words. With regard to words that are really difficult and loaded with theological connotations, this servant will leave them in parentheses and with notes. Ideally these should be footnoted, but I am not aware how one footnotes in this medium. [If I do not have time or ability to discuss my rendering, please forgive me but, by and by, more of this text will be available. The chapter entitled "The Guardian's Writings" in *The Priceless Pearl* is relevant to my theme].

Khazeh Fananapazir [Khāḍih Fannánpazír]

An introduction to the Lawḥ-i-Qarn³ by Dr 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá

Translated from the French by Ismael Velasco⁴

Among the numerous messages of the beloved Guardian, certain ones have been revealed for occasions of great importance and demand more detailed studies:

- The tablet of the year 89 (1933) on the occasion of the ascension of the Greatest Holy Leaf, Bahá'íyyih Khánúm.
- The tablet of the year 101 on the occasion of the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb.
- The tablet of the year 105 addressed to the friends in the East.
- The tablet of the year 108 concerning the construction of the Báb's Mausoleum.
- The tablet of the year 110, the description of the 10 Year Plan (titled the Spiritual Crusade)
- The tablet of the year 113, a moving and tragic episode concerning the attacks of the enemies of the Cause, and the destruction of the dome of the National Centre of Iran and the prediction of the fate of those that have risen against the Cause of God.

As time does not permit us to analyze all these precious documents, I will allow myself the detailed description of only one message—that of the Bahá'í year 101.

In 1944, on the occasion of the celebration of the Centenary of the Declaration of the beloved Báb, Bahá'í literature was crowned with two masterpieces from the Guardian, two brilliant stars that shall shine eternally in the firmament of the historical and literary works of the Cause. The first, which took the title of *God Passes By*, is addressed to the friends in America; and the second, addressed to the friends in the East, is titled "The Tablet of Naw-Rúz 101". Both deal with the touching history of the Cause in the course of the century, a history of persecution and oppression, a history of suffering and victory, a history of joy and love, a history of the growth of the Cause of God, of its rise and of its descent into a wave-tossed sea of happenings, of its evolution from an embryonic state to its triumphant march towards its culminating point determining the destiny of man.

In these two works, literary aptitude of the Guardian and his historical knowledge are fully manifested. His perspective on the destiny of the Cause, his clear vision and analytical power, enlighten us on the development of the divine Revelation and its long path to its apogee: the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

The subjects treated in the two works are analogous, but there is an evident difference in its manner and method of presentation. The book, *God Passes By*, which you have certainly read, is a book of 463 pages apportioned to four historical periods, comprising the ministry of the Báb in five chapters, the ministry of Bahá'u'lláh in eight chapters, the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá' likewise in eight chapters, and finally the dawn of the Formative Age of the Faith in four chapters, a section which ends in a retrospective overview of the past and a prospective vision of the future of the Cause. In contrast, the message of Naw-Rúz of the year 101 is one long tablet of 199 pages (104 manuscript pages written by the Guardian himself and 95 machine-typed pages) which begins with a 3 page Arabic prelude, of rare and exceptional beauty and eloquence, reflecting in their poetic eloquence the Guardian as both mystic historian and as theologian.

In this preface, the expression of salutation and praise to the names and attributes of God is followed by a eulogy to Bahá'u'lláh, listing His titles and characterizations, as well as the titles and characterizations that apply to Him in the prophecies of the Messengers of the past. Then, he offers his praises to the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá', and finally his wishes and his pledges to all that arise to serve and assist the Cause of God.

That which gives particular distinction to this moving preamble, is the number of characterizations, titles and attributes of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá' extracted from the sacred books.⁵ He characterizes Bahá'u'lláh with thirty-six attributes, he presents the Báb with twenty-nine characterizations and lauds 'Abdu'l-Bahá' by means of sixteen titles and attributes. The terms he uses for these characterizations are generally short, the majority composed of two or three well-chosen words.

For example, among the terms he uses to characterize Bahá'u'lláh, one finds: "the Truth of truths", "the Essence of essences", "the Hidden Name", "the Heavenly Father", "the Sovereign of sovereigns", "the Sun of the horizons", "Him Whom God will make Manifest", "the Founder of the Most Great Peace", etc. Among the characterizations of the Báb, one finds: "the great divine Gate", "the Proof of God among the peoples", "the divine and imperishable Face", "the king of the Messengers", etc.

The Arabic paragraphs are very rhythmic and emit a musical vibration. One is not content simply to read or listen to them, one desires to chant them. It is a symphony that fills heart and soul, and when one begins to read them, one relishes, one savours every word.

After this marvellous preamble, he addresses himself to the assemblage of believers and, over six pages, extols this era of God. He makes mention of eleven points to fully describe the importance of the first century of this Revelation. Here are some passages:

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century, this luminous, scintillating, and transcendent Age such that the eye of creation whether of the past or the future has not witnessed its likeness!

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century in which God through His omnipotent Will and all-pervasive Purpose has planted in the midmost point of existence [*qutb-al-áfáq*] the divine lote-tree [*sidrah*], the immortal Tree, and it has grown greatly, became verdant, efflorescent, sent high its branches and become fruitful and spread out its all-encompassing shade over all the world.

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century in the very first night of which the veil of concealment was uplifted and the fragrance of God was wafted and the earth of all existence has been quickened and the canopy of the past Dispensations was rolled up and in which the upright ALIF appeared and the Resurrection did come to pass and the Most Great Gate [Báb] was opened in the face of all nations and from the land of Persia the Light of God, the Most Exalted 'Alí, did shine, and the

veil was lifted from that 'Alid [Ar. 'Alawí] Youth of al-Baṭḥá and the Primal Point around which the spirits of all God's Messengers revolve appeared and was made manifest.

He continues the description of the station and importance of the first age of the Revelation of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, covering another eight subjects, each paragraph beginning by the repetition of:

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century.

He then addresses himself to the night itself of the Declaration of the Báb in the following phrases:

O sacred and holy Night! Upon thee be the most perfect and most glorious greetings! Upon thee be the purest and most radiant salutations!

O solace of the Eye of Creation! O joyous Commencement of the Days of God! O Dawn of the most glorious and honoured Age! And inception of the sacred and majestic Century! Because of thy revelation, O Night, the most great portals were opened unto the face of creation, the most concealed Mystery did reveal Itself, the Most Pre-existent Light did shine forth. Through Thee the Straight Path was outstretched, and the breezes of life-giving Spirit were wafted forth unto all the nations. Because of remembering Thee, Abraham, the Friend of God would rejoice in His inmost heart, and Moses the Interlocutor would be glad in His inmost being, and Jesus Christ the Spirit of God would be enthralled with His entire being, and Muḥammad the loved One would bestir Himself. Because of Thy Advent the Concourse on High were joyous, and hallelujah's of joy were raised from the cherubim, the saints, and the angels nigh unto God. Through Thee all earth and all the heavens were illumined, and in Thee all nights were resurrected, and from Thee all days sought light. The Night of Power circumambulated Thee. Because of thy advent, O Night, the Countenance of Existence wreathed into a smile!

He then embarks on the description of the history and historical events and development of the Cause. His powerful and inspired pen proceeds skilfully along the arena of events, touching on the salient points of history. The perspective he depicts touches on the essential traits of the growth of this Revelation, his brush paints the magnificent tableau of all that has unfolded in the course of the century. He describes the passage of history from the declaration of the Báb, the formation of the Letters of the Living, their missions, the pilgrimage of the Báb to Mecca, his return, the persecutions which ensued and ended in His confinement in Máh-Kú and Chihríq and finally His martyrdom, Bahá'u'lláh's entry to the scene, the scattering of the disciples to teach His Cause, the persecutions of Bahá'u'lláh, His efforts to reunite and guide the disciples of the Báb, His imprisonment, His private declaration, the shooting forth of the waves of animosity against Bahá'u'lláh, His exile in Baghdád, the Sulaymáníyyih days, His return to Baghdád and His public declaration, the inauguration of the Bahá'í Era, His exile to Istanbul, Adrianople and His incarceration in the Most Great Prison, the intrigues of Azal and his collaborators, the revelation of the Mother Book, the Aqdas, the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Centre of the Covenant and His task of expansion of the Faith across the world, His suffering, His voyages to the West and finally the tragic fate of the enemies of the Faith.

This literary masterpiece of the Guardian was revealed for presentation to the friends in the East at Naw-Rúz of the year 101 (1944), but the Guardian wished for it to be unveiled on Riḍván of the same year, in the course of a solemn pilgrimage ceremony which was to unfold at the House of the Báb in Shíráz, on the occasion of the centenary of His proclamation, with the participation of all the delegates that were to gather for Írán's National Convention. The National Spiritual Assembly of Írán took charge of the preparations, and in spite of the restrictions and difficulties imposed by the Second World War, it succeeded in conveying the manuscript of the message from 'Iráq to Shíráz precisely in time for Riḍván.

On the eve of the anniversary of the declaration of the Báb, while all the delegates were gathered in the blessed House of the Báb, inundated by the light of the lustres and candles, the resonance of a beautiful voice chanting the moving preamble to the message—in the very room where one hundred years earlier had witnessed the unveiling of the Báb's mission to Mullá Ḥusayn—made ecstatic tears to flow over the faces of 91 delegates who received the benedictions of a historic night filled with confirmation.

At the end of this message, the beloved Guardian had requested from all who were present at the House of the Báb to perform a pilgrimage on his behalf and implore the confirmation of the Blessed Beauty on his tasks in the service of His Cause, and he finishes the message with a prayer revealed by his blessed pen addressed to the Báb. I would like, to close this evening's talk, to share with you the translation of this prayer:

O God, the Most High! We implore Thee by Thy Name and by Thy blood spread over the earth to grant our prayers and to enable us to nest under the shelter of Thy protecting wings and to shower upon us the rain of Thy generosity and Thy bounty. Assist and aid us to follow Thy path for love of Thee and draw us nigh unto the chord of Thy faithfulness and confirm us in Thy love and in the promulgation of Thy Message.

Preserve us from the darts of them that have denied Thee. Aid us to follow the pathway of Thy Will and to proclaim the Faith of Thy Best-Beloved, the Most Glorious, He in Whose path thou hast sacrificed Thyself, and for the sake of Whose love Thou hast wished for martyrdom.

Deliver us, O our Best Beloved, the Exalted, the Most High. Encourage us and make firm our steps. Forgive us our sins and expiate our trespasses, unloose our tongues, so that we may lift our voices and from our lips may flow Thy praise. Crown our deeds and our labours with the diadem of Thy grace. Make the end of our lives like unto that which Thou didst bestow on the faithful among Thy servants. We supplicate unto Thee to count us among them who have

turned their faces unto Thee and have arisen in Thy service.

Intoxicate us with the glory of Thy presence, and render us immortal in the gardens of Thy holiness. Grant us the grace and bountiful favours of Thy heavenly Kingdom, O Thou Saviour of the world.

The servant at His threshold,
Shoghi

Lawḥ-i-Qarn (Tablet of the Centennial)

Shoghi Effendi Rabbání
Walíy al-Amru'lláh

To the Beloved of God and the handmaids of the Merciful, spiritual brothers and sisters in the countries and territories of the East—Upon them be the purest greetings and praise!

All praise to God, the Single, the One,⁶ the Pre-existent, the Inaccessible;⁷ the Reality endowed with emanating Grace,⁸ the All-Embracing Ipseity,⁹ the Inaccessible,¹⁰ the Unseen,¹¹ the Hidden Treasure,¹² the Origin of all outpouring Grace,¹³ the Cause of all Causes,¹⁴ the Raiser of all Messengers, the Ordainer of all Religions.¹⁵ Alone and single is He;¹⁶ there is no partner unto Him in all the kingdom¹⁷ and there is no peer for Him in all creation. All are His servants; all abide by His Command.¹⁸ All move by His Will.¹⁹ All beseech His bounty. All commence with Him and all shall return unto Him.²⁰ Holy and sanctified is He from that which the Messengers depict of Him or that which those who have attained could mention of Him!

All salutations and glory be upon that greatest Light that hath shone upon all horizons and become resplendent from²¹ the Dawning Place of Illumination, the Ancient Beauty,²² the Most Great Name,²³ the Mystery of Mysteries,²⁴ Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God,²⁵ the Most Splendid, the Most Precious, the Reality of all Realities,²⁶ He, the Quintessence of truth,²⁷ the inmost Reality of all things²⁸ the Source of all light,²⁹ the Essence of all Essences, the Light of all Lights,³⁰ the Reality of Realities,³¹ the Hidden Name,³² the Protected Mystery,³³ the Great Announcement,³⁴ the Universal Manifestation of the Divinity,³⁵ He around Whom the Messengers circumambulate³⁶ and the One Promised in the Books and Scrolls,³⁷ the One mentioned³⁸ by the tongue of Prophets and Messengers,³⁹ the Lord of Hosts,⁴⁰ the Speaker of Sinai,⁴¹ the Builder of the Temple,⁴² the Purifier of all sickness,⁴³ the One Seated upon the Throne of David,⁴⁴ the Heavenly Father,⁴⁵ the Alpha and Omega,⁴⁶ the King of Kings,⁴⁷ the Lord of the kingdom, the Lord of the Day of Judgement,⁴⁸ the Lord of the Covenant, the Lord of the Testament, the Luminary of all the World;⁴⁹ the One manifested in the Name of the Self-Subsistent One,⁵⁰ the One entitled in the Glorious Book,⁵¹ "He Whom God shall make Manifest",⁵² the Awaited Remnant of God,⁵³ the Most Great Beauty to be gazed at by all creation,⁵⁴ the Wronged One of the World, the Quickener of every mouldering bone,⁵⁵ the Raiser of the Edifice of the Most Great Peace amongst all nations, He, through Whose Appearance the sealed choice wine was unsealed,⁵⁶ and God proved the hearts of the entire company of His Messengers and Prophets,⁵⁷ through Whom the anticipated Most Great Catastrophe⁵⁸ did come to pass and the Second Greatest Earthquake⁵⁹ did occur and the Second Trumpet Blast was sounded⁶⁰ and the whole earth was illumined with the light of its Lord⁶¹ and its news was recounted⁶² and its burdens were laid down.⁶³ "When the earth is shaken to its utmost convulsion and the Earth throws up its burdens from within; On that day will she declare her tidings."⁶⁴

Exalted, immeasurably exalted, is His Glory and Might, His Splendour and His sublimity, His Sovereignty, His Dominion and His Majesty!

All greetings and Glory be upon His⁶⁵ Peerless Herald,⁶⁶ the Solace of the Eyes of all the Prophets,⁶⁷ the Most Great Gate of God⁶⁸ the Most Great Remembrance of God,⁶⁹ the Most Honoured, the Most Splendid,⁷⁰ the Proof of God⁷¹ amongst all the Nations, the Pearl of Primal Luminosity,⁷² the Most Exalted 'Alí, the Primal Point, the One Manifest with the evidences of all the Prophets,⁷³ the Countenance of God that shall never die,⁷⁴ the Light of God⁷⁵ that shall never be extinguished, the Promised *al-Qá'im*,⁷⁶ the Expected *al-Mahdí*,⁷⁷ the Morn of Guidance,⁷⁸ the Lord of the Age, the King of Messengers,⁷⁹ through Whose Advent the Resurrection was attained,⁸⁰ the "Hour"⁸¹ did

come to pass and the “Earth” was split asunder, and the heavens were cleft apart,⁸² and the “Mountains” did move,⁸³ and all existence was stupefied⁸⁴ and the Straight path⁸⁵ was outstretched, and the Balance was set up,⁸⁶ and the Fire was made to blaze,⁸⁷ and all those having a burden laid down their burden,⁸⁸ and the Dawn of Guidance⁸⁹ broke upon mankind, and the Greatest Glad-Tidings⁹⁰ were announced, and thereby, the effulgence of the Day-Star of Bahá was brought nigh—a Day-Star whose lights shineth upon the entire creation.

Greetings and praise be upon the Prophets of God⁹¹ and His Envoys, the Temples of Divine Unity,⁹² the Essences of Detachment,⁹³ the Manifestations of God,⁹⁴ the Sanctified Mirrors,⁹⁵ the Consummate Words,⁹⁶ the sanctified Beings, They Whom God hath chosen and ordained as the Manifestations of His Self,⁹⁷ the Descending Places of His Revelation, the Dawning Places of His Light, the Day-Stars of His Cause,⁹⁸ the Trustees of His Mysteries, the Expositors of His Attributes, the Fountainheads of His Wisdom,⁹⁹ the Treasuries of His Inspiration and of His Knowledge, the Repositories of His Utterance, the Ensigns of His Power, the Lamps of His Guidance,¹⁰⁰ the Lights of His Love, the Bearers of His Trust,¹⁰¹ the Sources of His Commandments.¹⁰² Through Them, He hath manifested His Cause¹⁰³ and hath revealed His Book, hath founded His *Sharí‘ah*,¹⁰⁴ and established His Proof. Through Them, He hath caused His Message to be delivered and the glad-tidings to be given concerning the Day of attaining His Presence and Meeting with Him,¹⁰⁵ the Day of Account,¹⁰⁶ the Day of Encounter,¹⁰⁷ the Awesome Day of God,¹⁰⁸ the Day when all mankind shall stand before the Lord of the Worlds.¹⁰⁹

Salutations and peace be upon the Centre of the Covenant of God and of His Testament,¹¹⁰ that most noble and righteous “Mystery of God”,¹¹¹ the Sea that hath branched from the Most Great Ocean,¹¹² the Sublime Exemplar,¹¹³ He around Whom all names circumambulate,¹¹⁴ He Who was purposed by God,¹¹⁵ the Solace of the eyes of Bahá, His Trust amongst His creation, the Interpreter and Expositor of His verses¹¹⁶ and of His words, the Stronghold of His Faith,¹¹⁷ the Shield of His Religion,¹¹⁸ the Promulgator of His Law,¹¹⁹ the Trustee of His secret, the Expounder of the principles of His Order, the Upholder of the banner of His victory, He Who is crowned with the diadem of servitude in the service of His Cause.¹²⁰

Light and Spirit be upon God’s Holy Ones, the Successors of the Prophets, the Chosen Ones of God, His Helpers, His Guides, His Witnesses, and His Saints, Who were chosen by the Prophets and Messengers to promulgate the commandments¹²¹ of God, to expound¹²² His Words, to strengthen the pillars of His Law,¹²³ to assist His Cause, to raise the station of His Religion, to expand His mission, to establish His power, to vindicate His Divine Right, and to withstand the evil¹²⁴ arising from His enemies and adversaries. Greetings and Praise be upon the People of Bahá, the Companions of the snow white banner and the crimson Ark¹²⁵ and upon the Family of the [Holy Tree] and the Leaves and Twigs of that Lote Tree, the Letters of His Book, the Hands of His Cause, the Guides of His Path, the steadfast in His Covenant, those firmly clinging to the Cord of His love, the martyrs in His Path, the spreaders of the divine fragrances, and those engaged in establishing the pillars of His Wondrous Order, the Offspring of His Law¹²⁶ the fruit of His most glorious, most exalted, most holy, most impregnable and peerless Testament.

O concourse of the faithful! At this juncture when the first and most glorious century of the most stupendous Cycle of the Ancient Beauty—a century which, in accord with the testimony of the Centre of the Covenant, is the “effulgent Sun of the earlier centuries and the light-giving Luminary of subsequent ones”¹²⁷—at this time when such a glorious century is on the point of its completion, the loud call of, “O Joy exceeding! O Happiness abundant!” is being raised from the Concourse on High and the joyous sound of celebration, praise and glorification in the Precincts of the divine Sanctuary is being raised in the highest chambers in the midst of the Abhá paradise exclaiming:

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century,¹²⁸ this luminous, scintillating, and transcendent Age, such that the eye of creation, whether of the past or the future, hath not witnessed its likeness!¹²⁹

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century in which God, through His omnipotent Will and all-pervasive Purpose, hath planted in the midmost point of existence¹³⁰ the divine Lote-Tree,¹³¹ the immortal Tree.¹³² It hath grown greatly, became verdant, and efflorescent, sent high its branches and become fruitful, and spread out its all-encompassing shade over all the world.

How great the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous, this most marvellous century, in the very first night¹³³ of which, the veil of concealment was uplifted and the fragrance of God was wafted and the earth of all existence hath been quickened¹³⁴ and the canopy of the past Dispensations was rolled up¹³⁵ and in which the upright ALIF appeared¹³⁶ and the Resurrection did come to pass, and the Most Great Gate¹³⁷ was opened in the face of all nations and, from the land of Persia, the Light of God, the Most Exalted ‘Alí,¹³⁸ did shine, and the veil was lifted from that ‘Alid (Ar. ‘Alawí) Youth of al-Baṭṭhá,¹³⁹ and the Primal Point around which the spirits of all God’s Messengers revolve¹⁴⁰ appeared and was made manifest.

How great is the blessedness that belongeth to this wondrous, this most marvellous Century, in which God came in canopies of clouds!¹⁴¹

How great is the blessedness that belongeth to this wondrous, this most marvellous Century, in which God hath come down in canopies of clouds¹⁴² and the Spirit hath risen,¹⁴³ and the Ancient Beauty of God has come out from behind a

thousand, thousand veils of light and hath lifted that veil from His beauteous Countenance, and in the land of 'Iráq, a glimmer of the fierce and crimson Light of Revelation was manifested.¹⁴⁴ Then was the Second Trumpet Blast blown.¹⁴⁵ Then was established on the Throne of manifestation the One Who held converse with Moses on Sinai,¹⁴⁶ and the Lord did come down with ten thousand saints.¹⁴⁷ And the One around Whom the Point of the Bayán¹⁴⁸ did circumambulate did appear. And the Most Great Spirit did sing in the heart of Bahá and the Beauty of Ḥusayn after the Qá'im¹⁴⁹ shone from behind the veil of concealment and the Father¹⁵⁰ did appear in His great glory¹⁵¹ and the Lord of Hosts descended in the land of the Promise,¹⁵² and the Clarion Call¹⁵³ was raised, and the Divine Caller called from a Near Place.¹⁵⁴ "And listen for the Day when the Caller will call out from a place Near. The day when they will hear a mighty Blast in very truth. That will be the Day of Resurrection."

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, this most marvellous Century in which the earth was shaken¹⁵⁵ to her utmost convulsion,¹⁵⁶ and threw up all her burdens from within,¹⁵⁷ in which "every mother giving suck forgot her suckling babe"¹⁵⁸ in which great hurricanes¹⁵⁹ succeeded each other and great mountains were uprooted and scattered as dust,¹⁶⁰ in which the heavens have been cloven asunder and the earth of existence has been pounded to powder¹⁶¹ and in which faces have become gloomy and dark¹⁶² and in which the "Mystery of the Great Reversal in the Sign of the Sovereign" was made manifest,¹⁶³ and in which the blinding and deafening Temptation¹⁶⁴ protruded itself and the Great Terror¹⁶⁵ appeared and the Raven¹⁶⁶ did crow,¹⁶⁷ and the Most Great Idol¹⁶⁸ fell down and Ṭághút cried out and the pillars of Jibt did quake¹⁶⁹ and the "dreadful years" transpired¹⁷⁰ and the Birds of Night¹⁷¹ moved about and the winds of covenant-breaking were blown and the storms of tests waxed most grievously and certain "branches" became dried up and certain "leaves" were seared and scattered away and the tribes of the earth did mourn¹⁷² and the conflagrations of war and slaughter¹⁷³ reached to high heaven, and that which caused the limbs of mankind to quake¹⁷⁴ did occur and lamentations and wailing were raised on all sides¹⁷⁵ and cities did burn¹⁷⁶ and the lightnings of the day of divine wrath shone and the Great Vengeance was wreaked¹⁷⁷ and desolating and devastating blasts were blown.¹⁷⁸

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century in which the lights of truth and purity were scintillant in the faces of the friends of God and the fire of love and devotion burnt most intensely in the breasts of thousands upon thousands of the chosen ones—those who adhered tenaciously to the luminous Handle,¹⁷⁹ those who tread the snow-white Path,¹⁸⁰ the lovers of the Abhá Beauty and the Countenance of the Primal Point, the upright banners, the piercing flames,¹⁸¹ the incandescent stars,¹⁸² the mighty mountains,¹⁸³ the choicest amongst God's creatures¹⁸⁴ and His chosen ones whom God hath elected for this great honour and whom He hath chosen to vindicate His Proof amongst all mankind and whom He hath made firm in His Mighty Covenant¹⁸⁵ and through whom He hath caused the banners of His Perspicuous Cause to be upraised and the pillars of His wondrous Order to be established and who have been clothed by Him with the raiment of holiness and sanctity and through whom His messages are to be delivered and who have been sent to the field of martyrdom with such evidences as hath attracted the realities of Prophets and Messengers.

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century in which the "seal" of the "sealed choice wine" was broken by the fingers of the Self-Subsisting One¹⁸⁶ and the veils which covered the truths latent in the treasuries of divine protection were lifted away and the "maidens"¹⁸⁷ of inner significances came out from the chambers of words, and the mysteries were thereby unraveled, the glad-tidings were made apparent, the promises and prophecies did come to pass,¹⁸⁸ and allusions and allegories¹⁸⁹ concealed in the depths of the verses of the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospels, the Qur'án, and beyond these, in the traditions¹⁹⁰ of the Chief of the Messengers¹⁹¹ and the Pure Imams and the scrolls of the Saints of God and the narrations of the Trustees of His Secret and the Sources of His Commands,¹⁹² from the earliest to the latest, were disclosed.

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century in which the skin of the denier, the objector and the oppressor, be they kings, sovereigns, caliphs, rulers, 'Ulamá, divines, ministers, the rich and proud ones of the East and the West did tremble.¹⁹³ These are they who waxed proud before God in His First Resurrection¹⁹⁴ and in the Second Resurrection¹⁹⁵ and afterwards in the Epoch of Centre of His Most Mighty, most firm, most exalted Covenant. These are they who alienated themselves from Him, who gainsaid His signs, who charged with falsehood His Proof, Who passed the sentence¹⁹⁶ of death against Him and who breached His honour and decreed His exile, His incarceration, and the imprisonment of His Family and His companions. These are they who scoffed at His envoys and usurped the rights of His saints, who fought against His Trustees and His letters and His guides, and His lovers, and shed the blood of His devotees and the servants of His Cause and sought to disperse the assemblage of His loved ones and preferred to remain heedless of His Proofs and Clear signs and His warnings. In truth their hopes were brought to naught, and their deeds are wasted, and their canopy of comfort was rolled up and God will obliterate their traces and disperse their own gathering and cut off their roots¹⁹⁷ and take hold of them with His power and wrath, and cause them to return to their abode in the depth of the abyss.

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century, in which the Mighty Sign appeared,¹⁹⁸ and the Outspread Roll was inscribed by the Pen of the Supreme,¹⁹⁹ and the Hidden Book, the Crimson Tablet²⁰⁰ was revealed. The firmly built Edifice was founded in the shade of the Tree of *Anísá*,²⁰¹ the Tree of the Covenant and strong Testament—a Covenant and Testament which was entered into in primordial Origin,²⁰² the Most Great Balance was set up, the Lodestone of Divine Confirmation was established. For it is the Ark of Salvation,²⁰³ the Sure Handle,²⁰⁴ the Planted Banner, the Cord outstretched between earth and heaven.²⁰⁵ It hath been ordained as the Balance of everything²⁰⁶ and which is a distinguishing²⁰⁷ bounty of this Supreme Theophany. All this is an evidence

of His omnipotent might and a proof of His grandeur, a glorification of His Law²⁰⁸ and a sure protection for the continued existence²⁰⁹ of His all-pervasive, sacred, awesome and Mighty Cause.

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century in which the Most Great Law was revealed²¹⁰ and the Most Mighty Ocean didst sprinkle upon the nations²¹¹ and the Spirit of Life was breathed into the body of the world and the Ark of God's Laws did sail²¹² and the Balance of Justice²¹³ was established and the New Jerusalem did descend from heaven,²¹⁴ and the Sacred, Most Holy Book emanated from the pen of the Lord of Mankind. For it is the Outspread Roll,²¹⁵ the Pre-Existent Scroll,²¹⁶ the Sublime Document, the Most Exalted Source to be referred thereto, and the Mightiest Proof, the Ocean of Mercy unto all creation, the Lamp²¹⁷ of Salvation in the Kingdom of creation, the Balance of Guidance²¹⁸ amongst men, the Testimony of the All Merciful unto all the peoples of earth and heaven.

Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century in which the foundations of His lofty Palace, His wondrous new Order, were raised up, an Order which is the offspring of His Law,²¹⁹ an Order Whose appearance was anticipated joyously by the Most Great Remembrance of God,²²⁰ the Exalted Báb in His (the Báb's) blessed and glorious Book,²²¹ an Order specifically referred to in the Most Holy Book²²² by its Founder, an Order, the principles of which, as attested by the Supreme Pen, were expounded and elucidated by the Most Great Branch, the Centre of the Covenant, in His Will and Testament through His holy, sacred, and honoured Pen and by His own Hand. Great is the blessedness of this wondrous, most marvellous Century in which a succession of glad-tidings did transpire—glad-tidings emanating from the Supreme Pen and confirmed by the Centre of His all-enfolding Covenant, glad-tidings that speak of the impending establishment of a Divine Civilization,²²³ and of an Everlasting Sovereignty,²²⁴ the Coming into the Realm of being of the Kingdom of God, and the effulgent splendour of the lights of peace and concord amongst all mankind, and the pitching of the Tabernacle of Justice in the midst of the world, and the waving of the banner of independence of His Beneficent Shari'ah, the strengthening of the bonds of unity and agreement and universal human brotherhood and primal oneness of whatever race, class, religion and country, and glad-tidings pertaining to the maturation of the world of humanity unto its utmost perfection²²⁵ such that the earth will be another earth and become in very deed a portion of Paradise whereupon is reflected the lights of the Concourse on High. Then shall the Earth be an Abhá Garden. Then shall all the faithful rejoice.

O sacred and holy Night!²²⁶ Upon thee be the most perfect and most glorious greetings! Upon thee be the purest and most radiant salutations! O solace of the Eye of Creation! O joyous Commencement of the Days of God! O Dawn of the most glorious and honoured Age and inception of the sacred and majestic Century! Because of thy revelation, O Night, the most great portals were opened unto the face of creation, the most concealed Mystery did reveal Itself, and the Most Pre-existent Light did shine forth.²²⁷ Through Thee, the Straight Path was outstretched, and the breezes of life-giving Spirit were wafted forth unto all the nations. Because of remembering Thee, Abraham, the Friend of God would rejoice in His inmost heart, and Moses, the Interlocutor, would be glad in His inmost being, and Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God, would be enthralled with His entire being,²²⁸ and Muḥammad, the loved One would bestir Himself. Because of Thy Advent, the Concourse on High were joyous and hallelujah's of joy were raised from the cherubim, the saints, and the angels nigh unto God.²²⁹ Through Thee, all the earth and all the heavens were illumined and in Thee, all nights were resurrected and from Thee, all days sought their light. The Night of Power circumambulated Thee.²³⁰ Because of thy advent, O Night, the Countenance of Existence wreathed into a smile! The Bird of Divine Unity sang Its melodies in the Highest Point of Heavenly Paradise, and the Cock of the Throne chanted around the Precincts of divine grandeur, and the Crimson Ocean exhibited all its waves, and the Beauty of the Rose did appear, and the veils covering the Beauty of the all-Beloved were lifted so that the hearts of all Prophets and Messengers were amazed and enthralled.

Blessed, a myriad times, blessed is the one who hath recognized Thy station, kept Thy honour and sacredness,²³¹ and witnessed Thy Signs, and derived bounty from Thy gracious emanations, and who has prided himself in Thy mysteries, who hath confessed and averred Thy sovereignty, Thy most exalted, most glorious, most resplendent and unique station!

O People of Bahá!²³² Consider awhile the manner in which the Hand of divine Omnipotence raised, confirmed, aided, blessed, and gave honour and dignity to a mere handful of the servants of God "brought low in the land", appertaining to the Shaykhí School of the Twelver Branch of Shi'ih Islám, men and women who were mere students and who were looked upon by all their compatriots whether they were divines, jurists, men of letters.²³³

Notes

- 1 Dhikru'lláh Khádím. "Service at the Threshold" in *The Vision of Shoghi Effendi: Proceedings of the Association for Bahá'í Studies Ninth Annual Conference*, November 2–4, 1984. (Ottawa: Association for Bahá'í Studies, 1993) pp. 106–7. Dr Varqá also mentions this important work in "Le Style persan du Gardien", pp. 209–219.
- 2 The source text is Rabbání, Shawqí Afandí (Shoghi Effendi). *Lawḥ-i-Qarn-i-Aḥibbá'-i-Sharq*. Tíhrán: MMMA, 123 (MW's note, based on information graciously supplied by Juan R. I. Cole).
- 3 "Le Style Persan du Gardien" in *The Vision of Shoghi Effendi: Proceedings of the Association for Bahá'í Studies Ninth Annual Conference*, November 2–4, 1984. (Ottawa: Association for Bahá'í Studies, 1993), pp. 215–219.
- 4 This introduction was especially translated from the French for this edition of the *Lawḥ-i-Qarn* at the request of the present editor. It is included with the expressed permission of the author, Dr 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá (MW's note).
- 5 Most of the titles given to the Central Figures of the Faith have been footnoted in this edition (MW's note).
- 6 "The One" in Arabic is *Aḥad*. This refers to the Absolute in its absoluteness. The Absolute in its absoluteness is the One, 'Aḥad. The word "one" in this particular context is not the one which is a whole of many. Nor is it one in opposition to many. It means the essential, primordial, absolutely unconditional simplicity of being where the concept of opposition is meaningless. See page 24 of Izutsu (KF's note).
- 7 Many references in the authorized translations; see, e.g. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 5, 144, 148, 245; *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, pp. 5, 18, 31, 112, 209 (MW's note).
- 8 *al-Ḥaqíqat al-Fá'idat*: Note that all things emanate in their essence or subsistence from an entity above them or they receive the effulgence of an attribute from a possessor that is endowed with that attribute or grace. Thus, here, God is described as that *Ḥaqíqat*, that Real Entity Which is active in the outpouring of these emanations and Grace (KF's note).
- 9 *Huwíyat* (KF's note).
- 10 Bahá'u'lláh writes: "The conceptions of the devoutest of mystics, the attainments of the most accomplished amongst men, the highest praise which human tongue or pen can render are all the product of man's finite mind and are conditioned by its limitations. Ten thousand Prophets, each a Moses, are thunderstruck upon the Sinai of their search at His forbidding voice, 'Thou shalt never behold Me!'; whilst a myriad Messengers, each as great as Jesus, stand dismayed upon their heavenly thrones by the interdiction, 'Mine Essence thou shalt never apprehend!' From time immemorial He hath been veiled in the ineffable sanctity of His exalted Self, and will everlastingly continue to be wrapt in the impenetrable mystery of His unknowable Essence. Every attempt to attain to an understanding of His inaccessible Reality hath ended in complete bewilderment, and every effort to approach His exalted Self and envisage His Essence hath resulted in hopelessness and failure." (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 62–3) (MW's note).
- 11 Many references in the Writings, e.g. "... God Himself, glorified be He, is the Unseen, the One concealed and hidden from the eyes of men." (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 13) (MW's note).
- 12 See *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, n. 23 and Moojan Momen. "Abdu'l-Bahá's Commentary on the Islamic Tradition: 'I Was a Hidden Treasure'" *Bahá'í Studies Bulletin* 3:4 (Dec. 1985), pp. 4–35. For the tradition quoted see, Najm al-Dín Abú Bakr Muḥammad 'Ibn Shakávar Asadí Rází. *Manárát as-Sah'yarin*, p. 61. My thanks to J. Vaḥíd Brown for finding this reference (KF's note).
- 13 i.e. of all *Fayḍ*: For *fayḍ*, see the *Book of Certitude* on the Most Holy Outpouring and the Holy Outpouring, pp. 140–141 (KF's note).
- 14 See *Lawḥ-i-Ḥikmat, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 144 (MW's note).
- 15 See *Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 87; *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 104 (MW's note).
- 16 Bahá'u'lláh quotes the tradition, "God was alone; there was none else besides Him" three times in *The Kitáb-i-Íqán* (MW's note).
- 17 *Mulk* (KF's note).
- 18 or 'bidding', 'Amr (KF's note).
- 19 *Mashíyyat* (KF's note)
- 20 Many Qur'anic references, e.g. 2:28, 2:245, 6:60, 6:108, 10:4, 40:77 96:8, etc. (MW's note).
- 21 *min* (KF's note)
- 22 Many references in the Writings, including, e.g. "The Most Great Law is come, and the Ancient Beauty ruleth upon the throne of David." (*Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 89). See also *Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 63, para. 1.123: "The Ancient Beauty is come in His Most Great Name, and He wisheth to admit all mankind into His most holy Kingdom." The title likely has its root from this verse of the Qur'án: "But God will deliver them from the evil of that Day, and will shed over them a Light of Beauty and (blissful) Joy." (Qur'án 76:11) The title 'Ancient of Days', which also occurs frequently in the Writings, is prefigured in Daniel: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13–14) (MW's note).
- 23 Again, many references in the Writings: e.g.: "... He Who is the Ancient Beauty hath come in the Most Great Name, that He may quicken the world and unite its peoples." See Qur'án 59:24: "He is God, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms (or Colours). To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names: whatever is in the heavens and on earth, doth declare His Praises and Glory: and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (MW's note)
- 24 *al-ramz al-munamnam* ("the ornamented symbol"). *Munamnam* appears to be a reference to a property of religious calligraphy in the sense that within one calligraphic writing, many other beautiful details and symbols can be discerned (KF's note).
- 25 Many Biblical references; e.g. Ps. 19:1, Bar. 5:9, Rom. 5:2, 15:7, Rev. 15:8, 21:11, 23. See also Qur'án 57:1, 59:1, 61:1 and 64:1 (MW's note).
- 26 *Ḥaqíqatu'l-Ḥaqá'iq*: The reference to Bahá'u'lláh's station in these terms is in *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, page 92, wherein this title and the two subsequent ones are mentioned (KF's note).
- 27 *Ḥaqíqatu'l-Ḥaqá'iq*. See Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 99 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 28 *Jawharu'l-Jawáhir* (KF's note)
- 29 *Núr'ul-Anwár* (KF's note)
- 30 It is this servant's reading that the term "Reality causing the emanation of all realities" and the "Essence of all Essences" (*Jawhar al-jawáhir*) is mentioned in the writings of the *Shaykh al-Yúnání* (i.e. Plotinus) and subsequently elaborated in ibn-al-

- Arabi's writings; the "Light of all Lights" is frequently in the writings of Suhrawardí and the *Ishráqiyyún* (i.e. the Illuminationists) (KF's note).
- 31 *Haqíqatu'l-Haqá'iq*: An explanation of this entity *Haqíqatu'l-Haqá'iq* is given as follows: It is the creative activity itself of the Absolute, It is the Absolute in Its first stage of eternal Self-manifestation. It is indeed the absolute but not in its primordial Absoluteness; rather in its first stage of Self Revelation [Izutsu, page 236] (KF's note).
- 32 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Revelation 2:17 (MW's note).
- 33 Note: See e.g., *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Section XIV, page 31: "O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who from everlasting had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come' 'All eyes are gladdened for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered hath lifted the veil of glory and uncovered the countenance of Beauty.'" (KF's note).
- 34 Qur'án 78:2-5: "Concerning the Great News, about which they cannot agree. Verily, they shall soon (come to) know! Verily, verily they shall soon (come to) know!" (Yúsuf 'Alí translation) (MW's note).
- 35 *al-Mazharu'l-Kulliyu'l Iláhí* (KF's note).
- 36 Note: See, for example, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Section CXXXIX, p. 302: "Thou hast quaffed the cup which is life indeed from the hands of this Youth around Whom revolve the Manifestations of the All-Glorious and the brightness of Whose presence they Who are the Day Springs of Mercy extol in the day time and the night season." (KF's note).
- 37 See e.g., *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 114-5 (MW's note).
- 38 *al Madhkúr* (KF's note)
- 39 "But for Him no divine messenger would have been invested with the robe of Prophethood, nor would any of the sacred Scriptures have been revealed." *God Passes By*, p. 99 (KF's note).
- 40 Many Biblical references, e.g. 1 Chron. 17:24, 2 Sam. 7:26, Hab. 2:13, Hag. 2:7-9, Is. 1:24, 2:12, 5:7, 9:7, 13:13, 24:23, 47:4, 54:5, Jer. 25:29, Ps. 24:10, etc. 'Abdu'l-Bahá' comments on the meaning of this title in *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, 8:2 (MW's note).
- 41 This is a reference to the Promise of the Imám 'Alí in the *Tutunjiya*: "Anticipate ye the Revelation of Him Who conversed with Moses from the Burning Bush on Sinai." Quoted by Bahá'u'lláh in *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 42 (KF's note).
- 42 See Malachi 3:1 and Zechariah 6:12-13: "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." [Ed. Note: In *God Passes By*, p. 212-3, Shoghi Effendi states that Bahá'u'lláh had identified the "Temple" in Zechariah 6 as the Tablets to the Kings and rulers and the *Súriy-i-Haykal*. See *Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, para. 276. There is also recording the promise of Jesus Christ to the Jews: "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." (Mark 14:58)] (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 43 "And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee." (Deuteronomy 7:15) (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 44 "And he that sat upon the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'" Revelation 21:5. See also Isaiah 9:6-7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 45 Luke 11:13, Matthew 6:32. See also Matthew 15:13: "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 46 "And he said unto me, 'It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.'" Revelation 21:6 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 47 "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Revelation 17:14 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 48 Qur'án 1:1-4: "In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the world; Most Gracious, Most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgement." (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 49 See *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Section CXI, p. 217. (MW's note)
- 50 *Qayyúm* (KF's note)
- 51 The Bayán (KF's note).
- 52 Many references in the Writings of the Báb, e.g. "Say, He Whom God shall make manifest is indeed the Primal Veil of God. Above this Veil ye can find nothing other than God, while beneath it ye can discern all things emanating from God." (*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 131) (MW's note).
- 53 *Baqíyyatu'lláh*. The reference is to the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*, Chap. IX. See *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 47 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 54 "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Revelation 1:7 (MW's note).
- 55 "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." Romans 4:17; "And he makes comparisons for Us, and forgets his own (origin and) Creation: He says, "Who can give life to (dry) bones and decomposed ones (at that)?" Say, "He will give them life. Who created them for the first time! For He is Well-versed in every kind of creation!" Qur'án 36:78-9 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 56 "Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed" Qur'án 83:25. See *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* ¶ 5, p. 21: "Think not that We have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power. To this beareth witness that which the Pen of Revelation hath revealed. Meditate upon this, O men of insight!" (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 57 "By the righteousness of God! These are the days in which God hath proved the hearts of the entire company of His Messengers and Prophets, and beyond them those that stand guard over His sacred and inviolable Sanctuary, the inmates of the celestial Pavilion and dwellers of the Tabernacle of Glory. How severe, therefore, the test to which they who join partners with God must needs be subjected!" (*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Section VIII, p. 11-2) (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 58 Qur'án 79:34. Yúsuf 'Alí translates the phrase as "the Great Overwhelming Event". (KF's note, expanded by MW).

- 59 Qur'án 79:6-7. In the Arabic, these verses read as "*Yawma tarjufu'r-rájifah Tatba'uhá'r-rádifah.*" [KF e-mail] Yúsusf 'Alí translates it as: "One Day everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion. Followed by oft-repeated (commotions)." The Beloved Guardian has "greatest second trumpet blast" as *Rádifatu'l-'Uzmá* (KF's note)
- 60 Bahá'u'lláh writes, "*The second blast hath been blown on the trumpet. On whom are ye gazing? This is your Lord, the God of Mercy.*" (*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 98) (MW's note).
- 61 Qur'án 39:68-69: "The Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except such as it will please God (to exempt). Then will a second one be sounded, when, behold, they will be standing and looking on! And the Earth will shine with the Glory of its Lord: the Record (of Deeds) will be placed (open); the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward and a just decision pronounced between them; and they will not be wronged (in the least)." (Yúsusf 'Alí) (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 62 Qur'án 99:4-5: "On that Day will she declare her tidings: For that thy Lord will have given her inspiration." (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 63 "When the earth is shaken to its utmost convulsion and the Earth throws up its burdens from within. On that day will she declare her tidings." Qur'án 99:2 (Yúsusf 'Alí translation quoted; Sale and Rodwell are similar.) (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 64 Qur'án 99:1-4 (KF's note).
- 65 Bahá'u'lláh's (KF's note).
- 66 the Báb (KF's note).
- 67 Many Qayyúmu'l-Asmá' references, e.g.: "*The angels and the spirits, arrayed rank upon rank, descend, by the leave of God, upon this Gate and circle round this Focal Point in a far-stretching line. Greet them with salutations, O Qurratu'l-'Ayn, for the dawn hath indeed broken; then proclaim unto the concourse of the faithful: 'Is not the rising of the Morn, foreshadowed in the Mother Book [Qur'án 11:83], to be near at hand?'*" *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 50. (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 68 *Báb 'Alláh-al-'Azám*. Note; in the well-known Visitation Prayer and Invocation of the *Shi'ih*s addressed to the promised One, the *Shi'ih*s have to call His Blessed Self *Yá Báb 'Alláh* (reference *Mafatih al-Jinan* by Qummi, Tíhrán and Beirut). The *Shi'ih* believers have a copy in each home and hearth page 1027 reads *as-salám alayka Yá Báb 'Alláh*; that is "Peace be upon Thee, O Gate of God!" (KF's note).
- 69 The Blessed Báb writes: "*O children of men! If ye believe in the one True God, follow Me, this Most Great Remembrance of God sent forth by your Lord, that He may graciously forgive you your sins. Verily He is forgiving and compassionate toward the concourse of the faithful.*" (*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 45) (MW's note).
- 70 *Dhikru'lláh al-Akbar* [Most Great Remembrance of God] *al-Akram* [most honourable] *al-fakhm* [most splendid]: Nabil's Narrative, p. 33 (KF's note).
- 71 *Hujjat'ulláh*. See the *Qayyúmu'l Asmá*, Chap. LXVI, *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 71 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 72 *ad-Durrat-al-'Ulá*: reference to the Qur'anic verse of Light (24:35): "God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! God doth guide whom He will to His Light: God doth set forth Parables for men: and God doth know all things." (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 73 "He shall manifest the perfection of Moses, the splendour of Jesus, and the patience of Job, Knowledge is twenty and seven letters. All that the Prophets have revealed are two letters thereof. No man thus far hath known more than these two letters. But when the Qá'im shall arise He will cause the remaining twenty and five letters to be made manifest." *The Kitáb-i-Íqán* references originally from volume 13/52 of the *Bihár* (KF's note).
- 74 The Blessed Báb has written: "*I am the Primal Point from which have been generated all created things. I am the Countenance of God Whose splendour can never be obscured, the Light of God Whose radiance can never fade. Whoso recognizeth Me, assurance and all good are in store for him, and whoso faileth to recognize Me, infernal fire and all evil await him*" (*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 12) (MW's note).
- 75 "*O Peoples of the earth! Verily the resplendent Light of God hath appeared in your midst,*" (*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 61) (MW's note).
- 76 See e.g. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, pp. 60 and 119 (MW's note).
- 77 Title found in e.g. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 146 (MW's note).
- 78 "Nay, verily: By the Moon, and by the Night as it retreateth, and by the Dawn as it shineth forth; this is but one of the mighty (portents), a warning to mankind to any of you that chooses to press forward, or to follow behind; every soul will be (held) in pledge for its deeds." Qur'án 74:32-7. See also 81:18. (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 79 See the Lawḥ-i-Aḥmad in *Bahá'í Prayers: A Selection of Prayers Revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, The Báb, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 210 (MW's note).
- 80 In this connection, the Báb writes: "*And from the moment when the Tree of the Bayán appeared until it disappeareth is the Resurrection of the Apostle of God, as is divinely foretold in the Qur'án; the beginning of which was when two hours and eleven minutes had passed on the eve of the fifth of Jamádiyu'l-Awwal, AH 1260, which is the year 1270 of the Declaration of the Mission of Muḥammad. This was the beginning of the Day of Resurrection of the Qur'án, and until the disappearance of the Tree of divine Reality is the Resurrection of the Qur'án. The stage of perfection of everything is reached when its resurrection occurreth. The perfection of the religion of Islám was consummated at the beginning of this Revelation; and from the rise of this Revelation until its setting, the fruits of the Tree of Islám, whatever they are, will become apparent.*" (*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 107) (MW's note).
- 81 See Matthew 24:36: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." See also Qur'án 7:187 "They ask thee about the (final) Hour—when will be its appointed time? Say: "The knowledge thereof is with my Lord (alone): None but He can reveal as to when it will occur." (MW's note).
- 82 Qur'án 82:1-5: "When the Sky is cleft asunder; When the Stars are scattered; When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth; And when the Graves are turned upside down;— (Then) shall each soul know what it hath sent forward and (what it hath) kept back." (MW's note).
- 83 See e.g. Qur'án 52:7-11: "Verily, the Doom of thy Lord will indeed come to pass; There is none can avert it; On the Day when the firmament will be in dreadful commotion. And the mountains will fly hither and thither." See also Isaiah 54:10: "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed." (MW's note).
- 84 Qur'án 39:68 (KF's note).

- 85 See e.g. *Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 112: "This is the straight Path, the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength, nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure." (MW's note)
- 86 Qur'an 21:48: "In the past We granted to Moses and Aaron the criterion (for judgment), and a Light and a Message for those who would do right,— See also *Gleanings*, xcvi: "Say: O leaders of religion! Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring balance established amongst men. In this most perfect balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it." (KF's note, expanded by MW)
- 87 Qur'an 81:12-14: "When the Blazing Fire is kindled to fierce heat; And when the Garden is brought near;— (Then) shall each soul know what it has put forward." (KF's note, expanded by MW)
- 88 Qur'an 22:2: "The Day ye shall see it, every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling-babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load (unformed): thou shalt see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk: but dreadful will be the Wrath of God." (MW's note)
- 89 See *Gleanings*, clxi, p. 339: "Be unrestrained as the wind, while carrying the Message of Him Who hath caused the Dawn of Divine Guidance to break." (MW's note).
- 90 Glad-Tidings: symbolic of the guidance of God: See e.g. Acts 13:32 "And we declare unto you glad-tidings." See also Qur'an e.g. 2:119 (MW's note).
- 91 *Anbiyá' Alláh* (KF's note)
- 92 *Hayákil at-Tawhíd*. Note: The first time the term "Temples of Divine Unity" has been used probably is in the sacrosanct narration emanating from the Imám 'Alí and often quoted in the Writings. For example, the Báb cites it in *The Seven Proofs* and Bahá'u'lláh in the *Book of Certitude*. The Imám responded to Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha'í, saying: *al-haqiqatu nurun ashraqa min 'ubh-il-Azal fa yaluhu ala hayákil-at-tawhíd atháruhu*: "The Truth is that Light resplendent from the Morn of Eternity, Whose effects are manifested in the Temples of Divine Unity." (KF's note).
- 93 *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pp. 82, 104, 142, 163. *Tajríd* can also be translated as abstraction: "Essences of Abstraction".
- 94 *al-Mazáhir al-iláhi*. Note: In the writings of the renowned Suhrawardí, who was martyred in CE 1191, he refers to the "*Mazáhir al-Anwár al-'Azam*", the "Supreme and Most Luminous Manifestation". This is found in his book, "*Hayákil-an-Núr*" and quoted in Abu'l-Faql's *Kitábu'l-Fará'id* [Book of Peerless Gems], p. 363. Also, the much beloved Shaykh Aḥmad quotes the father of Majlisi as describing the Imáms as "*Mazáhir al-Asmá' wa aṣ-Ṣifát al-iláhi*"—The "Manifestation of the Divine Names and Attributes". *Sharḥ az-Ziyara*, vol. 1, p. 168. Perhaps because of such expositions and guidance, Bahá'u'lláh writes in ESW 120 "*Meditate and be fair in thy judgement. The followers of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsá'í have, by the aid of God, apprehended that which was veiled from the comprehension of others and of which they remained deprived.*" (KF's note).
- 95 Note: Of course, "Mirror" has many references in the Báb's and Bahá'u'lláh's Writings. [See e.g. *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p.99: "*sanctified Mirrors*."] Interestingly, in the field of teaching, I found that in presenting the station of Jesus during the 3rd century, the Christian Fathers referred to Him as a Mirror. Thus, "When Philip said 'Show us the Father,' He [Jesus] answered: 'He that has seen Me has seen the Father', since the Father was Himself seen through the spotless and living mirror of the Divine Image. In the Psalms, it is said, 'In Thy Light shall we see Light.'" [Psalms 36:9] Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume VI, ¶9 [Emphasis added]. (KF's note).
- 96 *al-Kalimát-at-Tamám*. Note: In the *Súriy-i-Mulúk* (Tablet to the Kings), Bahá'u'lláh addresses the French ambassador and says a Christian must remind himself of the "*Mazáhir al-Kalima al-Injíl*"—the "Manifestations of the Word of the Gospel" or the "Logos" mentioned in the Gospel of John. See *Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, M17, p. 192 (KF's note, expanded by MW).
- 97 *Nafsahú*. The Guardian, in *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, translated this term sometimes as the "Revealer of the Supreme Being" (e.g. p. 97) and once as the "Manifestations of Thy Self" in *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 99 (KF's note).
- 98 'Amr (KF's note)
- 99 *Hikmat* (KF's note)
- 100 See Qur'an 24:35: "God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! God doth guide whom He will to His Light: God doth set forth Parables for men: and God doth know all things." (MW's note)
- 101 "Furthermore, it is evident to thee that the Bearers of the trust of God are made manifest unto the peoples of the earth as the Exponents of a new Cause and the Bearers of a new Message." *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 152 (MW's note).
- 102 *Aḥkám* (pl. of *ḥukm*) (KF's note)
- 103 'Amr (KF's note)
- 104 i.e. Dispensation (KF's note)
- 105 *Yawm al-Liqá'* ("day of the meeting"): Qur'an 6:31, 29:5, 33:44 and many more Qur'anic references. Also, see Amos 4:12, which is quoted by Bahá'u'lláh in *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 145: "Prepare to meet your God." (KF's note).
- 106 See Qur'an 38:16: ("They say: 'Our Lord! hasten to us our sentence (even) before the Day of Account!'", 38:26, 40:27. This phrase is translated also as the "Day of the Reckoning" in *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 64. (KF's note, expanded by MW)
- 107 Qur'an 40:15-16: "(He is) the Lord of the Throne (of Authority): by His Command doth He send the Spirit (of inspiration) to any of His servants he pleases, that it may warn (men) of the Day of Mutual Meeting,—The Day whereon they will (all) come forth: not a single thing concerning them is hidden from God. 'Whose will be the dominion that Day?' That of God, the One, the Irresistible!" (KF's note, expanded by MW)
- 108 cf. Qur'an 26:135: "Truly I fear for you the Penalty of a Great Day." (KF's note, expanded by MW)
- 109 Qur'an 83:6, according to the Yúsf 'Alí translation; Sale and Rodwell are similar. Bahá'u'lláh reveals: "*In truth I say: On this Day the blessed words, 'But He is the Apostle of God and the Seal of the Prophets' have found their consummation in the verse, 'the Day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds.' Render thou thanksgiving unto God for so great a bounty.*" *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 114 (KF's note)
- 110 'Abdu'l-Bahá' (MW's note).
- 111 *Sirru'lláh*, i.e. Shoghi Effendi. *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 134. (MW's note)
- 112 See *The Tablet of the Branch* (KF's note).
- 113 *Mathal al-A'lá'*: the phrase occurs in Qur'an 16:60 and 30:27. (KF's note).
- 114 Reference to the *Lawḥ-i-Arḍ-i-Bá'*: "Praise be to Him Who hath honoured the Land of Bá [i.e. Beirut] through the presence of Him round Whom all names revolve." See *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 227. (MW's note)

- 115 See *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶121, p. 63. (MW's note)
- 116 "... Bahá'u'lláh covenanted ... that 'Abdu'l-Bahá' is the Expounder of the Book and the Centre of His Covenant This is the Covenant which Bahá'u'lláh made. If a person shall deviate, he is not acceptable at the Threshold of Bahá'u'lláh. In case of differences, 'Abdu'l-Bahá must be consulted. They must revolve around his good pleasure." ('Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in *Star of the West*, vol. IV, no. 14 [November 1913]), p. 237–38; cited in the *Compilation on the Covenant*). (MW's note).
- 117 'Amr (KF's note)
- 118 Dín (KF's note)
- 119 *Sharí'ah* (KF's note)
- 120 Note: It is most interesting that after 14 titles and descriptions are disclosed, the 15th and crowning one is the "diadem of servitude". Servitude (*'ubúdiyát*) and slave (*'abd*, as in 'Abdu'l-Bahá) have the tri-lateral root "'Ayn, B, D" and the same root word *'abada* (to serve). (KF's note).
- 121 *aḥkám* (KF's note)
- 122 *tabyín* (KF's note)
- 123 *sharí'ah* (KF's note)
- 124 *sharr* (KF's note)
- 125 Many references to the Crimson Ark in Bahá'u'lláh's Writings. See, for example, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 97: "The glory which proceedeth from God, the Lord of the Throne on High and of the earth below, rest upon you, O people of Bahá, O ye the companions of the Crimson Ark, and upon such as have inclined their ears to your sweet voices and have observed that whereunto they are bidden in this mighty and wondrous Tablet." (MW's note)
- 126 *sharí'ah* (KF's note)
- 127 From *Min Makátib 'Abdu'l-Bahá* [Tablet 122] dedicated to the covenant starting *Yá man istabshara bi Bishárát Alláh*. [Reference added based on personal email communication from translator, dated Tuesday, 5 December 2000.] For an overview of the Bahá'í view of the 20th century, see Universal House of Justice, *Century of Light*. (MW's note, based partially on information from KF)
- 128 There is an Arabic adjective *Bádí'*, which means "marvellous" or "wondrous". This same adjective occurs in the superlative form as *abda'* or "most marvellous". The Guardian calls the first Bahá'í Century (1844–1944) *Qarn al-abda' al-badí'* (this Wondrous and Most Marvellous Century). The numerical difference between these two forms of the same adjective is NINE, which is exactly the difference between *azím* and *a'zam* ["great" and "most great", respectively] and also between *qá'im* and *qayyúm*. It is this servant's humble suggestion that these two adjectives, which occur in the exclamation, "Great is the blessedness that pertains to this wondrous and most marvellous century", itself repeated 12 times, in a sense, depicts both the Revelations of the Báb and of Bahá'u'lláh. In *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, the Báb's Dispensation is called "bádí'" or "this wondrous revelation" (See *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 252) (KF's note).
- 129 'Abdu'l-Bahá' describes the luminosity of this century in what has been termed the 'seven candles' of unity: "The first candle is unity in the political realm, the early glimmerings of which can now be discerned. The second candle is unity of thought in world undertakings, the consummation of which will erelong be witnessed. The third candle is unity in freedom which will surely come to pass. The fourth candle is unity in religion which is the corner-stone of the foundation itself, and which, by the power of God, will be revealed in all its splendour. The fifth candle is the unity of nations—a unity which in this century will be securely established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as citizens of one common fatherland. The sixth candle is unity of races, making of all that dwell on earth peoples and kindreds of one race. The seventh candle is unity of language, i.e., the choice of a universal tongue in which all peoples will be instructed and converse. Each and every one of these will inevitably come to pass, inasmuch as the power of the Kingdom of God will aid and assist in their realization." (*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 32). Interestingly, Bahá'u'lláh is portrayed in the Apocalypse of St. John among seven golden candlesticks that hold seven candles. See Revelation 1:12–3. The candlesticks are denoted as 'seven churches', but, mystically, could perhaps also be identified with the candles of unity (MW's note).
- 130 *quṭb al-áfáq* (KF's note)
- 131 *Sidr* or *Sadra* (KF's note)
- 132 Possible allusions to the allegory of Adam and Eve, though the connections are unclear (MW's note).
- 133 22 May 1844 (KF's note)
- 134 cf. Qur'án 22:5: "... thou seest the earth barren and lifeless, but when We pour down rain on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells, and it puts forth every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs)." (KF's note)
- 135 *ṭawíya*; See Qur'án 21:104: "The Day that We roll up the heavens like a scroll rolled up for books (completed), even as We produced the first creation, so shall We produce a new one: a promise We have undertaken: truly shall We fulfil it." See also *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 60, Section xxv: "The Prophetic Cycle hath, verily, ended. The Eternal Truth is now come." (KF's note, expanded by MW)
- 136 See *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶157 and note 172 on the UPRIGHT ALIF. Note 172 reads as follows: In his writings, *Shaykh* Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í placed great emphasis on the Arabic letter *Wáw*. In *The Dawn-Breakers*, Nábíl states that this letter "symbolized for the Báb the advent of a new cycle of Divine Revelation, and has since been alluded to by Bahá'u'lláh in *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* in such passages as 'the mystery of the Great Reversal' and 'the Sign of the Sovereign'". The name for the letter *Wáw* consists of three letters: *Wáw, Alif, Wáw*. According to the *abjad* reckoning, the numerical value of each of these letters is 6, 1 and 6 respectively. Shoghi Effendi, in a letter written on his behalf to one of the believers in the East provides an interpretation of this verse of the *Aqdas*. He states that the "Upright *Alif*" refers to the advent of the Báb. The first letter with its value of six, which comes before the *Alif*, is a symbol of earlier Dispensations and Manifestations which predate the Báb, while the third letter, which also has a numerical value of six, stands for Bahá'u'lláh's supreme Revelation that was made manifest after the *Alif*. (MW's note)
- 137 The Báb (KF's note)
- 138 Reference to the blessed name 'Alí-Muḥammad (The Báb) (MW's note).
- 139 Note on the 'Alid (Ar. 'Alawí) Youth of al-Baṭḥá. In the Commentary on the Sura of Joseph, the Báb's first revelation, He is called by the Voice of God the AL-ALAWÍ AL-ABṬAḤÍ ("the Youth of al-Abṭaḥ")—the "Youth with the attributes of both 'Alí and Baṭḥá [Mecca]". Here, Baṭḥá refers to Muḥammad. Thus, the Báb has the attributes of both the Imám 'Alí and the Prophet Muḥammad. The Báb was both the 12th Imám and the Return of the Prophet, Who was the Point of the Furqán, and in His Name He combined the appellations of 'Alí and of Muḥammad. (KF's note)

- 140 Note on the Point. There is a tradition attributed to the Imám ‘Alí and quoted by the Master, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His magnificent *Makátib*, vol. 1, p. 41: “All that is in the Torah and the Gospels and the Psalms is in the Qur’án. All that is in the Qur’án is in the *Fátiha* [the first chapter]. All that is in the Opening Chapter is in the First 19 letters [i.e. *Bismi’lláh*] and all that is in the “*Bismi’lláh*” is in the Letter *Bá’*. And all that is in the Letter *Bá’* is in the Point (*Nuqṭa*).” Thus, in the Book of Divine Revelation, all revolves around the Point and in all the Tablets and also here, the Báb is called the “Point around Whom all the Spirits revolve”. Bahá’u’lláh writes in *Tablets*, p. 101.
 “When He purposed to call the new creation into being, He sent forth the Manifest and Luminous Point [the Báb] from the horizon of His Will; it passed through every sign and manifested itself in every form until it reached the zenith, as bidden by God, the Lord of all men.
 “This Point is the focal centre of the circle of Names and marketh the culmination of the manifestations of Letters in the world of creation.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 141 *Atá-Alláh*; See *Gleanings*, section XVIII, pp. 43–45: “Say: Is there any doubt concerning God? Behold how He hath come down from the heaven of His grace.” See also *Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 182: “Say, God is my witness! The Promised One Himself hath come down from heaven, seated upon the crimson cloud with the hosts of revelation on His right, and the angels of inspiration on His left, and the Decree hath been fulfilled at the behest of God, the Omnipotent, the Almighty.” Also see Qur’án 2:210: “Will they wait until God comes down unto them in canopies of clouds.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 142 cf. Daniel 7:13, Jer. 4:13, Mark 13:26, Matt. 24:30, Revelation 1:7 (MW’s note)
- 143 Qur’án 78:38: “On the Day the Spirit will rise.” [Editor’s note: This could also be a reference to ‘Ísá (Yeshua).] (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 144 *World Order of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 101: “‘And when the appointed hour hath struck, He [the *Ḥaḍrat-i-Báb*] again addresses Bahá’u’lláh in that same commentary, ‘do Thou, by the leave of God, the All-Wise, reveal from the heights of the Most Lofty and Mystic Mount a faint, an infinitesimal glimmer of Thy impenetrable Mystery, that they who have recognized the radiance of the Sinaic Splendour may faint away and die as they catch a lightening glimpse of the fierce and crimson Light that envelops Thy Revelation.’” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 145 *Gleanings* p. 44: “How long will ye sleep? The second blast hath been blown.” Also, cf. Qur’án 39:69: “... for the two blasts of the Trumpet.” (MW’s note)
- 146 A reference to that most famous sermon of Imám ‘Alí, the *Tutunjiya*, quoted in the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*: “Anticipate ye the Advent of the One Who held converse on Sinai [*Mutakallim at-Ṭúr*].” (KF’s note)
- 147 Deuteronomy 33 wherein Revelations at Sinai, Seir and Páran are mentioned; in the forth and last, the Lord shall come with ten thousand saints. See also *God Passes By*. See also Jude 1:14–5: “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.’” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 148 The Báb (MW’s note)
- 149 Bahá’u’lláh makes explicit reference to this prophecy in *Gleanings* IX, p.12 (MW’s note)
- 150 Isaiah 9:6. (MW’s note)
- 151 Matthew 16:27: “... the Son shall return in the glory of His Father.” (KF’s note)
- 152 ‘The Promise’ here refers to the promise given to Abraham, recorded in Genesis: “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, ‘I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.’ And God said unto Abraham, ‘Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.’” (Gen. 17:1–2; 4–11) (MW’s note)
- 153 *ṣayḥat*; See Qur’án 50:42 (KF’s note)
- 154 Qur’án 50:41–42: “And listen for the Day when the Caller will call out from a place quiet near,—The Day when they will hear a (mighty) Blast in (very) truth: that will be the Day of Resurrection.” “The Place Near” is Palestine in relation to Arabia, according to Mírzá ‘Abú’l-Faḍl’s *Kitábu’l-Fará’id*. (KF’s note)
- 155 See Haggai 2:6–7: “For thus saith the Lord of hosts; ‘Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory,’ saith the Lord of hosts.” See also, e.g. Isaiah 13:13: “Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.” Also Joel 3:16 (MW’s note)
- 156 See *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 28 (MW’s note)
- 157 cf. Qur’án 99:1 “When the Earth is shaken to her utmost convulsion and it throws up her burdens from within and man cries distressed: ‘What is the matter with her?’” (KF’s note)
- 158 Qur’án 22:2: “The Day ye shall see it, every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling-babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load (unformed): thou shalt see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk: but dreadful will be the Wrath of God.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 159 Mentioned once in the Qur’án in 33:9 (MW’s note).
- 160 Qur’án 20:105: “They ask thee concerning the Mountains, say: ‘My Lord will uproot them and scatter them as dust.’” Also see Bahá’u’lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 132: “‘Have the tree-stumps been uprooted?’ Yea, more; the mountains have been scattered in dust; by Him the Lord of attributes.” See also Hab. 3:6. (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 161 Qur’án 89:21 says: “When the Earth is pounded to powder and Thy Lord cometh” The Guardian discloses: the earth of “*wújúd*” or “existence” is pounded. (KF’s note)
- 162 Qur’án 3:106 and 39:60: “On the Day of Judgement wilt thou see those who told lies; their faces will be turned gloomy and dark.” (KF’s note)

- 163 See *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶157, and also note 171: “Through this Reversal He hath caused the exalted to be abased and the abased to be exalted. In the days of Jesus it was those who were distinguished for their learning, the men of letters and religion who denied Him whilst humble fishermen made haste to gain admittance into the Kingdom.” See also KA note 172. (KF’s note)
- 164 *barázát* (KF’s note)
- 165 Qur’án 21:103 (MW’s note).
- 166 That is, the ‘raven of discord’, as mentioned in the *Súriy-i-Ra’is*, R 15; more specifically Siyyid Muḥammad-i-Iṣfahání. (MW’s note)
- 167 *na’āqa* (or *na’iq*) refers to both the bellowing of the Golden Calf and the crowing of the Raven (KF’s note).
- 168 Mírzá Yaḥyá (MW’s note).
- 169 The Great Temptation is the Great *Fitnah*. It was prophesied in the *Shi’a* traditions that, contemporaneous with the Advent of the Promised One, this *Fitnah* (i.e. Temptation, Sedition and Insurrection, blinding and deafening in its ferocity), would come to pass. See *Biḥar al-Anwár*, volumes 51–52; the chapter on *tamḥiṣ* [testing]. Also many references in the letters of in *Tárikh Zuhúr al-Ḥaqq*, volume 3. The Great Terror is mentioned in the Qur’án 21:103. The Most Great Idol and *Tághút* are both interpreted in Bahá’í Sacred Writings as Mírzá Yaḥyá (Azal). See the reference in *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 132 and *God Passes By*, p. 170. “Write us down with such of Thy servants as have repudiated the Idol (Mírzá Yaḥyá) and firmly believed in Thee, and been so established on the throne of certitude that the whisperings of the Evil One have been powerless to hinder them...” For *Jibt* (see also Qur’án 4:51) sorcery, divination any false belief, *Tághút* the evil that exceeds all bounds. There is a beautiful exposition on these two terms in *Sharḥ az-Ziyára*, [volume 3] in which those who recognized the radiance of the Sinaic Splendour fainted away and died [WOB page 101] and in which light was turned into fire. This is a reference to an utterance of the Báb quoted in *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 173: “How many the fires which God converteth into light through Him Whom God shall make manifest and how numerous the lights which are turned into fire through Him” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 170 Qur’án 12:48–9: “Then will come after that (period) seven dreadful (years), which will devour what ye shall have laid by in advance for them,—(all) except a little which ye shall have (specially) guarded. Then will come after that (period) a year in which the people will have abundant water, and in which they will press (wine and oil).” (KF’s note expanded by MW)
- 171 Bahá’u’lláh identifies the covenant-breakers as the ‘birds of night’ in both the *Lawḥ-i-Bulbulu’l-Firáq* (Tablet of the Nightingale of Bereavement) and also in the *Súrih-i-Ṣabr* (Sura of Patience), otherwise known as *Lawḥ-i-Ayyub* (Tablet of Job). (MW’s note)
- 172 See Matthew Chapter 24 and expounded by the Supreme Pen in the *Book of Certitude*. (KF’s note)
- 173 “But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number. Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.” (Isaiah 65:11–12) (MW’s note)
- 174 Bahá’u’lláh writes: “This is the Announcement, the greatness of which hath been mentioned in most of the Books of old and of more recent times. This is the Announcement that hath caused the limbs of mankind to quake, except such as God, the Protector, the Helper, the Succorer, hath willed to exempt. Men have indeed with their own eyes witnessed how all men and all things have been thrown into confusion and been sore perplexed, save those whom God hath chosen to exempt.” (*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 143–4) (MW’s note)
- 175 “Therefore the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus; ‘Wailing shall be in all streets; and they shall say in all the highways, ‘Alas! alas!’ and they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skillful of lamentation to wailing. And in all vineyards shall be wailing: for I will pass through thee’, saith the Lord.” (Amos 5:16–7) Christ prophesies: “The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13:41–2) (MW’s note)
- 176 Interestingly, in *Revelation*, we have the vision of Babylon, the great city: “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.’” (Revelation 18:8–10) (MW’s note)
- 177 See *The Promised Day is Come*, pp. 3–4:
 “A tempest, unprecedented in its violence, unpredictable in its course, catastrophic in its immediate effects, unimaginably glorious in its ultimate consequences, is at present sweeping the face of the earth. Its driving power is remorselessly gaining in range and momentum. Its cleansing force, however much undetected, is increasing with every passing day. Humanity, gripped in the clutches of its devastating power, is smitten by the evidences of its resistless fury. It can neither perceive its origin, nor probe its significance, nor discern its outcome. Bewildered, agonized and helpless, it watches this great and mighty wind of God invading the remotest and fairest regions of the earth, rocking its foundations, deranging its equilibrium, sundering its nations, disrupting the homes of its peoples, wasting its cities, driving into exile its kings, pulling down its bulwarks, uprooting its institutions, dimming its light, and harrowing up the souls of its inhabitants.
 “‘The time for the destruction of the world and its people,’ Bahá’u’lláh’s prophetic pen has proclaimed, ‘hath arrived.’ *The hour is approaching,*’ He specifically affirms, ‘when the most great convulsion will have appeared.’ *The promised day is come, the day when tormenting trials will have surged above your heads, and beneath your feet, saying: “Taste ye what your hands have wrought!”*’ *Soon shall the blasts of His chastisement beat upon you, and the dust of hell enshroud you.*’ And again: ‘And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake.’ *The day is approaching when its [civilization’s] flame will devour the cities, when the Tongue of Grandeur will proclaim: “The Kingdom is God’s, the Almighty, the All-Praised!”*’ *The day will soon come,*’ He, referring to the foolish ones of the earth, has written, ‘whereon they will cry out for help and receive no answer.’ *The day is approaching,*’ He moreover has prophesied, ‘when the wrathful anger of the Almighty will have taken hold of them. He, verily, is the Omnipotent, the All-Subduing, the Most Powerful. He shall cleanse the earth from the defilement of their corruption, and shall give it for an heritage unto such of His servants as are nigh unto Him.’” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 178 Qur’án 41:51: “We sent the devastating Wind.” For “widespread desolation of the human spirit”, see the Riḍván Message BE 155. (KF’s note)
- 179 Qur’án 2:256: “Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God heareth and knoweth all things.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)

- 180 *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 70 line 8: “The heart must needs therefore be cleansed from the idle sayings of men, and sanctified from every earthly affection, so that it may discover the hidden meaning of divine inspiration, and become the treasury of the mysteries of divine knowledge. Thus hath it been said: ‘He that treadeth the snow-white Path, and followeth in the footsteps of the Crimson Pillar, shall never attain unto his abode unless his hands are empty of those worldly things cherished by men.’” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 181 Qur’án 37:6–10: “We have indeed decked the lower heaven with beauty (in) the stars,—(For beauty) and for guard against all obstinate rebellious evil spirits, (So) they should not strain their ears in the direction of the Exalted Assembly but be cast away from every side, Repulsed, for they are under a perpetual penalty, Except such as snatch away something by stealth, and they are pursued by a flaming fire, of piercing brightness.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 182 Recall the statement in *Gleanings*: “O friends! ... Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding ...” (p. 196). (MW’s note)
- 183 Qur’án 26:64: “Then We told Moses by inspiration: “Strike the sea with thy rod.” So it divided, and each separate part became like the huge, firm mass of a mountain.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 184 *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 146. (KF’s note)
- 185 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ affirms that the Bahá’í Covenant is “... a Covenant so firm and mighty that from the beginning of time until the present day no religious Dispensation hath produced its like.” (‘Abdu’l-Bahá’, cited in *The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 136) (MW’s note)
- 186 Qur’án 83:25–8: “Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed: The seal thereof will be Musk: And for this let those aspire, who have aspirations: With it will be (given) a mixture of Tasním: A spring, from (the waters) whereof drink those Nearest to God.” See also Bahá’u’lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶5. (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 187 *Húr* (houris): See Qur’án 56:22–6: “And (there will be) Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes,—Like unto Pearls well-guarded. A Reward for the deeds of their past (life). Not frivolity will they hear therein, nor any taint of ill,—Only the saying, “Peace! Peace!”” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 188 See, e.g.: “The time foreordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled.” *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, Section x, p. 12–13. (MW’s note)
- 189 *Ramz* (mysterious allusion, enigma; pl. *rúmúz*) and *ishára* (hint, clue, sign; pl. *ishárát*). (KF’s note)
- 190 *al-ḥadīth* (pl. *al-aḥádīth*) (KF’s note)
- 191 Muḥammad (MW’s note).
- 192 *Aḥkám* (KF’s note).
- 193 Qur’án 39:23: “God has revealed (from time to time) the most beautiful Message in the form of a Book, consistent with itself, (yet) repeating (its teaching in various aspects): the skins of those who fear their Lord tremble thereat; then their skins and their hearts do soften to the celebration of God’s praises. Such is the guidance of God: He guides therewith whom He pleases, but such as God leaves to stray, can have none to guide.” The outer integument receives the first impact of the stimulus of divine disclosure. Bahá’u’lláh promises that in the coming Day, “the very skins of men shall creep” (*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 38). (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 194 i.e. The Báb (MW’s note)
- 195 Bahá’u’lláh (MW’s note)
- 196 *fatwá* (KF’s note).
- 197 Qur’án 8:7–8: “Behold! God promised you one of the two (enemy) parties, that it should be yours: Ye wished that the one unarmed should be yours, but God willed to justify the Truth according to His words and to cut off the roots of the Unbelievers;—That He might justify Truth and prove Falsehood false, distasteful though it be to those in guilt.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 198 *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá’u’lláh*, Section 177. (KF’s note)
- 199 Qur’án 52:3. See also *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá’u’lláh*, Section 7: “I beseech Thee by this Revelation whereby darkness hath been turned into light through which the Frequented Fane hath been built and the Written Tablet revealed, and the Outspread Roll uncovered ...” (KF’s note)
- 200 The “Hidden Book”, and “the Crimson Tablet” are both references to the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. (MW’s note)
- 201 In *God Passes By*, pp. 238–9, Shoghi Effendi quotes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’, Who notes that the people have been gathered at this Tree, which symbolizes the tree of life, to receive the new Covenant. (MW’s note)
- 202 *dharr-al-baqá* (KF’s note).
- 203 See Revelation 11:19: “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.” (MW’s note)
- 204 *‘urwatu’l-wuṭṭá*, literally hand-hold (KF’s note).
- 205 ‘Cord’ is used most often in the Writings to denote the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh Itself, e.g. see *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶ 117. However, Bahá’u’lláh also makes mention of ‘the Extended Cord’ in *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 106, which could conceivably be a reference to the growth of local Assemblies at the time. (MW’s note)
- 206 *kullu-shay’* (KF’s note).
- 207 *ikhtisás*: a distinguishing feature, peculiar feature, specialty (KF’s note).
- 208 *Sharí’ah* (KF’s note)
- 209 *kiyan* (KF’s note)
- 210 *Námús al-Akbar* (“The Most Great Law”—the UHJ constitution): a term within the text of the *Aqdas* (KA ¶81). (KF’s note)
- 211 *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶91.
- 212 Possibly a reference to the *Lawḥ-i-Karmil*: “Verily this is the Day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the Day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.” (*Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 5). (MW’s note)
- 213 “Say: This is the infallible Balance which the Hand of God is holding, in which all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth are weighed, and their fate determined, if ye be of them that believe and recognize this truth. Say: This is the Most Great Testimony, by which the validity of every proof throughout the ages hath been established, would that ye might be assured thereof. Say: Through it the poor have been enriched, the learned enlightened, and the seekers enabled to ascend unto the presence of God.” (*The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶183)
- 214 See Revelation 3:12 and 21:2: “And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” See also Bahá’u’lláh’s reference to this prophecy: “A Great City hath descended from heaven,

- and Zion trembleth and exulteth with joy at the Revelation of God, for it hath heard the Voice of God on every side.” (*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 145). (MW’s note)
- 215 Qur’án 52:1–9: “By the Mount (of Revelation), By a Decree inscribed in a Scroll unfolded; By the much-frequented Fane; By the Canopy Raised High; And by the Ocean filled with Swell;—Verily, the Doom of thy Lord will indeed come to pass;—There is none can avert it;— On the Day when the firmament will be in dreadful commotion.” (KF’s note, expanded by MW)
- 216 See Qur’án 52:3 (MW’s note).
- 217 See *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶29: “The sincere among His servants will regard the precepts set forth by God as the Water of Life to the followers of every faith, and the Lamp of wisdom and loving providence to all the denizens of earth and heaven.” See also *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶186: “This is a Book which hath become the Lamp of the Eternal unto the world, and His straight, undeviating Path amidst the peoples of the earth.” (MW’s note)
- 218 See e.g. Qur’án 55:7–8: “He has set up the Balance (of Justice), In order that ye may not transgress (due) balance.” See also *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* ¶183: “Say: This is the infallible Balance which the Hand of God is holding, in which all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth are weighed, and their fate determined, if ye be of them that believe and recognize this truth.” (MW’s note)
- 219 In *God Passes By* (p. 243), Shoghi Effendi refers to the Administrative Order as the ‘Child of the Covenant’ (ibn al-‘Ahd). He also uses this term as denoting the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’. See *The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 144. (MW’s note)
- 220 The passage referred to here is *Vahíd* 3, Báb 16 of the *Bayán-i-Fársí*, and is translated by the Guardian in *God Passes By*, p. 25: “Well is it with him who fixeth his gaze upon the Order of Bahá’u’lláh, and rendereth thanks unto his Lord. For He will assuredly be made manifest. God hath indeed irrevocably ordained it in the Bayán.” For a discussion of the conception of ‘order’ in the Bahá’í and Bábí Writings, see Ismael Velasco, “The Order of Bahá’u’lláh (*Nazm-i-Bahá’u’lláh*) in the Báb’s Persian Bayán”, paper presented to the ‘Irfán Colloquium, July 2002. (MW’s note)
- 221 The Bayán (MW’s note).
- 222 *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, ¶181. (KF’s note)
- 223 *Madaniyat al-Iláhiya* (KF’s note).
- 224 *as-Salṭanat al-Azalíya* (KF’s note).
- 225 *kamál* (KF’s note)
- 226 Here follows an apostrophe by the Guardian addressing the night of the Declaration (22 May 1844) and the inception of the Bahá’í Cycle. (KF’s note)
- 227 In His Own address to the Night of His Declaration, the Báb writes: “O Hour of the Dawn! Ere the resplendent glory of the divine Luminary sheddeth its radiance from the Dayspring of this Gate, call thou to mind that the appointed Day of God will indeed be at hand in less than the twinkling of an eye. Thus hath the decree of God been issued in the Mother Book.” (*Qayyúmu’l-Asmá*, Súra xciv, *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 69). (MW’s note)
- 228 *bi kullíyatahu* (KF’s note).
- 229 “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” (Revelation 19:6). (MW’s note)
- 230 The Night of Power (*Laylah al-qadr*) is mentioned in Qur’án 97:1: “We have revealed This in the Night of Power.” The Night of Power transcends Time, for it is God’s Power dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance. (KF’s note)
- 231 For a discussion on early Bahá’í practices on the Night of the Báb’s declaration, see J. R. I. Cole, translation and commentary on the *Lawh-i-Laylat al-Quds* (Tablet of the Sacred Night). (MW’s note)
- 232 After the eulogy and apostrophe addressed to the Blessed Night, the Persian section starts. (KF’s note)
- 233 Translation breaks off here (MW’s note).