

BAHÁ'Í FAITH

The Kitáb-i-Aqdas

The central book of laws written by Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í Faith.
Presents the complete authorized 1992 English translation (Universal House of
Justice / Bahá'í World Centre), including the Questions and Answers appendix.

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Questions and Answers

The Kitáb-i-Aqdas

¹ The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. It behooveth everyone who reacheth this most sublime station, this summit of transcendent glory, to observe every ordinance of Him Who is the Desire of the world. These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is acceptable without the other. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Source of Divine inspiration.

² They whom God hath endued with insight will readily recognize that the precepts laid down by God constitute the highest means for the maintenance of order in the world and the security of its peoples. He that turneth away from them is accounted among the abject and foolish. We, verily, have commanded you to refuse the dictates of your evil passions and corrupt desires, and not to transgress the bounds which the Pen of the Most High hath fixed, for these are the breath of life unto all created things. The seas of Divine wisdom and Divine utterance have risen under the breath of the breeze of the All-Merciful. Hasten to drink your fill, O men of understanding! They that have violated the Covenant of God by breaking His commandments, and have turned back on their heels, these have erred grievously in the sight of God, the All-Possessing, the Most High.

³ O ye peoples of the world! Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants, and the keys of My mercy for My creatures. Thus hath it been sent down from the heaven of the Will of your Lord, the Lord of Revelation. Were any man to taste the sweetness of the words which the lips of the All-Merciful have willed to utter, he would, though the treasures of the earth be in his possession, renounce them one and all, that he might vindicate the truth of even one of His commandments, shining above the Dayspring of His bountiful care and loving-kindness.

⁴ Say: From My laws the sweet-smelling savor of My garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of Victory will be planted upon the highest peaks. The Tongue of My power hath, from the heaven of My omnipotent glory, addressed to My creation these words: "Observe My commandments, for the love of My beauty." Happy is the lover that hath inhaled the divine fragrance of his Best-Beloved from these words, laden with the perfume of a grace which no tongue can describe. By My life! He who hath drunk the choice wine of fairness from the hands of My bountiful favor will circle around My commandments that shine above the Dayspring of My creation.

⁵ 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!

⁶ We have enjoined obligatory prayer upon you, with nine rak'ahs, to be offered at noon and in the morning and the evening unto God, the Revealer of Verses. We have relieved you of a greater number, as a command in the Book of God. He, verily, is the Ordainer, the Omnipotent, the Unrestrained. When ye desire to perform this prayer, turn ye towards the Court of My Most Holy

Presence, this Hallowed Spot that God hath made the Center round which circle the Concourse on high, and which He hath decreed to be the Point of Adoration for the denizens of the Cities of Eternity, and the Source of Command unto all that are in heaven and on earth; and when the Sun of Truth and Utterance shall set, turn your faces towards the Spot that We have ordained for you. He, verily, is Almighty and Omniscient.

⁷ Everything that is hath come to be through His irresistible decree. Whenever My laws appear like the sun in the heaven of Mine utterance, they must be faithfully obeyed by all, though My decree be such as to cause the heaven of every religion to be cleft asunder. He doeth what He pleaseth. He chooseth, and none may question His choice. Whatsoever He, the Well-Beloved, ordaineth, the same is, verily, beloved. To this He Who is the Lord of all creation beareth Me witness. Whoso hath inhaled the sweet fragrance of the All-Merciful, and recognized the Source of this utterance, will welcome with his own eyes the shafts of the enemy, that he may establish the truth of the laws of God amongst men. Well is it with him that hath turned thereunto, and apprehended the meaning of His decisive decree.

⁸ We have set forth the details of obligatory prayer in another Tablet. Blessed is he who observeth that whereunto he hath been bidden by Him Who ruleth over all mankind. In the Prayer for the Dead six specific passages have been sent down by God, the Revealer of Verses. Let one who is able to read recite that which hath been revealed to precede these passages; and as for him who is unable, God hath relieved him of this requirement. He, of a truth, is the Mighty, the Pardoner.

⁹ Hair doth not invalidate your prayer, nor aught from which the spirit hath departed, such as bones and the like. Ye are free to wear the fur of the sable as ye would that of the beaver, the squirrel, and other animals; the prohibition of its use hath stemmed, not from the Qur'án, but from the misconceptions of the divines. He, verily, is the All-Glorious, the All-Knowing.

¹⁰ We have commanded you to pray and fast from the beginning of maturity; this is ordained by God, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers. He hath exempted from this those who are weak from illness or age, as a bounty from His Presence, and He is the Forgiving, the Generous. God hath granted you leave to prostrate yourselves on any surface that is clean, for We have removed in this regard the limitation that had been laid down in the Book; God, indeed, hath knowledge of that whereof ye know naught. Let him that findeth no water for ablution repeat five times the words "In the Name of God, the Most Pure, the Most Pure," and then proceed to his devotions. Such is the command of the Lord of all worlds. In regions where the days and nights grow long, let times of prayer be gauged by clocks and other instruments that mark the passage of the hours. He, verily, is the Expounder, the Wise.

¹¹ We have absolved you from the requirement of performing the Prayer of the Signs. On the appearance of fearful natural events call ye to mind the might and majesty of your Lord, He Who heareth and seeth all, and say "Dominion is God's, the Lord of the seen and the unseen, the Lord of creation."

¹² It hath been ordained that obligatory prayer is to be performed by each of you individually. Save in the Prayer for the Dead, the practice of congregational prayer hath been annulled. He, of a truth, is the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

¹³ God hath exempted women who are in their courses from obligatory prayer and fasting. Let them, instead, after performance of their ablutions, give praise unto God, repeating ninety-five times

between the noon of one day and the next “Glorified be God, the Lord of Splendor and Beauty.” Thus hath it been decreed in the Book, if ye be of them that comprehend.

¹⁴ When traveling, if ye should stop and rest in some safe spot, perform ye—men and women alike—a single prostration in place of each unsaid Obligatory Prayer, and while prostrating say “Glorified be God, the Lord of Might and Majesty, of Grace and Bounty.” Whoso is unable to do this, let him say only “Glorified be God”; this shall assuredly suffice him. He is, of a truth, the all-sufficing, the ever-abiding, the forgiving, compassionate God. Upon completing your prostrations, seat yourselves cross-legged—men and women alike—and eighteen times repeat “Glorified be God, the Lord of the kingdoms of earth and heaven.” Thus doth the Lord make plain the ways of truth and guidance, ways that lead to one way, which is this Straight Path. Render thanks unto God for this most gracious favor; offer praise unto Him for this bounty that hath encompassed the heavens and the earth; extol Him for this mercy that hath pervaded all creation.

¹⁵ Say: God hath made My hidden love the key to the Treasure; would that ye might perceive it! But for the key, the Treasure would to all eternity have remained concealed; would that ye might believe it! Say: This is the Source of Revelation, the Dawning-place of Splendor, Whose brightness hath illumined the horizons of the world. Would that ye might understand! This is, verily, that fixed Decree through which every irrevocable decree hath been established.

¹⁶ O Pen of the Most High! Say: O people of the world! We have enjoined upon you fasting during a brief period, and at its close have designated for you Naw-Rúz as a feast. Thus hath the Daystar of Utterance shone forth above the horizon of the Book as decreed by Him Who is the Lord of the beginning and the end. Let the days in excess of the months be placed before the month of fasting. We have ordained that these, amid all nights and days, shall be the manifestations of the letter Há, and thus they have not been bounded by the limits of the year and its months. It behooveth the people of Bahá, throughout these days, to provide good cheer for themselves, their kindred and, beyond them, the poor and needy, and with joy and exultation to hail and glorify their Lord, to sing His praise and magnify His Name; and when they end—these days of giving that precede the season of restraint—let them enter upon the Fast. Thus hath it been ordained by Him Who is the Lord of all mankind. The traveler, the ailing, those who are with child or giving suck, are not bound by the Fast; they have been exempted by God as a token of His grace. He, verily, is the Almighty, the Most Generous.

¹⁷ These are the ordinances of God that have been set down in the Books and Tablets by His Most Exalted Pen. Hold ye fast unto His statutes and commandments, and be not of those who, following their idle fancies and vain imaginings, have clung to the standards fixed by their own selves, and cast behind their backs the standards laid down by God. Abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sundown, and beware lest desire deprive you of this grace that is appointed in the Book.

¹⁸ It hath been ordained that every believer in God, the Lord of Judgment, shall, each day, having washed his hands and then his face, seat himself and, turning unto God, repeat “Alláh-u-Abhá” ninety-five times. Such was the decree of the Maker of the Heavens when, with majesty and power, He established Himself upon the thrones of His Names. Perform ye, likewise, ablutions for the Obligatory Prayer; this is the command of God, the Incomparable, the Unrestrained.

¹⁹ Ye have been forbidden to commit murder or adultery, or to engage in backbiting or calumny; shun ye, then, what hath been prohibited in the holy Books and Tablets.

²⁰ We have divided inheritance into seven categories: to the children, We have allotted nine parts comprising five hundred and forty shares; to the wife, eight parts comprising four hundred and eighty shares; to the father, seven parts comprising four hundred and twenty shares; to the mother, six parts comprising three hundred and sixty shares; to the brothers, five parts or three hundred shares; to the sisters, four parts or two hundred and forty shares; and to the teachers, three parts or one hundred and eighty shares. Such was the ordinance of My Forerunner, He Who extolleth My Name in the night season and at the break of day. When We heard the clamor of the children as yet unborn, We doubled their share and decreased those of the rest. He, of a truth, hath power to ordain whatsoever He desireth, and He doeth as He pleaseth by virtue of His sovereign might.

²¹ Should the deceased leave no offspring, their share shall revert to the House of Justice, to be expended by the Trustees of the All-Merciful on the orphaned and widowed, and on whatsoever will bring benefit to the generality of the people, that all may give thanks unto their Lord, the All-Gracious, the Pardoners.

²² Should the deceased leave offspring, but none of the other categories of heirs that have been specified in the Book, they shall receive two-thirds of the inheritance and the remaining third shall revert to the House of Justice. Such is the command which hath been given, in majesty and glory, by Him Who is the All-Possessing, the Most High.

²³ If the deceased should leave none of the specified heirs, but have among his relatives nephews and nieces, whether on his brother's or his sister's side, two-thirds of the inheritance shall pass to them; or, lacking these, to his uncles and aunts on both his father's and his mother's side, and after them to their sons and daughters. The remaining third of the inheritance shall, in any case, revert to the Seat of Justice. Thus hath it been laid down in the Book by Him Who ruleth over all men.

²⁴ Should the deceased be survived by none of those whose names have been recorded by the Pen of the Most High, his estate shall, in its entirety, revert to the aforementioned Seat that it may be expended on that which is prescribed by God. He, verily, is the Ordainer, the Omnipotent.

²⁵ We have assigned the residence and personal clothing of the deceased to the male, not female, offspring, nor to the other heirs. He, verily, is the Munificent, the All-Bountiful.

²⁶ Should the son of the deceased have passed away in the days of his father and have left children, they will inherit their father's share, as prescribed in the Book of God. Divide ye their share amongst them with perfect justice. Thus have the billows of the Ocean of Utterance surged, casting forth the pearls of the laws decreed by the Lord of all mankind.

²⁷ If the deceased should leave children who are under age, their share of the inheritance must be entrusted to a reliable individual, or to a company, that it may be invested on their behalf in trade and business until they come of age. The trustee should be assigned a due share of the profit that hath accrued to it from being thus employed.

²⁸ Division of the estate should take place only after the Ḥuqúqu'lláh hath been paid, any debts have been settled, the expenses of the funeral and burial defrayed, and such provision made that the deceased may be carried to his resting-place with dignity and honor. Thus hath it been ordained by Him Who is Lord of the beginning and the end.

²⁹ Say: This is that hidden knowledge which shall never change, since its beginning is with nine, the symbol that betokeneth the concealed and manifest, the inviolable and unapproachably exalted

Name. As for what We have appropriated to the children, this is a bounty conferred on them by God, that they may render thanks unto their Lord, the Compassionate, the Merciful. These, verily, are the Laws of God; transgress them not at the prompting of your base and selfish desires. Observe ye the injunctions laid upon you by Him Who is the Dawning-place of Utterance. 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.

³⁰ The Lord hath ordained that in every city a House of Justice be established wherein shall gather counselors to the number of Bahá, and should it exceed this number it doth not matter. They should consider themselves as entering the Court of the presence of God, the Exalted, the Most High, and as beholding Him Who is the Unseen. It behooveth them to be the trusted ones of the Merciful among men and to regard themselves as the guardians appointed of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incumbent upon them to take counsel together and to have regard for the interests of the servants of God, for His sake, even as they regard their own interests, and to choose that which is meet and seemly. Thus hath the Lord your God commanded you. Beware lest ye put away that which is clearly revealed in His Tablet. Fear God, O ye that perceive.

³¹ O people of the world! Build ye houses of worship throughout the lands in the name of Him Who is the Lord of all religions. Make them as perfect as is possible in the world of being, and adorn them with that which befitteth them, not with images and effigies. Then, with radiance and joy, celebrate therein the praise of your Lord, the Most Compassionate. Verily, by His remembrance the eye is cheered and the heart is filled with light.

³² The Lord hath ordained that those of you who are able shall make pilgrimage to the sacred House, and from this He hath exempted women as a mercy on His part. He, of a truth, is the All-Bountiful, the Most Generous.

³³ O people of Bahá! It is incumbent upon each one of you to engage in some occupation—such as a craft, a trade or the like. We have exalted your engagement in such work to the rank of worship of the one true God. Reflect, O people, on the grace and blessings of your Lord, and yield Him thanks at eventide and dawn. Waste not your hours in idleness and sloth, but occupy yourselves with what will profit you and others. Thus hath it been decreed in this Tablet from whose horizon hath shone the daystar of wisdom and utterance. The most despised of men in the sight of God are they who sit and beg. Hold ye fast unto the cord of means and place your trust in God, the Provider of all means.

³⁴ The kissing of hands hath been forbidden in the Book. This practice is prohibited by God, the Lord of glory and command. To none is it permitted to seek absolution from another soul; let repentance be between yourselves and God. He, verily, is the Pardoner, the Bounteous, the Gracious, the One Who absolveth the repentant.

³⁵ O ye servants of the Merciful One! Arise to serve the Cause of God, in such wise that the cares and sorrows caused by them that have disbelieved in the Dayspring of the Signs of God may not afflict you. At the time when the Promise was fulfilled and the Promised One made manifest, differences have appeared amongst the kindreds of the earth and each people hath followed its own fancy and idle imaginings.

³⁶ Amongst the people is he who seateth himself amid the sandals by the door whilst coveting in his heart the seat of honor. Say: What manner of man art thou, O vain and heedless one, who wouldst appear as other than thou art? And among the people is he who layeth claim to inner knowledge, and

still deeper knowledge concealed within this knowledge. Say: Thou speakest false! By God! What thou dost possess is naught but husks which We have left to thee as bones are left to dogs. By the righteousness of the one true God! Were anyone to wash the feet of all mankind, and were he to worship God in the forests, valleys, and mountains, upon high hills and lofty peaks, to leave no rock or tree, no clod of earth, but was a witness to his worship—yet, should the fragrance of My good pleasure not be inhaled from him, his works would never be acceptable unto God. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Lord of all. How many a man hath secluded himself in the climes of India, denied himself the things that God hath decreed as lawful, imposed upon himself austerities and mortifications, and hath not been remembered by God, the Revealer of Verses. Make not your deeds as snares wherewith to entrap the object of your aspiration, and deprive not yourselves of this Ultimate Objective for which have ever yearned all such as have drawn nigh unto God. Say: The very life of all deeds is My good pleasure, and all things depend upon Mine acceptance. Read ye the Tablets that ye may know what hath been purposed in the Books of God, the All-Glorious, the Ever-Bounteous. He who attaineth to My love hath title to a throne of gold, to sit thereon in honor over all the world; he who is deprived thereof, though he sit upon the dust, that dust would seek refuge with God, the Lord of all Religions.

³⁷ Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying impostor. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will, no doubt, forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will, assuredly, send down one who will deal mercilessly with him. Terrible, indeed, is God in punishing! Whosoever interpreteth this verse otherwise than its obvious meaning is deprived of the Spirit of God and of His mercy which encompasseth all created things. Fear God, and follow not your idle fancies. Nay, rather, follow the bidding of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Wise. Erelong shall clamorous voices be raised in most lands. Shun them, O My people, and follow not the iniquitous and evilhearted. This is that of which We gave you forewarning when We were dwelling in ‘Irâq, then later while in the Land of Mystery, and now from this Resplendent Spot.

³⁸ Be not dismayed, O peoples of the world, when the daystar of My beauty is set, and the heaven of My tabernacle is concealed from your eyes. Arise to further My Cause, and to exalt My Word amongst men. We are with you at all times, and shall strengthen you through the power of truth. We are truly almighty. Whoso hath recognized Me will arise and serve Me with such determination that the powers of earth and heaven shall be unable to defeat his purpose.

³⁹ The peoples of the world are fast asleep. Were they to wake from their slumber, they would hasten with eagerness unto God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. They would cast away everything they possess, be it all the treasures of the earth, that their Lord may remember them to the extent of addressing to them but one word. Such is the instruction given you by Him Who holdeth the knowledge of things hidden, in a Tablet which the eye of creation hath not seen, and which is revealed to none except His own Self, the omnipotent Protector of all worlds. So bewildered are they in the drunkenness of their evil desires, that they are powerless to recognize the Lord of all being, Whose voice calleth aloud from every direction: “There is none other God but Me, the Mighty, the All-Wise.”

⁴⁰ Say: Rejoice not in the things ye possess; tonight they are yours, tomorrow others will possess them. Thus warneth you He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. Say: Can ye claim that what ye own is lasting or secure? Nay! By Myself, the All-Merciful, ye cannot, if ye be of them who judge fairly. The days of your life flee away as a breath of wind, and all your pomp and glory shall be folded up as were the pomp and glory of those gone before you. Reflect, O people! What hath become of your bygone days, your lost centuries? Happy the days that have been consecrated to the remembrance of God, and blessed the hours which have been spent in praise of Him Who is the All-Wise. By My life! Neither the pomp of the mighty, nor the wealth of the rich, nor even the ascendancy of the ungodly will endure. All will perish, at a word from Him. He, verily, is the All-Powerful, the All-Compelling, the Almighty. What advantage is there in the earthly things which men possess? That which shall profit them, they have utterly neglected. Erelong, they will awake from their slumber, and find themselves unable to obtain that which hath escaped them in the days of their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Did they but know it, they would renounce their all, that their names may be mentioned before His throne. They, verily, are accounted among the dead.

⁴¹ Amongst the people is he whose learning hath made him proud, and who hath been debarred thereby from recognizing My Name, the Self-Subsisting; who, when he heareth the tread of sandals following behind him, waxeth greater in his own esteem than Nimrod. Say: O rejected one! Where now is his abode? By God, it is the nethermost fire. Say: O concourse of divines! Hear ye not the shrill voice of My Most Exalted Pen? See ye not this Sun that shineth in refulgent splendor above the All-Glorious Horizon? For how long will ye worship the idols of your evil passions? Forsake your vain imaginings, and turn yourselves unto God, your Everlasting Lord.

⁴² Endowments dedicated to charity revert to God, the Revealer of Signs. None hath the right to dispose of them without leave from Him Who is the Dawning-place of Revelation. After Him, this authority shall pass to the Aghṣán, and after them to the House of Justice—should it be established in the world by then—that they may use these endowments for the benefit of the Places which have been exalted in this Cause, and for whatsoever hath been enjoined upon them by Him Who is the God of might and power. Otherwise, the endowments shall revert to the people of Bahá who speak not except by His leave and judge not save in accordance with what God hath decreed in this Tablet—lo, they are the champions of victory betwixt heaven and earth—that they may use them in the manner that hath been laid down in the Book by God, the Mighty, the Bountiful.

⁴³ Lament not in your hours of trial, neither rejoice therein; seek ye the Middle Way which is the remembrance of Me in your afflictions and reflection over that which may befall you in future. Thus informeth you He Who is the Omniscient, He Who is aware.

⁴⁴ Shave not your heads; God hath adorned them with hair, and in this there are signs from the Lord of creation to those who reflect upon the requirements of nature. He, verily, is the God of strength and wisdom. Notwithstanding, it is not seemly to let the hair pass beyond the limit of the ears. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Lord of all worlds.

⁴⁵ Exile and imprisonment are decreed for the thief, and, on the third offense, place ye a mark upon his brow so that, thus identified, he may not be accepted in the cities of God and His countries. Beware lest, through compassion, ye neglect to carry out the statutes of the religion of God; do that which hath been bidden you by Him Who is compassionate and merciful. We school you with the rod of wisdom and laws, like unto the father who educateth his son, and this for naught but the protection

of your own selves and the elevation of your stations. By My life, were ye to discover what We have desired for you in revealing Our holy laws, ye would offer up your very souls for this sacred, this mighty, and most exalted Faith.

⁴⁶ Whoso wisheth to make use of vessels of silver and gold is at liberty to do so. Take heed lest, when partaking of food, ye plunge your hands into the contents of bowls and platters. Adopt ye such usages as are most in keeping with refinement. He, verily, desireth to see in you the manners of the inmates of Paradise in His mighty and most sublime Kingdom. Hold ye fast unto refinement under all conditions, that your eyes may be preserved from beholding what is repugnant both to your own selves and to the dwellers of Paradise. Should anyone depart therefrom, his deed shall at that moment be rendered vain; yet should he have good reason, God will excuse him. He, in truth, is the Gracious, the Most Bountiful.

⁴⁷ He Who is the Dawning-place of God's Cause hath no partner in the Most Great Infallibility. He it is Who, in the kingdom of creation, is the Manifestation of "He doeth whatsoever He willeth." God hath reserved this distinction unto His own Self, and ordained for none a share in so sublime and transcendent a station. This is the Decree of God, concealed ere now within the veil of impenetrable mystery. We have disclosed it in this Revelation, and have thereby rent asunder the veils of such as have failed to recognize that which the Book of God set forth and who were numbered with the heedless.

⁴⁸ Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing and in all that hath been laid down in the Holy Tablet. He that putteth away that which is commanded unto him, the Trustees are then to take from him that which is required for their instruction if he be wealthy and, if not, the matter devolveth upon the House of Justice. Verily have We made it a shelter for the poor and needy. He that bringeth up his son or the son of another, it is as though he hath brought up a son of Mine; upon him rest My glory, My loving-kindness, My mercy, that have compassed the world.

⁴⁹ God hath imposed a fine on every adulterer and adulteress, to be paid to the House of Justice: nine mithqáls of gold, to be doubled if they should repeat the offense. Such is the penalty which He Who is the Lord of Names hath assigned them in this world; and in the world to come He hath ordained for them a humiliating torment. Should anyone be afflicted by a sin, it behooveth him to repent thereof and return unto his Lord. He, verily, granteth forgiveness unto whomsoever He willeth, and none may question that which it pleaseth Him to ordain. He is, in truth, the Ever-Forgiving, the Almighty, the All-Praised.

⁵⁰ Beware lest ye be hindered by the veils of glory from partaking of the crystal waters of this living Fountain. Seize ye the chalice of salvation at this dawning in the name of Him Who causeth the day to break, and drink your fill in praise of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Incomparable.

⁵¹ We have made it lawful for you to listen to music and singing. Take heed, however, lest listening thereto should cause you to overstep the bounds of propriety and dignity. Let your joy be the joy born of My Most Great Name, a Name that bringeth rapture to the heart, and filleth with ecstasy the minds of all who have drawn nigh unto God. We, verily, have made music as a ladder for your souls, a means whereby they may be lifted up unto the realm on high; make it not, therefore, as wings to self and passion. Truly, We are loath to see you numbered with the foolish.

⁵² We have decreed that a third part of all fines shall go to the Seat of Justice, and We admonish its men to observe pure justice, that they may expend what is thus accumulated for such purposes as have been enjoined upon them by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. O ye Men of Justice! Be ye, in the realm of God, shepherds unto His sheep and guard them from the ravening wolves that have appeared in disguise, even as ye would guard your own sons. Thus exhorteth you the Counselor, the Faithful.

⁵³ Should differences arise amongst you over any matter, refer it to God while the Sun still shineth above the horizon of this Heaven and, when it hath set, refer ye to whatsoever hath been sent down by Him. This, verily, is sufficient unto the peoples of the world. Say: Let not your hearts be perturbed, O people, when the glory of My Presence is withdrawn, and the ocean of My utterance is stilled. In My presence amongst you there is a wisdom, and in My absence there is yet another, inscrutable to all but God, the Incomparable, the All-Knowing. Verily, We behold you from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favored angels.

⁵⁴ O peoples of the earth! God, the Eternal Truth, is My witness that streams of fresh and soft-flowing waters have gushed from the rocks through the sweetness of the words uttered by your Lord, the Unconstrained; and still ye slumber. Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things. Thus biddeth you the Lord of creation, the movement of Whose Pen hath revolutionized the soul of mankind.

⁵⁵ Know ye from what heights your Lord, the All-Glorious, is calling? Think ye that ye have recognized the Pen wherewith your Lord, the Lord of all names, commandeth you? Nay, by My life! Did ye but know it, ye would renounce the world, and would hasten with your whole hearts to the presence of the Well-Beloved. Your spirits would be so transported by His Word as to throw into commotion the Greater World—how much more this small and petty one! Thus have the showers of My bounty been poured down from the heaven of My loving-kindness, as a token of My grace, that ye may be of the thankful.

⁵⁶ The penalties for wounding or striking a person depend upon the severity of the injury; for each degree the Lord of Judgment hath prescribed a certain indemnity. He is, in truth, the Ordainer, the Mighty, the Most Exalted. We shall, if it be Our Will, set forth these payments in their just degrees—this is a promise on Our part, and He, verily, is the Keeper of His pledge, the Knower of all things.

⁵⁷ Verily, it is enjoined upon you to offer a feast, once in every month, though only water be served; for God hath purposed to bind hearts together, albeit through both earthly and heavenly means.

⁵⁸ Beware lest the desires of the flesh and of a corrupt inclination provoke divisions among you. Be ye as the fingers of one hand, the members of one body. Thus counseleth you the Pen of Revelation, if ye be of them that believe.

⁵⁹ Consider the mercy of God and His gifts. He enjoineth upon you that which shall profit you, though He Himself can well dispense with all creatures. Your evil doings can never harm Us, neither can your good works profit Us. We summon you wholly for the sake of God. To this every man of understanding and insight will testify.

⁶⁰ If ye should hunt with beasts or birds of prey, invoke ye the Name of God when ye send them to pursue their quarry; for then whatever they catch shall be lawful unto you, even should ye find it to

have died. He, verily, is the Omniscient, the All-Informed. Take heed, however, that ye hunt not to excess. Tread ye the path of justice and equity in all things. Thus biddeth you He Who is the Dawning-place of Revelation, would that ye might comprehend.

⁶¹ God hath bidden you to show forth kindness towards My kindred, but He hath granted them no right to the property of others. He, verily, is self-sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

⁶² Should anyone intentionally destroy a house by fire, him also shall ye burn; should anyone deliberately take another's life, him also shall ye put to death. Take ye hold of the precepts of God with all your strength and power, and abandon the ways of the ignorant. Should ye condemn the arsonist and the murderer to life imprisonment, it would be permissible according to the provisions of the Book. He, verily, hath power to ordain whatsoever He pleaseth.

⁶³ God hath prescribed matrimony unto you. Beware that ye take not unto yourselves more wives than two. Whoso contenteth himself with a single partner from among the maidservants of God, both he and she shall live in tranquillity. And he who would take into his service a maid may do so with propriety. Such is the ordinance which, in truth and justice, hath been recorded by the Pen of Revelation. Enter into wedlock, O people, that ye may bring forth one who will make mention of Me amid My servants. This is My bidding unto you; hold fast to it as an assistance to yourselves.

⁶⁴ O people of the world! Follow not the promptings of the self, for it summoneth insistently to wickedness and lust; follow, rather, Him Who is the Possessor of all created things, Who biddeth you to show forth piety, and manifest the fear of God. He, verily, is independent of all His creatures. Take heed not to stir up mischief in the land after it hath been set in order. Whoso acteth in this way is not of Us, and We are quit of him. Such is the command which hath, through the power of truth, been made manifest from the heaven of Revelation.

⁶⁵ It hath been laid down in the Bayán that marriage is dependent upon the consent of both parties. Desiring to establish love, unity and harmony amidst Our servants, We have conditioned it, once the couple's wish is known, upon the permission of their parents, lest enmity and rancor should arise amongst them. And in this We have yet other purposes. Thus hath Our commandment been ordained.

⁶⁶ No marriage may be contracted without payment of a dowry, which hath been fixed for city dwellers at nineteen mithqáls of pure gold, and for village dwellers at the same amount in silver. Whoso wisheth to increase this sum, it is forbidden him to exceed the limit of ninety-five mithqáls. Thus hath the command been writ in majesty and power. If he content himself, however, with a payment of the lowest level, it shall be better for him according to the Book. God, verily, enricheth whomsoever He willeth through both heavenly and earthly means, and He, in truth, hath power over all things.

⁶⁷ It hath been decreed by God that, should any one of His servants intend to travel, he must fix for his wife a time when he will return home. If he return by the promised time, he will have obeyed the bidding of his Lord and shall be numbered by the Pen of His behest among the righteous; otherwise, if there be good reason for delay, he must inform his wife and make the utmost endeavor to return to her. Should neither of these eventualities occur, it behooveth her to wait for a period of nine months, after which there is no impediment to her taking another husband; but should she wait longer, God, verily, loveth those women and men who show forth patience. Obey ye My commandments, and follow not the ungodly, they who have been reckoned as sinners in God's Holy Tablet. If, during the period of her waiting, word should reach her from her husband, she should choose the course that is

praiseworthy. He, of a truth, desireth that His servants and His handmaids should be at peace with one another; take heed lest ye do aught that may provoke intransigence amongst you. Thus hath the decree been fixed and the promise come to pass. If, however, news should reach her of her husband's death or murder, and be confirmed by general report, or by the testimony of two just witnesses, it behooveth her to remain single; then, upon completion of the fixed number of months, she is free to adopt the course of her choosing. Such is the bidding of Him Who is mighty and powerful in His command.

⁶⁸ Should resentment or antipathy arise between husband and wife, he is not to divorce her but to bide in patience throughout the course of one whole year, that perchance the fragrance of affection may be renewed between them. If, upon the completion of this period, their love hath not returned, it is permissible for divorce to take place. God's wisdom, verily, hath encompassed all things. The Lord hath prohibited, in a Tablet inscribed by the Pen of His command, the practice to which ye formerly had recourse when thrice ye had divorced a woman. This He hath done as a favor on His part, that ye may be accounted among the thankful. He who hath divorced his wife may choose, upon the passing of each month, to remarry her when there is mutual affection and consent, so long as she hath not taken another husband. Should she have wed again, then, by this other union, the separation is confirmed and the matter is concluded unless, clearly, her circumstances change. Thus hath the decree been inscribed with majesty in this glorious Tablet by Him Who is the Dawning-place of Beauty.

⁶⁹ If the wife accompany her husband on a journey, and differences arise between them on the way, he is required to provide her with her expenses for one whole year, and either to return her whence she came or to entrust her, together with the necessities for her journey, to a dependable person who is to escort her home. Thy Lord, verily, ordaineth as He pleaseth, by virtue of a sovereignty that overshadoweth the peoples of the earth.

⁷⁰ Should a woman be divorced in consequence of a proven act of infidelity, she shall receive no maintenance during her period of waiting. Thus hath the daystar of Our commandment shone forth resplendent from the firmament of justice. Truly, the Lord loveth union and harmony and abhorreth separation and divorce. Live ye one with another, O people, in radiance and joy. By My life! All that are on earth shall pass away, while good deeds alone shall endure; to the truth of My words God doth Himself bear witness. Compose your differences, O My servants; then heed ye the admonition of Our Pen of Glory and follow not the arrogant and wayward.

⁷¹ Take heed lest the world beguile you as it beguiled the people who went before you! Observe ye the statutes and precepts of your Lord, and walk ye in this Way which hath been laid out before you in righteousness and truth. They who eschew iniquity and error, who adhere to virtue, are, in the sight of the one true God, among the choicest of His creatures; their names are extolled by the Concourse of the realms above, and by those who dwell in this Tabernacle which hath been raised in the name of God.

⁷² It is forbidden you to trade in slaves, be they men or women. It is not for him who is himself a servant to buy another of God's servants, and this hath been prohibited in His Holy Tablet. Thus, by His mercy, hath the commandment been recorded by the Pen of justice. Let no man exalt himself above another; all are but bondslaves before the Lord, and all exemplify the truth that there is none other God but Him. He, verily, is the All-Wise, Whose wisdom encompasseth all things.

⁷³ Adorn yourselves with the raiment of goodly deeds. He whose deeds attain unto God's good pleasure is assuredly of the people of Bahá and is remembered before His throne. Assist ye the Lord of all creation with works of righteousness, and also through wisdom and utterance. Thus, indeed, have ye been commanded in most of the Tablets by Him Who is the All-Merciful. He, truly, is cognizant of what I say. Let none contend with another, and let no soul slay another; this, verily, is that which was forbidden you in a Book that hath lain concealed within the Tabernacle of glory. What! Would ye kill him whom God hath quickened, whom He hath endowed with spirit through a breath from Him? Grievous then would be your trespass before His throne! Fear God, and lift not the hand of injustice and oppression to destroy what He hath Himself raised up; nay, walk ye in the way of God, the True One. No sooner did the hosts of true knowledge appear, bearing the standards of Divine utterance, than the tribes of the religions were put to flight, save only those who willed to drink from the stream of everlasting life in a Paradise created by the breath of the All-Glorious.

⁷⁴ God hath decreed, in token of His mercy unto His creatures, that semen is not unclean. Yield thanks unto Him with joy and radiance, and follow not such as are remote from the Dawning-place of His nearness. Arise ye, under all conditions, to render service to the Cause, for God will assuredly assist you through the power of His sovereignty which overshadoweth the worlds. Cleave ye unto the cord of refinement with such tenacity as to allow no trace of dirt to be seen upon your garments. Such is the injunction of One Who is sanctified above all refinement. Whoso falleth short of this standard with good reason shall incur no blame. God, verily, is the Forgiving, the Merciful. Wash ye every soiled thing with water that hath undergone no alteration in any one of the three respects; take heed not to use water that hath been altered through exposure to the air or to some other agent. Be ye the very essence of cleanliness amongst mankind. This, truly, is what your Lord, the Incomparable, the All-Wise, desireth for you.

⁷⁵ God hath, likewise, as a bounty from His presence, abolished the concept of "uncleanness," whereby divers things and peoples have been held to be impure. He, of a certainty, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous. Verily, all created things were immersed in the sea of purification when, on that first day of Ridván, We shed upon the whole of creation the splendors of Our most excellent Names and Our most exalted Attributes. This, verily, is a token of My loving providence, which hath encompassed all the worlds. Consort ye then with the followers of all religions, and proclaim ye the Cause of your Lord, the Most Compassionate; this is the very crown of deeds, if ye be of them who understand.

⁷⁶ God hath enjoined upon you to observe the utmost cleanliness, to the extent of washing what is soiled with dust, let alone with hardened dirt and similar defilement. Fear Him, and be of those who are pure. Should the garb of anyone be visibly sullied, his prayers shall not ascend to God, and the celestial Concourse will turn away from him. Make use of rose water, and of pure perfume; this, indeed, is that which God hath loved from the beginning that hath no beginning, in order that there may be diffused from you what your Lord, the Incomparable, the All-Wise, desireth.

⁷⁷ God hath relieved you of the ordinance laid down in the Bayán concerning the destruction of books. We have permitted you to read such sciences as are profitable unto you, not such as end in idle disputation; better is this for you, if ye be of them that comprehend.

⁷⁸ O kings of the earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting. Worship none but God, and, with radiant hearts, lift up

your faces unto your Lord, the Lord of all names. This is a Revelation to which whatever ye possess can never be compared, could ye but know it.

⁷⁹ We see you rejoicing in that which ye have amassed for others and shutting out yourselves from the worlds which naught except My guarded Tablet can reckon. The treasures ye have laid up have drawn you far away from your ultimate objective. This ill beseemeth you, could ye but understand it. Wash from your hearts all earthly defilements, and hasten to enter the Kingdom of your Lord, the Creator of earth and heaven, Who caused the world to tremble and all its peoples to wail, except them that have renounced all things and clung to that which the Hidden Tablet hath ordained.

⁸⁰ This is the Day in which He Who held converse with God hath attained the light of the Ancient of Days, and quaffed the pure waters of reunion from this Cup that hath caused the seas to swell. Say: By the one true God! Sinai is circling round the Dayspring of Revelation, while from the heights of the Kingdom the Voice of the Spirit of God is heard proclaiming: “Bestir yourselves, ye proud ones of the earth, and hasten ye unto Him.” Carmel hath, in this Day, hastened in longing adoration to attain His court, whilst from the heart of Zion there cometh the cry: “The promise is fulfilled. That which had been announced in the holy Writ of God, the Most Exalted, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved, is made manifest.”

⁸¹ O kings of the earth! The Most Great Law hath been revealed in this Spot, this scene of transcendent splendor. Every hidden thing hath been brought to light by virtue of the Will of the Supreme Ordainer, He Who hath ushered in the Last Hour, through Whom the Moon hath been cleft, and every irrevocable decree expounded.

⁸² Ye are but vassals, O kings of the earth! He Who is the King of Kings hath appeared, arrayed in His most wondrous glory, and is summoning you unto Himself, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Take heed lest pride deter you from recognizing the Source of Revelation, lest the things of this world shut you out as by a veil from Him Who is the Creator of heaven. Arise, and serve Him Who is the Desire of all nations, Who hath created you through a word from Him, and ordained you to be, for all time, the emblems of His sovereignty.

⁸³ By the righteousness of God! It is not Our wish to lay hands on your kingdoms. Our mission is to seize and possess the hearts of men. Upon them the eyes of Bahá are fastened. To this testifieth the Kingdom of Names, could ye but comprehend it. Whoso followeth his Lord will renounce the world and all that is therein; how much greater, then, must be the detachment of Him Who holdeth so august a station! Forsake your palaces, and haste ye to gain admittance into His Kingdom. This, indeed, will profit you both in this world and in the next. To this testifieth the Lord of the realm on high, did ye but know it.

⁸⁴ How great the blessedness that awaiteth the king who will arise to aid My Cause in My kingdom, who will detach himself from all else but Me! Such a king is numbered with the companions of the Crimson Ark—the Ark which God hath prepared for the people of Bahá. All must glorify his name, must reverence his station, and aid him to unlock the cities with the keys of My Name, the omnipotent Protector of all that inhabit the visible and invisible kingdoms. Such a king is the very eye of mankind, the luminous ornament on the brow of creation, the fountainhead of blessings unto the whole world. Offer up, O people of Bahá, your substance, nay your very lives, for his assistance.

⁸⁵ O Emperor of Austria! He Who is the Dayspring of God’s Light dwelt in the prison of ‘Akká at the time when thou didst set forth to visit the Aqṣá Mosque. Thou passed Him by, and inquired not

about Him by Whom every house is exalted and every lofty gate unlocked. We, verily, made it a place whereunto the world should turn, that they might remember Me, and yet thou hast rejected Him Who is the Object of this remembrance, when He appeared with the Kingdom of God, thy Lord and the Lord of the worlds. We have been with thee at all times, and found thee clinging unto the Branch and heedless of the Root. Thy Lord, verily, is a witness unto what I say. We grieved to see thee circle round Our Name, whilst unaware of Us, though We were before thy face. Open thine eyes, that thou mayest behold this glorious Vision, and recognize Him Whom thou invokest in the daytime and in the night season, and gaze on the Light that shineth above this luminous Horizon.

⁸⁶ Say: O King of Berlin! Give ear unto the Voice calling from this manifest Temple: “Verily, there is none other God but Me, the Everlasting, the Peerless, the Ancient of Days.” Take heed lest pride debar thee from recognizing the Dayspring of Divine Revelation, lest earthly desires shut thee out, as by a veil, from the Lord of the Throne above and of the earth below. Thus counseleth thee the Pen of the Most High. He, verily, is the Most Gracious, the All-Bountiful. Do thou remember the one whose power transcended thy power, and whose station excelled thy station. Where is he? Whither are gone the things he possessed? Take warning, and be not of them that are fast asleep. He it was who cast the Tablet of God behind him when We made known unto him what the hosts of tyranny had caused Us to suffer. Wherefore, disgrace assailed him from all sides, and he went down to dust in great loss. Think deeply, O King, concerning him, and concerning them who, like unto thee, have conquered cities and ruled over men. The All-Merciful brought them down from their palaces to their graves. Be warned, be of them who reflect.

⁸⁷ We have asked nothing from you. For the sake of God We, verily, exhort you, and will be patient as We have been patient in that which hath befallen Us at your hands, O concourse of kings!

⁸⁸ Hearken ye, O Rulers of America and the Presidents of the Republics therein, unto that which the Dove is warbling on the Branch of Eternity: “There is none other God but Me, the Ever-Abiding, the Forgiving, the All-Bountiful.” Adorn ye the temple of dominion with the ornament of justice and of the fear of God, and its head with the crown of the remembrance of your Lord, the Creator of the heavens. Thus counseleth you He Who is the Dayspring of Names, as bidden by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. The Promised One hath appeared in this glorified Station, whereat all beings, both seen and unseen, have rejoiced. Take ye advantage of the Day of God. Verily, to meet Him is better for you than all that whereon the sun shineth, could ye but know it. O concourse of rulers! Give ear unto that which hath been raised from the Dayspring of Grandeur: “Verily, there is none other God but Me, the Lord of Utterance, the All-Knowing.” Bind ye the broken with the hands of justice, and crush the oppressor who flourisheth with the rod of the commandments of your Lord, the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

⁸⁹ O people of Constantinople! Lo, from your midst We hear the baleful hooting of the owl. Hath the drunkenness of passion laid hold upon you, or is it that ye are sunk in heedlessness? O Spot that art situate on the shores of the two seas! The throne of tyranny hath, verily, been established upon thee, and the flame of hatred hath been kindled within thy bosom, in such wise that the Concourse on high and they who circle around the Exalted Throne have wailed and lamented. We behold in thee the foolish ruling over the wise, and darkness vaunting itself against the light. Thou art indeed filled with manifest pride. Hath thine outward splendor made thee vainglorious? By Him Who is the Lord of

mankind! It shall soon perish, and thy daughters and thy widows and all the kindreds that dwell within thee shall lament. Thus informeth thee the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

⁹⁰ O banks of the Rhine! We have seen you covered with gore, inasmuch as the swords of retribution were drawn against you; and ye shall have another turn. And We hear the lamentations of Berlin, though she be today in conspicuous glory.

⁹¹ Let nothing grieve thee, O Land of Ṭá, for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind. He shall, if it be His Will, bless thy throne with one who will rule with justice, who will gather together the flock of God which the wolves have scattered. Such a ruler will, with joy and gladness, turn his face towards, and extend his favors unto, the people of Bahá. He indeed is accounted in the sight of God as a jewel among men. Upon him rest forever the glory of God and the glory of all that dwell in the kingdom of His revelation.

⁹² Rejoice with great joy, for God hath made thee “the dayspring of His light,” inasmuch as within thee was born the Manifestation of His Glory. Be thou glad for this name that hath been conferred upon thee—a name through which the daystar of grace hath shed its splendor, through which both earth and heaven have been illumined.

⁹³ Erelong will the state of affairs within thee be changed, and the reins of power fall into the hands of the people. Verily, thy Lord is the All-Knowing. His authority embraceth all things. Rest thou assured in the gracious favor of thy Lord. The eye of His loving-kindness shall everlastingly be directed towards thee. The day is approaching when thy agitation will have been transmuted into peace and quiet calm. Thus hath it been decreed in the wondrous Book.

⁹⁴ O Land of Khá! We hear from thee the voice of heroes, raised in glorification of thy Lord, the All-Possessing, the Most Exalted. Blessed the day on which the banners of the divine Names shall be upraised in the kingdom of creation in My Name, the All-Glorious. On that day the faithful shall rejoice in the victory of God, and the disbelievers shall lament.

⁹⁵ None must contend with those who wield authority over the people; leave unto them that which is theirs, and direct your attention to men’s hearts.

⁹⁶ O Most Mighty Ocean! Sprinkle upon the nations that with which Thou hast been charged by Him Who is the Sovereign of Eternity, and adorn the temples of all the dwellers of the earth with the vesture of His laws through which all hearts will rejoice and all eyes be brightened.

⁹⁷ Should anyone acquire one hundred mithqáls of gold, nineteen mithqáls thereof are God’s and to be rendered unto Him, the Fashioner of earth and heaven. Take heed, O people, lest ye deprive yourselves of so great a bounty. This We have commanded you, though We are well able to dispense with you and with all who are in the heavens and on earth; in it there are benefits and wisdoms beyond the ken of anyone but God, the Omniscient, the All-Informed. Say: By this means He hath desired to purify what ye possess and to enable you to draw nigh unto such stations as none can comprehend save those whom God hath willed. He, in truth, is the Beneficent, the Gracious, the Bountiful. O people! Deal not faithlessly with the Right of God, nor, without His leave, make free with its disposal. Thus hath His commandment been established in the holy Tablets, and in this exalted Book. He who dealeth faithlessly with God shall in justice meet with faithlessness himself; he, however, who acteth in accordance with God’s bidding shall receive a blessing from the heaven of the bounty of his Lord, the Gracious, the Bestower, the Generous, the Ancient of Days. He, verily,

hath willed for you that which is yet beyond your knowledge, but which shall be known to you when, after this fleeting life, your souls soar heavenwards and the trappings of your earthly joys are folded up. Thus admonisheth you He in Whose possession is the Guarded Tablet.

⁹⁸ Various petitions have come before Our throne from the believers, concerning laws from God, the Lord of the seen and the unseen, the Lord of all worlds. We have, in consequence, revealed this Holy Tablet and arrayed it with the mantle of His Law that haply the people may keep the commandments of their Lord. Similar requests had been made of Us over several previous years but We had, in Our wisdom, withheld Our Pen until, in recent days, letters arrived from a number of the friends, and We have therefore responded, through the power of truth, with that which shall quicken the hearts of men.

⁹⁹ 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.

¹⁰⁰ The eye of My loving-kindness weepeth sore over you, inasmuch as ye have failed to recognize the One upon Whom ye have been calling in the daytime and in the night season, at even and at morn. Advance, O people, with snow-white faces and radiant hearts, unto the blest and crimson Spot, wherein the Sadratu'l-Muntahá is calling: "Verily, there is none other God beside Me, the Omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting!"

¹⁰¹ O ye leaders of religion! Who is the man amongst you that can rival Me in vision or insight? Where is he to be found that dareth to claim to be My equal in utterance or wisdom? No, by My Lord, the All-Merciful! All on the earth shall pass away; and this is the face of your Lord, the Almighty, the Well-Beloved.

¹⁰² We have decreed, O people, that the highest and last end of all learning be the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge; and yet, behold how ye have allowed your learning to shut you out, as by a veil, from Him Who is the Dayspring of this Light, through Whom every hidden thing hath been revealed. Could ye but discover the source whence the splendor of this utterance is diffused, ye would cast away the peoples of the world and all that they possess, and would draw nigh unto this most blessed Seat of glory.

¹⁰³ Say: This, verily, is the heaven in which the Mother Book is treasured, could ye but comprehend it. He it is Who hath caused the Rock to shout, and the Burning Bush to lift up its voice, upon the Mount rising above the Holy Land, and proclaim: "The Kingdom is God's, the sovereign Lord of all, the All-Powerful, the Loving!"

¹⁰⁴ We have not entered any school, nor read any of your dissertations. Incline your ears to the words of this unlettered One, wherewith He summoneth you unto God, the Ever-Abiding. Better is this for you than all the treasures of the earth, could ye but comprehend it.

¹⁰⁵ Whoso interpreteth what hath been sent down from the heaven of Revelation, and altereth its evident meaning, he, verily, is of them that have perverted the Sublime Word of God, and is of the lost ones in the Lucid Book.

¹⁰⁶ It hath been enjoined upon you to pare your nails, to bathe yourselves each week in water that covereth your bodies, and to clean yourselves with whatsoever ye have formerly employed. Take

heed lest through negligence ye fail to observe that which hath been prescribed unto you by Him Who is the Incomparable, the Gracious. Immerse yourselves in clean water; it is not permissible to bathe yourselves in water that hath already been used. See that ye approach not the public pools of Persian baths; whoso maketh his way toward such baths will smell their fetid odor ere he entereth therein. Shun them, O people, and be not of those who ignominiously accept such vileness. In truth, they are as sinks of foulness and contamination, if ye be of them that apprehend. Avoid ye likewise the malodorous pools in the courtyards of Persian homes, and be ye of the pure and sanctified. Truly, We desire to behold you as manifestations of paradise on earth, that there may be diffused from you such fragrance as shall rejoice the hearts of the favored of God. If the bather, instead of entering the water, wash himself by pouring it upon his body, it shall be better for him and shall absolve him of the need for bodily immersion. The Lord, verily, hath willed, as a bounty from His presence, to make life easier for you that ye may be of those who are truly thankful.

¹⁰⁷ It is forbidden you to wed your fathers' wives. We shrink, for very shame, from treating of the subject of boys. Fear ye the Merciful, O peoples of the world! Commit not that which is forbidden you in Our Holy Tablet, and be not of those who rove distractedly in the wilderness of their desires.

¹⁰⁸ To none is it permitted to mutter sacred verses before the public gaze as he walketh in the street or marketplace; nay rather, if he wish to magnify the Lord, it behooveth him to do so in such places as have been erected for this purpose, or in his own home. This is more in keeping with sincerity and godliness. Thus hath the sun of Our commandment shone forth above the horizon of Our utterance. Blessed, then, be those who do Our bidding.

¹⁰⁹ Unto everyone hath been enjoined the writing of a will. The testator should head this document with the adornment of the Most Great Name, bear witness therein unto the oneness of God in the Dayspring of His Revelation, and make mention, as he may wish, of that which is praiseworthy, so that it may be a testimony for him in the kingdoms of Revelation and Creation and a treasure with his Lord, the Supreme Protector, the Faithful.

¹¹⁰ All Feasts have attained their consummation in the two Most Great Festivals, and in the two other Festivals that fall on the twin days—the first of the Most Great Festivals being those days whereon the All-Merciful shed upon the whole of creation the effulgent glory of His most excellent Names and His most exalted Attributes, and the second being that day on which We raised up the One Who announced unto mankind the glad tidings of this Name, through which the dead have been resurrected and all who are in the heavens and on earth have been gathered together. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Ordainer, the Omniscient.

¹¹¹ Happy the one who entereth upon the first day of the month of Bahá, the day which God hath consecrated to this Great Name. And blessed be he who evidenceth on this day the bounties that God hath bestowed upon him; he, verily, is of those who show forth thanks to God through actions betokening the Lord's munificence which hath encompassed all the worlds. Say: This day, verily, is the crown of all the months and the source thereof, the day on which the breath of life is wafted over all created things. Great is the blessedness of him who greeteth it with radiance and joy. We testify that he is, in truth, among those who are blissful.

¹¹² Say: The Most Great Festival is, indeed, the King of Festivals. Call ye to mind, O people, the bounty which God hath conferred upon you. Ye were sunk in slumber, and lo! He aroused you by the reviving breezes of His Revelation, and made known unto you His manifest and undeviating Path.

¹¹³ Resort ye, in times of sickness, to competent physicians; We have not set aside the use of material means, rather have We confirmed it through this Pen, which God hath made to be the Dawning-place of His shining and glorious Cause.

¹¹⁴ God had formerly laid upon each one of the believers the duty of offering before Our throne priceless gifts from among his possessions. Now, in token of Our gracious favor, We have absolved them of this obligation. He, of a truth, is the Most Generous, the All-Bountiful.

¹¹⁵ Blessed is he who, at the hour of dawn, centering his thoughts on God, occupied with His remembrance, and supplicating His forgiveness, directeth his steps to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and, entering therein, seateth himself in silence to listen to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Mighty, the All-Praised. Say: The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is each and every building which hath been erected in cities and villages for the celebration of My praise. Such is the name by which it hath been designated before the throne of glory, were ye of those who understand.

¹¹⁶ They who recite the verses of the All-Merciful in the most melodious of tones will perceive in them that with which the sovereignty of earth and heaven can never be compared. From them they will inhale the divine fragrance of My worlds—worlds which today none can discern save those who have been endowed with vision through this sublime, this beauteous Revelation. Say: These verses draw hearts that are pure unto those spiritual worlds that can neither be expressed in words nor intimated by allusion. Blessed be those who hearken.

¹¹⁷ Assist ye, O My people, My chosen servants who have arisen to make mention of Me among My creatures and to exalt My Word throughout My realm. These, truly, are the stars of the heaven of My loving providence and the lamps of My guidance unto all mankind. But he whose words conflict with that which hath been sent down in My Holy Tablets is not of Me. Beware lest ye follow any impious pretender. These Tablets are embellished with the seal of Him Who causeth the dawn to appear, Who lifteth up His voice between the heavens and the earth. Lay hold on this Sure Handle and on the Cord of My mighty and unassailable Cause.

¹¹⁸ The Lord hath granted leave to whosoever desireth it that he be instructed in the divers tongues of the world that he may deliver the Message of the Cause of God throughout the East and throughout the West, that he make mention of Him amidst the kindreds and peoples of the world in such wise that hearts may revive and the moldering bone be quickened.

¹¹⁹ It is inadmissible that man, who hath been endowed with reason, should consume that which stealeth it away. Nay, rather it behooveth him to comport himself in a manner worthy of the human station, and not in accordance with the misdeeds of every heedless and wavering soul.

¹²⁰ Adorn your heads with the garlands of trustworthiness and fidelity, your hearts with the attire of the fear of God, your tongues with absolute truthfulness, your bodies with the vesture of courtesy. These are in truth seemly adornings unto the temple of man, if ye be of them that reflect. Cling, O ye people of Bahá, to the cord of servitude unto God, the True One, for thereby your stations shall be made manifest, your names written and preserved, your ranks raised and your memory exalted in the Preserved Tablet. Beware lest the dwellers on earth hinder you from this glorious and exalted station. Thus have We exhorted you in most of Our Epistles and now in this, Our Holy Tablet, above which hath beamed the Daystar of the Laws of the Lord, your God, the Powerful, the All-Wise.

¹²¹ When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces towards Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root.

¹²² Consider the pettiness of men's minds. They ask for that which injureth them, and cast away the thing that profiteth them. They are, indeed, of those that are far astray. We find some men desiring liberty, and priding themselves therein. Such men are in the depths of ignorance.

¹²³ Liberty must, in the end, lead to sedition, whose flames none can quench. Thus warneth you He Who is the Reckoner, the All-Knowing. Know ye that the embodiment of liberty and its symbol is the animal. That which beseemeth man is submission unto such restraints as will protect him from his own ignorance, and guard him against the harm of the mischief maker. Liberty causeth man to overstep the bounds of propriety, and to infringe on the dignity of his station. It debaseth him to the level of extreme depravity and wickedness.

¹²⁴ Regard men as a flock of sheep that need a shepherd for their protection. This, verily, is the truth, the certain truth. We approve of liberty in certain circumstances, and refuse to sanction it in others. We, verily, are the All-Knowing.

¹²⁵ Say: True liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His Will that pervadeth all created things. Say: The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in complete servitude unto God, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven.

¹²⁶ In the Bayán it had been forbidden you to ask Us questions. The Lord hath now relieved you of this prohibition, that ye may be free to ask what you need to ask, but not such idle questions as those on which the men of former times were wont to dwell. Fear God, and be ye of the righteous! Ask ye that which shall be of profit to you in the Cause of God and His dominion, for the portals of His tender compassion have been opened before all who dwell in heaven and on earth.

¹²⁷ The number of months in a year, appointed in the Book of God, is nineteen. Of these the first hath been adorned with this Name which overshadoweth the whole of creation.

¹²⁸ The Lord hath decreed that the dead should be interred in coffins made of crystal, of hard, resistant stone, or of wood that is both fine and durable, and that graven rings should be placed upon their fingers. He, verily, is the Supreme Ordainer, the One apprised of all.

¹²⁹ The inscription on these rings should read, for men: "Unto God belongeth all that is in the heavens and on the earth and whatsoever is between them, and He, in truth, hath knowledge of all things"; and for women: "Unto God belongeth the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatsoever is between them, and He, in truth, is potent over all things." These are the verses that were revealed aforetime, but lo, the Point of the Bayán now calleth out, exclaiming, "O Best-Beloved of the worlds! Reveal Thou in their stead such words as will waft the fragrance of Thy gracious favors over all mankind. We have announced unto everyone that one single word from Thee excelleth all that hath been sent down in the Bayán. Thou, indeed, hast power to do what pleaseth Thee. Deprive not Thy servants of the overflowing bounties of the ocean of Thy mercy! Thou, in truth, art He Whose grace is infinite." Behold, We have hearkened to His call, and now fulfill His wish. He,

verily, is the Best-Beloved, the Answerer of prayers. If the following verse, which hath at this moment been sent down by God, be engraved upon the burial rings of both men and women, it shall be better for them; We, of a certainty, are the Supreme Ordainer: "I came forth from God, and return unto Him, detached from all save Him, holding fast to His Name, the Merciful, the Compassionate." Thus doth the Lord single out whomsoever He desireth for a bounty from His presence. He is, in very truth, the God of might and power.

¹³⁰ The Lord hath decreed, moreover, that the deceased should be enfolded in five sheets of silk or cotton. For those whose means are limited a single sheet of either fabric will suffice. Thus hath it been ordained by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. It is forbidden you to transport the body of the deceased a greater distance than one hour's journey from the city; rather should it be interred, with radiance and serenity, in a nearby place.

¹³¹ God hath removed the restrictions on travel that had been imposed in the Bayán. He, verily, is the Unconstrained; He doeth as He pleaseth and ordaineth whatsoever He willeth.

¹³² O peoples of the world! Give ear unto the call of Him Who is the Lord of Names, Who proclaimeth unto you from His habitation in the Most Great Prison: "Verily, no God is there but Me, the Powerful, the Mighty, the All-Subduing, the Most Exalted, the Omniscient, the All-Wise." In truth, there is no God but Him, the Omnipotent Ruler of the worlds. Were it His Will, He would, through but a single word proceeding from His presence, lay hold on all mankind. Beware lest ye hesitate in your acceptance of this Cause—a Cause before which the Concourse on high and the dwellers of the Cities of Names have bowed down. Fear God, and be not of those who are shut out as by a veil. Burn ye away the veils with the fire of My love, and dispel ye the mists of vain imaginings by the power of this Name through which We have subdued the entire creation.

¹³³ Raise up and exalt the two Houses in the Twin Hallowed Spots, and the other sites wherein the throne of your Lord, the All-Merciful, hath been established. Thus commandeth you the Lord of every understanding heart.

¹³⁴ Be watchful lest the concerns and preoccupations of this world prevent you from observing that which hath been enjoined upon you by Him Who is the Mighty, the Faithful. Be ye the embodiments of such steadfastness amidst mankind that ye will not be kept back from God by the doubts of those who disbelieved in Him when He manifested Himself, invested with a mighty sovereignty. Take heed lest ye be prevented by aught that hath been recorded in the Book from hearkening unto this, the Living Book, Who proclaimeth the truth: "Verily, there is no God but Me, the Most Excellent, the All-Praised." Look ye with the eye of equity upon Him Who hath descended from the heaven of Divine will and power, and be not of those who act unjustly.

¹³⁵ Call then to mind these words which have streamed forth, in tribute to this Revelation, from the Pen of Him Who was My Herald, and consider what the hands of the oppressors have wrought throughout My days. Truly they are numbered with the lost. He said: "Should ye attain the presence of Him Whom We shall make manifest, beseech ye God, in His bounty, to grant that He might deign to seat Himself upon your couches, for that act in itself would confer upon you matchless and surpassing honor. Should He drink a cup of water in your homes, this would be of greater consequence for you than your proffering unto every soul, nay unto every created thing, the water of its very life. Know this, O ye My servants!"

¹³⁶ Such are the words with which My Forerunner hath extolled My Being, could ye but understand. Whoso reflecteth upon these verses, and realizeth what hidden pearls have been enshrined within them, will, by the righteousness of God, perceive the fragrance of the All-Merciful wafting from the direction of this Prison and will, with his whole heart, hasten unto Him with such ardent longing that the hosts of earth and heaven would be powerless to deter him. Say: This is a Revelation around which every proof and testimony doth circle. Thus hath it been sent down by your Lord, the God of Mercy, if ye be of them that judge aright. Say: This is the very soul of all Scriptures which hath been breathed into the Pen of the Most High, causing all created beings to be dumbfounded, save only those who have been enraptured by the gentle breezes of My loving-kindness and the sweet savors of My bounties which have pervaded the whole of creation.

¹³⁷ O people of the Bayán! Fear ye the Most Merciful and consider what He hath revealed in another passage. He said: “The Qiblih is indeed He Whom God will make manifest; whenever He moveth, it moveth, until He shall come to rest.” Thus was it set down by the Supreme Ordainer when He desired to make mention of this Most Great Beauty. Meditate on this, O people, and be not of them that wander distraught in the wilderness of error. If ye reject Him at the bidding of your idle fancies, where then is the Qiblih to which ye will turn, O assemblage of the heedless? Ponder ye this verse, and judge equitably before God, that haply ye may glean the pearls of mysteries from the ocean that surgeth in My Name, the All-Glorious, the Most High.

¹³⁸ Let none, in this Day, hold fast to aught save that which hath been manifested in this Revelation. Such is the decree of God, aforetime and hereafter—a decree wherewith the Scriptures of the Messengers of old have been adorned. Such is the admonition of the Lord, aforetime and hereafter—an admonition wherewith the preamble to the Book of Life hath been embellished, did ye but perceive it. Such is the commandment of the Lord, aforetime and hereafter; beware lest ye choose instead the part of ignominy and abasement. Naught shall avail you in this Day but God, nor is there any refuge to flee to save Him, the Omniscient, the All-Wise. Whoso hath known Me hath known the Goal of all desire, and whoso hath turned unto Me hath turned unto the Object of all adoration. Thus hath it been set forth in the Book, and thus hath it been decreed by God, the Lord of all worlds. To read but one of the verses of My Revelation is better than to peruse the Scriptures of both the former and latter generations. This is the Utterance of the All-Merciful, would that ye had ears to hear! Say: This is the essence of knowledge, did ye but understand.

¹³⁹ And now consider what hath been revealed in yet another passage, that perchance ye may forsake your own concepts and set your faces towards God, the Lord of being. He hath said: “It is unlawful to enter into marriage save with a believer in the Bayán. Should only one party to a marriage embrace this Cause, his or her possessions will become unlawful to the other, until such time as the latter hath converted. This law, however, will only take effect after the exaltation of the Cause of Him Whom We shall manifest in truth, or of that which hath already been made manifest in justice. Ere this, ye are at liberty to enter into wedlock as ye wish, that haply by this means ye may exalt the Cause of God.” Thus hath the Nightingale sung with sweet melody upon the celestial bough, in praise of its Lord, the All-Merciful. Well is it with them that hearken.

¹⁴⁰ O people of the Bayán, I adjure you by your Lord, the God of mercy, to look with the eye of fairness upon this utterance which hath been sent down through the power of truth, and not to be of those who see the testimony of God yet reject and deny it. They, in truth, are of those who will

assuredly perish. The Point of the Bayán hath explicitly made mention in this verse of the exaltation of My Cause before His own Cause; unto this will testify every just and understanding mind. As ye can readily witness in this day, its exaltation is such as none can deny save those whose eyes are drunken in this mortal life and whom a humiliating chastisement awaiteth in the life to come.

¹⁴¹ Say: By the righteousness of God! I, verily, am His Best-Beloved; and at this moment He listeneth to these verses descending from the Heaven of Revelation and bewaileth the wrongs ye have committed in these days. Fear God, and join not with the aggressor. Say: O people, should ye choose to disbelieve in Him, refrain at least from rising up against Him. By God! Sufficient are the hosts of tyranny that are leagued against Him!

¹⁴² Verily, He revealed certain laws so that, in this Dispensation, the Pen of the Most High might have no need to move in aught but the glorification of His own transcendent Station and His most effulgent Beauty. Since, however, We have wished to evidence Our bounty unto you, We have, through the power of truth, set forth these laws with clarity and mitigated what We desire you to observe. He, verily, is the Munificent, the Generous.

¹⁴³ He hath previously made known unto you that which would be uttered by this Dayspring of Divine wisdom. He said, and He speaketh the truth: “He is the One Who will under all conditions proclaim: ‘Verily, there is none other God besides Me, the One, the Incomparable, the Omniscient, the All-Informed.’” This is a station which God hath assigned exclusively to this sublime, this unique and wondrous Revelation. This is a token of His bounteous favor, if ye be of them who comprehend, and a sign of His irresistible decree. This is His Most Great Name, His Most Exalted Word, and the Dayspring of His Most Excellent Titles, if ye could understand. Nay more, through Him every Fountainhead, every Dawning-place of Divine guidance is made manifest. Reflect, O people, on that which hath been sent down in truth; ponder thereon, and be not of the transgressors.

¹⁴⁴ Consort with all religions with amity and concord, that they may inhale from you the sweet fragrance of God. Beware lest amidst men the flame of foolish ignorance overpower you. All things proceed from God and unto Him they return. He is the source of all things and in Him all things are ended.

¹⁴⁵ Take heed that ye enter no house in the absence of its owner, except with his permission. Comport yourselves with propriety under all conditions, and be not numbered with the wayward.

¹⁴⁶ It hath been enjoined upon you to purify your means of sustenance and other such things through payment of Zakát. Thus hath it been prescribed in this exalted Tablet by Him Who is the Revealer of verses. We shall, if it be God’s will and purpose, set forth erelong the measure of its assessment. He, verily, expoundeth whatsoever He desireth by virtue of His own knowledge, and He, of a truth, is Omniscient and All-Wise.

¹⁴⁷ It is unlawful to beg, and it is forbidden to give to him who beggeth. All have been enjoined to earn a living, and as for those who are incapable of doing so, it is incumbent on the Deputies of God and on the wealthy to make adequate provision for them. Keep ye the statutes and commandments of God; nay, guard them as ye would your very eyes, and be not of those who suffer grievous loss.

¹⁴⁸ Ye have been forbidden in the Book of God to engage in contention and conflict, to strike another, or to commit similar acts whereby hearts and souls may be saddened. A fine of nineteen mithqáls of gold had formerly been prescribed by Him Who is the Lord of all mankind for anyone

who was the cause of sadness to another; in this Dispensation, however, He hath absolved you thereof and exhorteth you to show forth righteousness and piety. Such is the commandment which He hath enjoined upon you in this resplendent Tablet. Wish not for others what ye wish not for yourselves; fear God, and be not of the prideful. Ye are all created out of water, and unto dust shall ye return. Reflect upon the end that awaiteth you, and walk not in the ways of the oppressor. Give ear unto the verses of God which He Who is the sacred Lote-Tree reciteth unto you. They are assuredly the infallible balance, established by God, the Lord of this world and the next. Through them the soul of man is caused to wing its flight towards the Dayspring of Revelation, and the heart of every true believer is suffused with light. Such are the laws which God hath enjoined upon you, such His commandments prescribed unto you in His Holy Tablet; obey them with joy and gladness, for this is best for you, did ye but know.

¹⁴⁹ Recite ye the verses of God every morn and eventide. Whoso faileth to recite them hath not been faithful to the Covenant of God and His Testament, and whoso turneth away from these holy verses in this Day is of those who throughout eternity have turned away from God. Fear ye God, O My servants, one and all. Pride not yourselves on much reading of the verses or on a multitude of pious acts by night and day; for were a man to read a single verse with joy and radiance it would be better for him than to read with lassitude all the Holy Books of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Read ye the sacred verses in such measure that ye be not overcome by languor and despondency. Lay not upon your souls that which will weary them and weigh them down, but rather what will lighten and uplift them, so that they may soar on the wings of the Divine verses towards the Dawning-place of His manifest signs; this will draw you nearer to God, did ye but comprehend.

¹⁵⁰ Teach your children the verses revealed from the heaven of majesty and power, so that, in most melodious tones, they may recite the Tablets of the All-Merciful in the alcoves within the Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs. Whoever hath been transported by the rapture born of adoration for My Name, the Most Compassionate, will recite the verses of God in such wise as to captivate the hearts of those yet wrapped in slumber. Well is it with him who hath quaffed the Mystic Wine of everlasting life from the utterance of his merciful Lord in My Name—a Name through which every lofty and majestic mountain hath been reduced to dust.

¹⁵¹ Ye have been enjoined to renew the furnishings of your homes after the passing of each nineteen years; thus hath it been ordained by One Who is Omniscient and All-Perceiving. He, verily, is desirous of refinement, both for you yourselves and for all that ye possess; lay not aside the fear of God and be not of the negligent. Whoso findeth that his means are insufficient to this purpose hath been excused by God, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bounteous.

¹⁵² Wash your feet once every day in summer, and once every three days during winter.

¹⁵³ Should anyone wax angry with you, respond to him with gentleness; and should anyone upbraid you, forbear to upbraid him in return, but leave him to himself and put your trust in God, the omnipotent Avenger, the Lord of might and justice.

¹⁵⁴ Ye have been prohibited from making use of pulpits. Whoso wisheth to recite unto you the verses of his Lord, let him sit on a chair placed upon a dais, that he may make mention of God, his Lord, and the Lord of all mankind. It is pleasing to God that ye should seat yourselves on chairs and benches as a mark of honor for the love ye bear for Him and for the Manifestation of His glorious and resplendent Cause.

¹⁵⁵ Gambling and the use of opium have been forbidden unto you. Eschew them both, O people, and be not of those who transgress. Beware of using any substance that induceth sluggishness and torpor in the human temple and inflicteth harm upon the body. We, verily, desire for you naught save what shall profit you, and to this bear witness all created things, had ye but ears to hear.

¹⁵⁶ Whensoever ye be invited to a banquet or festive occasion, respond with joy and gladness, and whoever fulfilleth his promise will be safe from reproof. This is a Day on which each of God's wise decrees hath been expounded.

¹⁵⁷ Behold, the "mystery of the Great Reversal in the Sign of the Sovereign" hath now been made manifest. Well is it with him whom God hath aided to recognize the "Six" raised up by virtue of this "Upright Alif"; he, verily, is of those whose faith is true. How many the outwardly pious who have turned away, and how many the wayward who have drawn nigh, exclaiming: "All praise be to Thee, O Thou the Desire of the worlds!" In truth, it is in the hand of God to give what He willeth to whomsoever He willeth, and to withhold what He pleaseth from whomsoever He may wish. He knoweth the inner secrets of the hearts and the meaning hidden in a mocker's wink. How many an embodiment of heedlessness who came unto Us with purity of heart have We established upon the seat of Our acceptance; and how many an exponent of wisdom have We in all justice consigned to the fire. We are, in truth, the One to judge. He it is Who is the manifestation of "God doeth whatsoever He pleaseth," and abideth upon the throne of "He ordaineth whatsoever He chooseth."

¹⁵⁸ Blessed is the one who discovereth the fragrance of inner meanings from the traces of this Pen through whose movement the breezes of God are wafted over the entire creation, and through whose stillness the very essence of tranquillity appeareth in the realm of being. Glorified be the All-Merciful, the Revealer of so inestimable a bounty. Say: Because He bore injustice, justice hath appeared on earth, and because He accepted abasement, the majesty of God hath shone forth amidst mankind.

¹⁵⁹ It hath been forbidden you to carry arms unless essential, and permitted you to attire yourselves in silk. The Lord hath relieved you, as a bounty on His part, of the restrictions that formerly applied to clothing and to the trim of the beard. He, verily, is the Ordainer, the Omniscient. Let there be naught in your demeanor of which sound and upright minds would disapprove, and make not yourselves the playthings of the ignorant. Well is it with him who hath adorned himself with the vesture of seemly conduct and a praiseworthy character. He is assuredly reckoned with those who aid their Lord through distinctive and outstanding deeds.

¹⁶⁰ Promote ye the development of the cities of God and His countries, and glorify Him therein in the joyous accents of His well-favored ones. In truth, the hearts of men are edified through the power of the tongue, even as houses and cities are built up by the hand and other means. We have assigned to every end a means for its accomplishment; avail yourselves thereof, and place your trust and confidence in God, the Omniscient, the All-Wise.

¹⁶¹ Blessed is the man that hath acknowledged his belief in God and in His signs, and recognized that "He shall not be asked of His doings." Such a recognition hath been made by God the ornament of every belief and its very foundation. Upon it must depend the acceptance of every goodly deed. Fasten your eyes upon it, that haply the whisperings of the rebellious may not cause you to slip.

¹⁶² Were He to decree as lawful the thing which from time immemorial had been forbidden, and forbid that which had, at all times, been regarded as lawful, to none is given the right to question His

authority. Whoso will hesitate, though it be for less than a moment, should be regarded as a transgressor.

¹⁶³ Whoso hath not recognized this sublime and fundamental verity, and hath failed to attain this most exalted station, the winds of doubt will agitate him, and the sayings of the infidels will distract his soul. He that hath acknowledged this principle will be endowed with the most perfect constancy. All honor to this all-glorious station, the remembrance of which adorneth every exalted Tablet. Such is the teaching which God bestoweth on you, a teaching that will deliver you from all manner of doubt and perplexity, and enable you to attain unto salvation in both this world and the next. He, verily, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful. He it is Who hath sent forth the Messengers, and sent down the Books to proclaim "There is none other God but Me, the Almighty, the All-Wise."

¹⁶⁴ O Land of Káf and Rá! We, verily, behold thee in a state displeasing unto God, and see proceeding from thee that which is inscrutable to anyone save Him, the Omniscient, the All-Informed; and We perceive that which secretly and stealthily diffuseth from thee. With Us is the knowledge of all things, inscribed in a lucid Tablet. Sorrow not for that which hath befallen thee. Erelong will God raise up within thee men endued with mighty valor, who will magnify My Name with such constancy that neither will they be deterred by the evil suggestions of the divines, nor will they be kept back by the insinuations of the sowers of doubt. With their own eyes will they behold God, and with their own lives will they render Him victorious. These, truly, are of those who are steadfast.

¹⁶⁵ O concourse of divines! When My verses were sent down, and My clear tokens were revealed, We found you behind the veils. This, verily, is a strange thing. Ye glory in My Name, yet ye recognized Me not at the time your Lord, the All-Merciful, appeared amongst you with proof and testimony. We have rent the veils asunder. Beware lest ye shut out the people by yet another veil. Pluck asunder the chains of vain imaginings, in the name of the Lord of all men, and be not of the deceitful. Should ye turn unto God and embrace His Cause, spread not disorder within it, and measure not the Book of God with your selfish desires. This, verily, is the counsel of God aforetime and hereafter, and to this God's witnesses and chosen ones, yea, each and every one of Us, do solemnly attest.

¹⁶⁶ Call ye to mind the shaykh whose name was Muḥammad-Ḥasan, who ranked among the most learned divines of his day. When the True One was made manifest, this shaykh, along with others of his calling, rejected Him, while a sifter of wheat and barley accepted Him and turned unto the Lord. Though he was occupied both night and day in setting down what he conceived to be the laws and ordinances of God, yet when He Who is the Unconstrained appeared, not one letter thereof availed him, or he would not have turned away from a Countenance that hath illumined the faces of the well-favored of the Lord. Had ye believed in God when He revealed Himself, the people would not have turned aside from Him, nor would the things ye witness today have befallen Us. Fear God, and be not of the heedless.

¹⁶⁷ Beware lest any name debar you from Him Who is the Possessor of all names, or any word shut you out from this Remembrance of God, this Source of Wisdom amongst you. Turn unto God and seek His protection, O concourse of divines, and make not of yourselves a veil between Me and My creatures. Thus doth your Lord admonish you, and command you to be just, lest your works should come to naught and ye yourselves be oblivious of your plight. Shall he who denieth this Cause be

able to vindicate the truth of any cause throughout creation? Nay, by Him Who is the Fashioner of the universe! Yet the people are wrapped in a palpable veil. Say: Through this Cause the daystar of testimony hath dawned, and the luminary of proof hath shed its radiance upon all that dwell on earth. Fear God, O men of insight, and be not of those who disbelieve in Me. Take heed lest the word “Prophet” withhold you from this Most Great Announcement, or any reference to “Vicegerency” debar you from the sovereignty of Him Who is the Vicegerent of God, which overshadoweth all the worlds. Every name hath been created by His Word, and every cause is dependent on His irresistible, His mighty and wondrous Cause. Say: This is the Day of God, the Day on which naught shall be mentioned save His own Self, the omnipotent Protector of all worlds. This is the Cause that hath made all your superstitions and idols to tremble.

¹⁶⁸ We, verily, see amongst you him who taketh hold of the Book of God and citeth from it proofs and arguments wherewith to repudiate his Lord, even as the followers of every other Faith sought reasons in their Holy Books for refuting Him Who is the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Say: God, the True One, is My witness that neither the Scriptures of the world, nor all the books and writings in existence, shall, in this Day, avail you aught without this, the Living Book, Who proclaimeth in the midmost heart of creation: “Verily, there is none other God but Me, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”

¹⁶⁹ O concourse of divines! Beware lest ye be the cause of strife in the land, even as ye were the cause of the repudiation of the Faith in its early days. Gather the people around this Word that hath made the pebbles to cry out: “The Kingdom is God’s, the Dawning-place of all signs!” Thus doth your Lord admonish you, as a bounty on His part; He, of a truth, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.

¹⁷⁰ Call ye to mind Karím, and how, when We summoned him unto God, he waxed disdainful, prompted by his own desires; yet We had sent him that which was a solace to the eye of proof in the world of being and the fulfillment of God’s testimony to all the denizens of earth and heaven. As a token of the grace of Him Who is the All-Possessing, the Most High, We bade him embrace the Truth. But he turned away until, as an act of justice from God, angels of wrath laid hold upon him. Unto this We truly were a witness.

¹⁷¹ Tear the veils asunder in such wise that the inmates of the Kingdom will hear them being rent. This is the command of God, in days gone by and for those to come. Blessed the man that observeth that whereunto he was bidden, and woe betide the negligent.

¹⁷² We, of a certainty, have had no purpose in this earthly realm save to make God manifest and to reveal His sovereignty; sufficient unto Me is God for a witness. We, of a certainty, have had no intent in the celestial Kingdom but to exalt His Cause and glorify His praise; sufficient unto Me is God for a protector. We, of a certainty, have had no desire in the Dominion on high except to extol God and what hath been sent down by Him; sufficient unto Me is God for a helper.

¹⁷³ Happy are ye, O ye the learned ones in Bahá. By the Lord! Ye are the billows of the Most Mighty Ocean, the stars of the firmament of Glory, the standards of triumph waving betwixt earth and heaven. Ye are the manifestations of steadfastness amidst men and the daysprings of Divine Utterance to all that dwell on earth. Well is it with him that turneth unto you, and woe betide the froward. This day, it behooveth whoso hath quaffed the Mystic Wine of everlasting life from the Hands of the loving-kindness of the Lord his God, the Merciful, to pulsate even as the throbbing

artery in the body of mankind, that through him may be quickened the world and every crumbling bone.

¹⁷⁴ O people of the world! When the Mystic Dove will have winged its flight from its Sanctuary of Praise and sought its far-off goal, its hidden habitation, refer ye whatsoever ye understand not in the Book to Him Who hath branched from this mighty Stock.

¹⁷⁵ O Pen of the Most High! Move Thou upon the Tablet at the bidding of Thy Lord, the Creator of the Heavens, and tell of the time when He Who is the Dayspring of Divine Unity purposed to direct His steps towards the School of Transcendent Oneness; haply the pure in heart may gain thereby a glimpse, be it as small as a needle's eye, of the mysteries of Thy Lord, the Almighty, the Omniscient, that lie concealed behind the veils. Say: We, indeed, set foot within the School of inner meaning and explanation when all created things were unaware. We saw the words sent down by Him Who is the All-Merciful, and We accepted the verses of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting, which He presented unto Us, and hearkened unto that which He had solemnly affirmed in the Tablet. This We assuredly did behold. And We assented to His wish through Our behest, for truly We are potent to command.

¹⁷⁶ O people of the Bayán! We, verily, set foot within the School of God when ye lay slumbering; and We perused the Tablet while ye were fast asleep. By the one true God! We read the Tablet ere it was revealed, while ye were unaware, and We had perfect knowledge of the Book when ye were yet unborn. These words are to your measure, not to God's. To this testifieth that which is enshrined within His knowledge, if ye be of them that comprehend; and to this the tongue of the Almighty doth bear witness, if ye be of those who understand. I swear by God, were We to lift the veil, ye would be dumbfounded.

¹⁷⁷ Take heed that ye dispute not idly concerning the Almighty and His Cause, for lo! He hath appeared amongst you invested with a Revelation so great as to encompass all things, whether of the past or of the future. Were We to address Our theme by speaking in the language of the inmates of the Kingdom, We would say: "In truth, God created that School ere He created heaven and earth, and We entered it before the letters B and E were joined and knit together." Such is the language of Our servants in Our Kingdom; consider what the tongue of the dwellers of Our exalted Dominion would utter, for We have taught them Our knowledge and have revealed to them whatever had lain hidden in God's wisdom. Imagine then what the Tongue of Might and Grandeur would utter in His All-Glorious Abode!

¹⁷⁸ This is not a Cause which may be made a plaything for your idle fancies, nor is it a field for the foolish and faint of heart. By God, this is the arena of insight and detachment, of vision and upliftment, where none may spur on their chargers save the valiant horsemen of the Merciful, who have severed all attachment to the world of being. These, truly, are they that render God victorious on earth, and are the dawning-places of His sovereign might amidst mankind.

¹⁷⁹ Beware lest aught that hath been revealed in the Bayán should keep you from your Lord, the Most Compassionate. God is My witness that the Bayán was sent down for no other purpose than to celebrate My praise, did ye but know! In it the pure in heart will find only the fragrance of My love, only My Name that overshadoweth all that seeth and is seen. Say: Turn ye, O people, unto that which hath proceeded from My Most Exalted Pen. Should ye inhale therefrom the fragrance of God, set not

yourselves against Him, nor deny yourselves a portion of His gracious favor and His manifold bestowals. Thus doth your Lord admonish you; He, verily, is the Counselor, the Omniscient.

¹⁸⁰ Whatsoever ye understand not in the Bayán, ask it of God, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers. Should He so desire, He will expound for you that which is revealed therein, and disclose to you the pearls of Divine knowledge and wisdom that lie concealed within the ocean of its words. He, verily, is supreme over all names; no God is there but Him, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

¹⁸¹ The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System—the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed.

¹⁸² Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My words, that ye may unravel its secrets, and discover all the pearls of wisdom that lie hid in its depths. Take heed that ye do not vacillate in your determination to embrace the truth of this Cause—a Cause through which the potentialities of the might of God have been revealed, and His sovereignty established. With faces beaming with joy, hasten ye unto Him. This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Let him that seeketh, attain it; and as to him that hath refused to seek it—verily, God is Self-Sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

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. 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. Beware lest ye make it a cause of dissension amongst you. Be ye as firmly settled as the immovable mountain in the Cause of your Lord, the Mighty, the Loving.

¹⁸⁴ Say: O source of perversion! Abandon thy willful blindness, and speak forth the truth amidst the people. I swear by God that I have wept for thee to see thee following thy selfish passions and renouncing Him Who fashioned thee and brought thee into being. Call to mind the tender mercy of thy Lord, and remember how We nurtured thee by day and by night for service to the Cause. Fear God, and be thou of the truly repentant. Granted that the people were confused about thy station, is it conceivable that thou thyself art similarly confused? Tremble before thy Lord and recall the days when thou didst stand before Our throne, and didst write down the verses that We dictated unto thee—verses sent down by God, the Omnipotent Protector, the Lord of might and power. Beware lest the fire of thy presumptuousness debar thee from attaining to God's Holy Court. Turn unto Him, and fear not because of thy deeds. He, in truth, forgiveth whomsoever He desireth as a bounty on His part; no God is there but Him, the Ever-Forgiving, the All-Bounteous. We admonish thee solely for the sake of God. Shouldst thou accept this counsel, thou wilt have acted to thine own behoof; and shouldst thou reject it, thy Lord, verily, can well dispense with thee, and with all those who, in manifest delusion, have followed thee. Behold! God hath laid hold on him who led thee astray. Return unto God, humble, submissive and lowly; verily, He will put away from thee thy sins, for thy Lord, of a certainty, is the Forgiving, the Mighty, the All-Merciful.

¹⁸⁵ This is the Counsel of God; would that thou mightest heed it! This is the Bounty of God; would that thou mightest receive it! This is the Utterance of God; if only thou wouldst apprehend it! This is the Treasure of God; if only thou couldst understand!

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. Say: This is the Dayspring of Divine knowledge, if ye be of them that understand, and the Dawning-place of God's commandments, if ye be of those who comprehend.

¹⁸⁷ Burden not an animal with more than it can bear. We, truly, have prohibited such treatment through a most binding interdiction in the Book. Be ye the embodiments of justice and fairness amidst all creation.

¹⁸⁸ Should anyone unintentionally take another's life, it is incumbent upon him to render to the family of the deceased an indemnity of one hundred mithqáls of gold. Observe ye that which hath been enjoined upon you in this Tablet, and be not of those who overstep its limits.

¹⁸⁹ O members of parliaments throughout the world! Select ye a single language for the use of all on earth, and adopt ye likewise a common script. God, verily, maketh plain for you that which shall profit you and enable you to be independent of others. He, of a truth, is the Most Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. This will be the cause of unity, could ye but comprehend it, and the greatest instrument for promoting harmony and civilization, would that ye might understand! We have appointed two signs for the coming of age of the human race: the first, which is the most firm foundation, We have set down in other of Our Tablets, while the second hath been revealed in this wondrous Book.

¹⁹⁰ It hath been forbidden you to smoke opium. We, truly, have prohibited this practice through a most binding interdiction in the Book. Should anyone partake thereof, assuredly he is not of Me. Fear God, O ye endued with understanding!

Questions and Answers

¹ Question: Concerning the Most Great Festival. Answer: The Most Great Festival commenceth late in the afternoon of the thirteenth day of the second month of the year according to the Bayán. On the first, ninth and twelfth days of this Festival, work is forbidden.

² Question: Concerning the Festival of the Twin Birthdays. Answer: The Birth of the Abhá Beauty was at the hour of dawn on the second day of the month of Muḥarram, the first day of which marketh the Birth of His Herald. These two days are accounted as one in the sight of God.

³ Question: Concerning the Marriage Verses. Answer: For men: "We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God." For women: "We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God."

⁴ Question: Should a man go on a journey without specifying a time for his return without indicating, in other words, the expected period of his absence—and should no word be heard of him thereafter, and all trace of him be lost, what course should be followed by his wife? Answer: Should he have omitted to fix a time for his return despite being aware of the stipulation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas in this regard, his wife should wait for one full year, after which she shall be free either to adopt the course that is praiseworthy, or to choose for herself another husband. If, however, he be unaware of this stipulation, she should abide in patience until such time as God shall please to disclose to her his fate. By the course that is praiseworthy in this connection is meant the exercise of patience.

⁵ Question: Concerning the holy verse: “When We heard the clamor of the children as yet unborn, We doubled their share and decreased those of the rest.” Answer: According to the Book of God, the estate of the deceased is divided into 2,520 shares, which number is the lowest common multiple of all integers up to nine, and these shares are then distributed into seven portions, each of which is allocated, as mentioned in the Book, to a particular category of heirs. The children, for example, are allotted nine blocks of 60 shares, comprising 540 shares in all. The meaning of the statement “We doubled their share” is thus that the children receive a further nine blocks of 60 shares, entitling them to a total of 18 blocks all told. The extra shares that they receive are deducted from the portions of the other categories of heirs, so that, although it is revealed, for instance, that the spouse is entitled to “eight parts comprising four hundred and eighty shares,” which is the equivalent of eight blocks of 60 shares, now, by virtue of this rearrangement, one and a half blocks of shares, comprising 90 shares in all, have been subtracted from the spouse’s portion and reallocated to the children, and similarly in the case of the others. The result is that the total amount subtracted is equivalent to the nine extra blocks of shares allotted to the children.

⁶ Question: Is it necessary that the brother, in order to qualify for his portion of the inheritance, be descended from both the father and the mother of the deceased, or is it sufficient merely that there be one parent in common? Answer: If the brother be descended from the father he shall receive his share of the inheritance in the prescribed measure recorded in the Book; but if he be descended from the mother, he shall receive only two-thirds of his entitlement, the remaining third reverting to the House of Justice. This ruling is also applicable to the sister.

⁷ Question: Amongst the provisions concerning inheritance it hath been laid down that, should the deceased leave no offspring, their share of the estate is to revert to the House of Justice. In the event of other categories of heirs, such as the father, mother, brother, sister and teacher being similarly absent, do their shares of the inheritance also revert to the House of Justice, or are they dealt with in some other fashion? Answer: The sacred verse sufficeth. He saith, exalted be His Word: “Should the deceased leave no offspring, their share shall revert to the House of Justice” etc. and “Should the deceased leave offspring, but none of the other categories of heirs that have been specified in the Book, they shall receive two-thirds of the inheritance and the remaining third shall revert to the House of Justice” etc. In other words, where there are no offspring, their allotted portion of the inheritance reverteth to the House of Justice; and where there are offspring but the other categories of heirs are lacking, two-thirds of the inheritance pass to the offspring, the remaining third reverting to the House of Justice. This ruling hath both general and specific application, which is to say that whenever any category of this latter class of heirs is absent, two-thirds of their inheritance pass to the offspring and the remaining third to the House of Justice.

⁸ Question: Concerning the basic sum on which Ḥuqúqu’lláh is payable. Answer: The basic sum on which Ḥuqúqu’lláh is payable is nineteen mithqáls of gold. In other words, when money to the value of this sum hath been acquired, a payment of Ḥuqúq falleth due. Likewise Ḥuqúq is payable when the value, not the number, of other forms of property reacheth the prescribed amount. Ḥuqúqu’lláh is payable no more than once. A person, for instance, who acquireth a thousand mithqáls of gold, and payeth the Ḥuqúq, is not liable to make a further such payment on this sum, but only on what accrueth to it through commerce, business and the like. When this increase, namely the profit realized, reacheth the prescribed sum, one must carry out what God hath decreed. Only when the

principal changeth hands is it once more subject to payment of Ḥuqúq, as it was the first time. The Primal Point hath directed that Ḥuqúqu'lláh must be paid on the value of whatsoever one possesseth; yet, in this Most Mighty Dispensation, We have exempted the household furnishings, that is such furnishings as are needed, and the residence itself.

⁹ Question: Which is to take precedence: the Ḥuqúqu'lláh, the debts of the deceased or the cost of the funeral and burial? Answer: The funeral and burial take precedence, then settlement of debts, then payment of Ḥuqúqu'lláh. Should the property of the deceased prove insufficient to cover his debts, the remainder of his estate should be distributed among these debts in proportion to their size.

¹⁰ Question: Shaving the head hath been forbidden in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas but enjoined in the Súriy-i-Ḥajj. Answer: All are charged with obedience to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas; whatsoever is revealed therein is the Law of God amid His servants. The injunction on pilgrims to the sacred House to shave the head hath been lifted.

¹¹ Question: If intercourse take place between a couple during their year of patience, and they become estranged again thereafter, must they recommence their year of patience, or may the days preceding the intercourse be included in the reckoning of the year? And once divorce hath taken place, is it necessary that a further period of waiting be observed? Answer: Should affection be renewed between the couple during their year of patience, the marriage tie is valid, and what is commanded in the Book of God must be observed; but once the year of patience hath been completed and that which is decreed by God taketh place, a further period of waiting is not required. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife is forbidden during their year of patience, and whoso committeth this act must seek God's forgiveness, and, as a punishment, render to the House of Justice a fine of nineteen mithqáls of gold.

¹² Question: Should antipathy develop between a couple after the Marriage Verses have been read and the dowry paid, may divorce take place without observance of the year of patience? Answer: Divorce may legitimately be sought after the reading of the Marriage Verses and payment of the dowry, but before the consummation of the marriage. In such circumstances there is no need for observance of a year of patience, but recovery of the dowry payment is not permissible.

¹³ Question: Is the consent of the parents on both sides prerequisite to marriage, or is that of the parents on one side sufficient? Is this law applicable only to virgins or to others as well? Answer: Marriage is conditional upon the consent of the parents of both parties to the marriage, and in this respect it maketh no difference whether the bride be a virgin or otherwise.

¹⁴ Question: The believers have been enjoined to face in the direction of the Qiblih when reciting their Obligatory Prayers; in what direction should they turn when offering other prayers and devotions? Answer: Facing in the direction of the Qiblih is a fixed requirement for the recitation of obligatory prayer, but for other prayers and devotions one may follow what the merciful Lord hath revealed in the Qur'án: "Whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God."

¹⁵ Question: Concerning the remembrance of God in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár "at the hour of dawn." Answer: Although the words "at the hour of dawn" are used in the Book of God, it is acceptable to God at the earliest dawn of day, between dawn and sunrise, or even up to two hours after sunrise.

¹⁶ Question: Is the ordinance that the body of the deceased should be carried no greater distance than one hour's journey applicable to transport by both land and sea? Answer: This command applieth to

distances by sea as well as by land, whether it is an hour by steamship or by rail; the intention is the hour's time, whatever the means of transport. The sooner the burial taketh place, however, the more fitting and acceptable will it be.

¹⁷ Question: What procedure should be followed on the discovery of lost property? Answer: If such property be found in the town, its discovery is to be announced once by the town crier. If the owner of the property is then found, it should be delivered up to him. Otherwise, the finder of the property should wait one year, and if, during this period, the owner cometh to light, the finder should receive from him the crier's fee and restore to him his property; only if the year should pass without the owner's being identified may the finder take possession of the property himself. If the value of the property is less than or equal to the crier's fee, the finder should wait a single day from the time of its discovery, at the end of which, if the owner hath not come to light, he may himself appropriate it; and in the case of property discovered in an uninhabited area, the finder should observe a three days' wait, on the passing of which period, if the identity of the owner remain unknown, he is free to take possession of his find.

¹⁸ Question: With reference to the ablutions: if, for example, a person hath just bathed his entire body, must he still perform his ablutions? Answer: The commandment regarding ablutions must, in any case, be observed.

¹⁹ Question: Should a person plan to migrate from his country, and his wife be opposed and the disagreement culminate in divorce, and should his preparations for the journey extend until a year hath passed, may this period be counted as the year of patience, or should the day the couple part be regarded as the starting point of that year? Answer: The starting point for computation is the day the couple part, and if, therefore, they have separated a year before the husband's departure, and if the fragrance of affection hath not been renewed between the couple, divorce may take place. Otherwise the year must be counted from the day of his departure, and the conditions set forth in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas observed.

²⁰ Question: Concerning the age of maturity with respect to religious duties. Answer: The age of maturity is fifteen for both men and women.

²¹ Question: Concerning the holy verse: "When traveling, if ye should stop and rest in some safe spot, perform ye ... a single prostration in place of each unsaid Obligatory Prayer..." Answer: This prostration is to compensate for obligatory prayer omitted in the course of travel, and by reason of insecure circumstances. If, at the time of prayer, the traveler should find himself at rest in a secure place, he should perform that prayer. This provision regarding the compensating prostration applieth both at home and on a journey.

²² Question: Concerning the definition of a journey. Answer: The definition of a journey is nine hours by the clock. Should the traveler stop in a place, anticipating that he will stay there for no less than one month by the Bayán reckoning, it is incumbent on him to keep the Fast; but if for less than one month, he is exempt from fasting. If he arriveth during the Fast at a place where he is to stay one month according to the Bayán, he should not observe the Fast till three days have elapsed, thereafter keeping it throughout the remainder of its course; but if he come to his home, where he hath heretofore been permanently resident, he must commence his fast upon the first day after his arrival.

²³ Question: Concerning the punishment of the adulterer and adulteress. Answer: Nine mithqáls are payable for the first offense, eighteen for the second, thirty-six for the third, and so on, each

succeeding fine being double the preceding. The weight of one mithqál is equivalent to nineteen nakhuds in accordance with the specification of the Bayán.

²⁴ Question: Concerning hunting. Answer: He saith, exalted be He: “If ye should hunt with beasts or birds of prey” and so forth. Other means, such as bows and arrows, guns, and similar equipment employed in hunting, are also included. If, however, traps or snares are used, and the game dieth before it can be reached, it is unlawful for consumption.

²⁵ Question: Concerning the pilgrimage. Answer: It is an obligation to make pilgrimage to one of the two sacred Houses; but as to which, it is for the pilgrim to decide.

²⁶ Question: Concerning the dowry. Answer: Regarding dowry, the intention of contenting oneself with the lowest level is nineteen mithqáls of silver.

²⁷ Question: Concerning the sacred verse: “If, however, news should reach her of her husband’s death,” etc. Answer: With reference to waiting a “fixed number of months” a period of nine months is intended.

²⁸ Question: Again inquiry hath been made about the teacher’s share of the inheritance. Answer: Should the teacher have passed away, one-third of his share of the inheritance reverteth to the House of Justice, and the remaining two-thirds pass to the deceased’s, and not the teacher’s, offspring.

²⁹ Question: Again inquiry hath been made about the pilgrimage. Answer: By pilgrimage to the sacred House, which is enjoined upon men, is intended both the Most Great House in Baghdád and the House of the Primal Point in Shíráz; pilgrimage to either of these Houses sufficeth. They may thus make pilgrimage to whichever lieth nearer to the place where they reside.

³⁰ Question: Concerning the verse: “he who would take into his service a maid may do so with propriety.” Answer: This is solely for service such as is performed by any other class of servants, be they young or old, in exchange for wages; such a maiden is free to choose a husband at whatever time she pleaseth, for it is forbidden either that women should be purchased, or that a man should have more wives than two.

³¹ Question: Concerning the sacred verse: “The Lord hath prohibited ... the practice to which ye formerly had recourse when thrice ye had divorced a woman.” Answer: The reference is to the law which previously made it necessary for another man to marry such a woman before she could again be wedded to her former husband; this practice hath been prohibited in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

³² Question: Concerning the restoration and preservation of the two Houses in the Twin Spots, and the other sites wherein the throne hath been established. Answer: By the two Houses is intended the Most Great House and the House of the Primal Point. As for other sites, the people of the areas where these are situated may choose to preserve either each house wherein the throne hath been established, or one of them.

³³ Question: Again inquiry hath been made about the inheritance of the teacher. Answer: If the teacher is not of the people of Bahá, he doth not inherit. Should there be several teachers, the share is to be divided equally amongst them. If the teacher is deceased, his offspring do not inherit his share, but rather two-thirds of it revert to the children of the owner of the estate, and the remaining one-third to the House of Justice.

³⁴ Question: Concerning the residence which hath been assigned exclusively to the male offspring. Answer: If there are several residences, the finest and noblest of these dwellings is the one intended,

the remainder being distributed amongst the whole body of the heirs like any other form of property. Any heir, from whichever category of inheritors, who is outside the Faith of God is accounted as nonexistent and doth not inherit.

³⁵ Question: Concerning Naw-Rúz. Answer: The Festival of Naw-Rúz falleth on the day that the sun entereth the sign of Aries, even should this occur no more than one minute before sunset.

³⁶ Question: If the anniversary either of the Twin Birthdays or of the Declaration of the Báb occurreth during the Fast, what is to be done? Answer: Should the feasts celebrating the Twin Birthdays or the Declaration of the Báb fall within the month of fasting, the command to fast shall not apply on that day.

³⁷ Question: In the holy ordinances governing inheritance, the residence and personal clothing of the deceased have been allotted to the male offspring. Doth this provision refer only to the father's property, or doth it apply to the mother's as well? Answer: The used clothing of the mother should be divided in equal shares among the daughters, but the remainder of her estate, including property, jewelry, and unused clothing, is to be distributed, in the manner revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, to all her heirs. If, however, the deceased hath left no daughters, her estate in its entirety must be divided in the manner designated for men in the holy Text.

³⁸ Question: Concerning divorce, which must be preceded by a year of patience: if only one of the parties is inclined toward conciliation, what is to be done? Answer: According to the commandment revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, both parties must be content; unless both are willing, reunion cannot take place.

³⁹ Question: In connection with the dowry, what if the bridegroom cannot pay this sum in full, but instead were to formally deliver a promissory note to his bride at the time of the wedding ceremony, on the understanding that he will honor it when he is able to do so? Answer: Permission to adopt this practice hath been granted by the Source of Authority.

⁴⁰ Question: If during the year of patience the fragrance of affection be renewed, only to be succeeded by antipathy, and the couple waver between affection and aversion throughout the year, and the year endeth in antipathy, can divorce take place or not? Answer: In each case at any time antipathy occurreth, the year of patience beginneth on that day, and the year must run its full course.

⁴¹ Question: The residence and personal clothing of the deceased have been assigned to the male, not female, offspring, nor to the other heirs; should the deceased have left no male offspring, what is to be done? Answer: He saith, exalted be He: "Should the deceased leave no offspring, their share shall revert to the House of Justice..." In conformity with this sacred verse, the residence and personal clothing of the deceased revert to the House of Justice.

⁴² Question: The ordinance of Ḥuqúqu'lláh is revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Is the residence, with the accompanying fixtures and necessary furnishings, included in the property on which Ḥuqúq is payable, or is it otherwise? Answer: In the laws revealed in Persian We have ordained that in this Most Mighty Dispensation the residence and the household furnishings are exempt—that is, such furnishings as are necessary.

⁴³ Question: Concerning the betrothal of a girl before maturity. Answer: This practice hath been pronounced unlawful by the Source of Authority, and it is unlawful to announce a marriage earlier than ninety-five days before the wedding.

⁴⁴ Question: If a person hath, for example, a hundred túmáns, payeth the Ḥuqúq on this sum, loseth half the sum in unsuccessful transactions and then, through trading, the amount in hand is raised again to the sum on which Ḥuqúq is due—must such a person pay Ḥuqúq or not? Answer: In such an event the Ḥuqúq is not payable.

⁴⁵ Question: If, after payment of Ḥuqúq, this same sum of one hundred túmáns is lost in its entirety, but subsequently regained through trade and business dealings, must Ḥuqúq be paid a second time or not? Answer: In this event as well, payment of Ḥuqúq is not required.

⁴⁶ Question: With reference to the sacred verse, “God hath prescribed matrimony unto you,” is this prescription obligatory or not? Answer: It is not obligatory.

⁴⁷ Question: Supposing that a man hath wed a certain woman believing her to be a virgin and he hath paid her the dowry, but at the time of consummation it becometh evident that she is not a virgin, are the expenses and the dowry to be repaid or not? And if the marriage had been made conditional upon virginity, doth the unfulfilled condition invalidate that which was conditioned upon it? Answer: In such a case the expenses and the dowry may be refunded. The unfulfilled condition invalidateth that which is conditioned upon it. However, to conceal and forgive the matter will, in the sight of God, merit a bounteous reward.

⁴⁸ Question: “...it is enjoined upon you to offer a feast...” Is this obligatory or not? Answer: It is not obligatory.

⁴⁹ Question: Concerning the penalties for adultery, sodomy, and theft, and the degrees thereof. Answer: The determination of the degrees of these penalties rests with the House of Justice.

⁵⁰ Question: Concerning the legitimacy or otherwise of marrying one’s relatives. Answer: These matters likewise rest with the Trustees of the House of Justice.

⁵¹ Question: With reference to ablutions, it hath been revealed, “Let him that findeth no water for ablution repeat five times the words ‘In the Name of God, the Most Pure, the Most Pure’”: is it permissible to recite this verse in times of bitter cold, or if the hands or face be wounded? Answer: Warm water may be used in times of bitter cold. If there are wounds on the face or hands, or there be other reasons such as aches and pains for which the use of water would be harmful, one may recite the appointed verse in place of the ablution.

⁵² Question: Is the recitation of the verse revealed to replace the Prayer of the Signs obligatory? Answer: It is not obligatory.

⁵³ Question: With reference to inheritance, when there are full brothers and full sisters, would half-brothers and half-sisters on the mother’s side also receive a share? Answer: They receive no share.

⁵⁴ Question: He saith, exalted be He: “Should the son of the deceased have passed away in the days of his father and have left children, they will inherit their father’s share...” What is to be done if the daughter hath died during the lifetime of her father? Answer: Her share of the inheritance should be distributed among the seven categories of heirs according to the ordinance of the Book.

⁵⁵ Question: If the deceased be a woman, to whom is the “wife’s” share of the inheritance allotted? Answer: The “wife’s” share of the inheritance is allotted to the husband.

⁵⁶ Question: Concerning the shrouding of the body of the deceased which is decreed to comprise five sheets: does the five refer to five cloths which were hitherto customarily used or to five full-length shrouds wrapped one around the other? Answer: The use of five cloths is intended.

⁵⁷ Question: Concerning disparities between certain revealed verses. Answer: Many Tablets were revealed and dispatched in their original form without being checked and reviewed. Consequently, as bidden, they were again read out in the Holy Presence, and brought into conformity with the grammatical conventions of the people in order to forestall the cavils of opponents of the Cause. Another reason for this practice is that the new style inaugurated by the Herald, may the souls of all else but Him be offered up for His sake, was seen to be marked by substantial latitude in adherence to the rules of grammar; sacred verses therefore were then revealed in a style which is for the most part in conformity with current usage for ease of understanding and concision of expression.

⁵⁸ Question: Concerning the blessed verse, “When traveling, if ye should stop and rest in some safe spot, perform ye ... a single prostration in place of each unsaid Obligatory Prayer”: is this compensation for the Obligatory Prayer missed by reason of insecure circumstances, or is obligatory prayer completely suspended during travel, and doth the prostration take its place? Answer: If, when the hour of obligatory prayer arriveth, there be no security, one should, upon arrival in safe surroundings, perform a prostration in place of each Obligatory Prayer that was missed, and after the final prostration, sit cross-legged and read the designated verse. If there be a safe place, obligatory prayer is not suspended during travel.

⁵⁹ Question: If, after a traveler hath stopped and rested it is the time for obligatory prayer, should he perform the prayer, or make the prostration in its stead? Answer: Except in insecure circumstances omission of the Obligatory Prayer is not permissible.

⁶⁰ Question: If, due to missed Obligatory Prayers, a number of prostrations are required, must the verse be repeated after each compensating prostration or not? Answer: It is sufficient to recite the designated verse after the last prostration. The several prostrations do not require separate repetitions of the verse.

⁶¹ Question: If an Obligatory Prayer be omitted at home, is it to be compensated for by a prostration or not? Answer: In answer to previous questions it was written: “This provision regarding the compensating prostration applieth both at home and on a journey.”

⁶² Question: If, for another purpose, one hath performed ablutions, and the time of obligatory prayer arriveth, are these ablutions sufficient or must they be renewed? Answer: These same ablutions are sufficient, and there is no need for them to be renewed.

⁶³ Question: In the Kitáb-i-Aqdas obligatory prayer hath been enjoined, consisting of nine rak‘ahs, to be performed at noon, in the morning and the evening, but the Tablet of Obligatory Prayers appeareth to differ from this. Answer: That which hath been revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas concerneth a different Obligatory Prayer. Some years ago a number of the ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas including that Obligatory Prayer were, for reasons of wisdom, recorded separately and sent away together with other sacred writings, for the purposes of preservation and protection. Later these three Obligatory Prayers were revealed.

⁶⁴ Question: In determining time, is it permissible to rely on clocks and watches? Answer: It is permissible to rely on clocks and watches.

⁶⁵ Question: In the Tablet of Obligatory Prayers, three prayers are revealed; is the performance of all three required or not? Answer: It is enjoined to offer one of these three prayers; whichever is performed sufficeth.

⁶⁶ Question: Are ablutions for the morning prayer still valid for the noonday prayer? And similarly, are ablutions carried out at noon still valid in the evening? Answer: Ablutions are connected with the Obligatory Prayer for which they are performed, and must be renewed for each prayer.

⁶⁷ Question: Concerning the long Obligatory Prayer, it is required to stand up and “turn unto God.” This seemeth to indicate that it is not necessary to face the Qiblih; is this so or not? Answer: The Qiblih is intended.

⁶⁸ Question: Concerning the sacred verse: “Recite ye the verses of God every morn and eventide.” Answer: The intention is all that hath been sent down from the Heaven of Divine Utterance. The prime requisite is the eagerness and love of sanctified souls to read the Word of God. To read one verse, or even one word, in a spirit of joy and radiance, is preferable to the perusal of many Books.

⁶⁹ Question: May a person, in drawing up his will, assign some portion of his property—beyond that which is devoted to payment of Ḥuqúqu’lláh and the settlement of debts—to works of charity, or is he entitled to do no more than allocate a certain sum to cover funeral and burial expenses, so that the rest of his estate will be distributed in the manner fixed by God among the designated categories of heirs? Answer: A person hath full jurisdiction over his property. If he is able to discharge the Ḥuqúqu’lláh, and is free of debt, then all that is recorded in his will, and any declaration or avowal it containeth, shall be acceptable. God, verily, hath permitted him to deal with that which He hath bestowed upon him in whatever manner he may desire.

⁷⁰ Question: Is the use of the burial ring enjoined exclusively for adults, or is it for minors as well? Answer: It is for adults only. The Prayer for the Dead is likewise for adults.

⁷¹ Question: Should a person wish to fast at a time other than in the month of ‘Alá’, is this permissible or not; and if he hath vowed or pledged himself to such a fast, is this valid and acceptable? Answer: The ordinance of fasting is such as hath already been revealed. Should someone pledge himself, however, to offer up a fast to God, seeking in this way the fulfillment of a wish, or to realize some other aim, this is permissible, now as heretofore. Howbeit, it is God’s wish, exalted be His glory, that vows and pledges be directed to such objectives as will profit mankind.

⁷² Question: Again a question hath been asked concerning the residence and personal clothing: are these to revert, in the absence of male offspring, to the House of Justice, or are they to be distributed like the rest of the estate? Answer: Two-thirds of the residence and personal clothing pass to the female offspring, and one-third to the House of Justice, which God hath made to be the treasury of the people.

⁷³ Question: If, upon completion of the year of patience, the husband refuseth to allow divorce, what course should be adopted by the wife? Answer: When the period is ended divorce is effected. However, it is necessary that there be witnesses to the beginning and end of this period, so that they can be called upon to give testimony should the need arise.

⁷⁴ Question: Concerning the definition of old age. Answer: To the Arabs it denoteth the furthest extremity of old age, but for the people of Bahá it is from the age of seventy.

⁷⁵ Question: Concerning the limit of fasting for someone traveling on foot. Answer: The limit is set at two hours. If this is exceeded, it is permissible to break the Fast.

⁷⁶ Question: Concerning observance of the Fast by people engaged in hard labor during the month of fasting. Answer: Such people are excused from fasting; however, in order to show respect to the law

of God and for the exalted station of the Fast, it is most commendable and fitting to eat with frugality and in private.

⁷⁷ Question: Do ablutions performed for the Obligatory Prayer suffice for the ninety-five repetitions of the Greatest Name? Answer: It is unnecessary to renew the ablutions.

⁷⁸ Question: Concerning clothes and jewelry which a husband may have purchased for his wife: are these to be distributed, after his death, amongst his heirs, or are they specially for the wife? Answer: Aside from used clothing, whatever there may be, jewelry or otherwise, belongeth to the husband, except what is proven to have been gifts to the wife.

⁷⁹ Question: Concerning the criterion of justness when proving some matter dependent on the testimony of two just witnesses. Answer: The criterion of justness is a good reputation among the people. The testimony of all God's servants, of whatever faith or creed, is acceptable before His Throne.

⁸⁰ Question: If the deceased hath not settled his obligation to Ḥuqúqu'lláh, nor paid his other debts, are these to be discharged by proportionate deductions from the residence, personal clothing and the rest of the estate, or are the residence and personal clothing set aside for the male offspring, and consequently the debts must be settled from the rest of the estate? And if the rest of the estate is insufficient for this purpose, how should the debts be settled? Answer: Outstanding debts and payments of Ḥuqúq should be settled from the remainder of the estate, but if this is insufficient for the purpose, the shortfall should be met from his residence and personal clothing.

⁸¹ Question: Should the third Obligatory Prayer be offered while seated or standing? Answer: It is preferable and more fitting to stand in an attitude of humble reverence.

⁸² Question: Concerning the first Obligatory Prayer it hath been ordained, "one should perform it at whatever time one findeth oneself in a state of humbleness and longing adoration": is it to be performed once in twenty-four hours, or more frequently? Answer: Once in twenty-four hours is sufficient; this is that which hath been uttered by the Tongue of Divine Command.

⁸³ Question: Concerning the definition of "morning," "noon" and "evening." Answer: These are sunrise, noon and sunset. The allowable times for Obligatory Prayers are from morning till noon, from noon till sunset, and from sunset till two hours thereafter. Authority is in the hand of God, the Bearer of the Two Names.

⁸⁴ Question: Is it permissible for a believer to marry an unbeliever? Answer: Both taking and giving in marriage are permissible; thus did the Lord decree when He ascended the throne of bounteousness and grace.

⁸⁵ Question: Concerning the Prayer for the Dead: should it precede or follow the interment? And is facing the Qiblih required? Answer: Recital of this prayer should precede interment; and as regards the Qiblih: "Whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God."

⁸⁶ Question: At noon, which is the time for two of the Obligatory Prayers—the short midday prayer, and the prayer to be offered in the morning, noon, and evening—is it necessary in this case to perform two ablutions or would one suffice? Answer: The renewal of ablutions is unnecessary.

⁸⁷ Question: Concerning the dowry for village dwellers which is to be of silver: is it the bride or bridegroom who is intended or both of them? And what is to be done if one is a city dweller and the

other a village dweller? Answer: The dowry is determined by the dwelling place of the bridegroom; if he be a city dweller, the dowry is of gold, and if he be a village dweller, it is of silver.

⁸⁸ Question: What is the criterion for determining if one is a city dweller or a village dweller? If a city dweller taketh up residence in a village, or a village dweller in a city, intending to settle permanently, what ruling is applicable? Is the place of birth the deciding factor? Answer: The criterion is permanent residence and, depending on where this is, the injunction in the Book must be observed accordingly.

⁸⁹ Question: In the holy Tablets it hath been revealed that when someone acquireth the equivalent of nineteen mithqáls of gold, he should pay the Right of God on that sum. Might it be explained how much of this nineteen should be paid? Answer: Nineteen out of one hundred is established by the ordinance of God. Computation should be made on this basis. It may then be ascertained what amount is due on nineteen.

⁹⁰ Question: When one's wealth exceeds nineteen, is it necessary for it to increase by a further nineteen before Ḥuqúq is due again, or would it be due on any increase? Answer: Any amount added to nineteen is exempt from Ḥuqúq until it reacheth a further nineteen.

⁹¹ Question: Concerning pure water, and the point at which it is considered used. Answer: Small quantities of water, such as one cupful, or even two or three, must be considered used after a single washing of the face and hands. But a kurr or more of water remaineth unchanged after one or two washings of the face, and there is no objection to its use unless it is altered in one of the three ways, for example its color is changed, in which case it should be looked upon as used.

⁹² Question: In a treatise in Persian on various questions, the age of maturity hath been set at fifteen; is marriage likewise conditional upon the reaching of maturity, or is it permissible before that time? Answer: Since the consent of both parties is required in the Book of God, and since, before maturity, their consent or lack of it cannot be ascertained, marriage is therefore conditional upon reaching the age of maturity, and is not permissible before that time.

⁹³ Question: Concerning fasting and obligatory prayer by the sick. Answer: In truth, I say that obligatory prayer and fasting occupy an exalted station in the sight of God. It is, however, in a state of health that their virtue can be realized. In time of ill health it is not permissible to observe these obligations; such hath been the bidding of the Lord, exalted be His glory, at all times. Blessed be such men and women as pay heed, and observe His precepts. All praise be unto God, He who hath sent down the verses and is the Revealer of undoubted proofs!

⁹⁴ Question: Concerning mosques, chapels and temples. Answer: Whatever hath been constructed for the worship of the one true God, such as mosques, chapels and temples, must not be used for any purpose other than the commemoration of His Name. This is an ordinance of God, and he who violateth it is verily of those who have transgressed. No harm attacheth to the builder, for he hath performed his deed for the sake of God, and hath received and will continue to receive his just reward.

⁹⁵ Question: Regarding the appointments of a place of business, which are needed for carrying on one's work or profession: are they subject to the payment of Ḥuqúqu'lláh, or are they covered by the same ruling as the household furnishings? Answer: They are covered by the same ruling as the household furnishings.

⁹⁶ Question: Concerning the exchange of property held in trust for cash or other forms of property, to guard against depreciation or loss. Answer: Regarding the written question on the exchange of property held in trust to guard against depreciation and loss, such exchange is permissible on condition that the substitute will be equivalent in value. Thy Lord, verily, is the Expounder, the Omniscient, and He, truly, is the Ordainer, the Ancient of Days.

⁹⁷ Question: Concerning the washing of the feet in winter and summer. Answer: It is the same in both cases; warm water is preferable, but there can be no objection to cold.

⁹⁸ Question: A further question on divorce. Answer: Since God, exalted be His glory, doth not favor divorce, nothing was revealed on this issue. However, from the beginning of the separation until the end of one year, two people or more must remain informed as witnesses; if, by the end, there is no reconciliation, divorce taketh place. This must be recorded in the registry by the religious judicial officer of the city appointed by the Trustees of the House of Justice. Observance of this procedure is essential lest those that are possessed of an understanding heart be saddened.

⁹⁹ Question: Concerning consultation. Answer: If consultation among the first group of people assembled endeth in disagreement, new people should be added, after which persons to the number of the Greatest Name, or fewer or more, shall be chosen by lot. Whereupon the consultation shall be renewed, and the outcome, whatever it is, shall be obeyed. If, however, there is still disagreement, the same procedure should be repeated once more, and the decision of the majority shall prevail. He, verily, guideth whomsoever He pleaseth to the right way.

¹⁰⁰ Question: Concerning inheritance. Answer: Regarding inheritance, that which the Primal Point hath ordained—may the souls of all else but Him be offered up for His sake—is well pleasing. The existing heirs should receive their allotted shares of the inheritance, while a statement of the remainder must be submitted to the Court of the Most High. In His hand is the source of authority; He ordaineth as He pleaseth. In this regard, a law was revealed in the Land of Mystery, temporarily awarding the missing heirs' inheritance to the existing heirs until such time as the House of Justice shall be established, when the decree concerning this will be promulgated. The inheritance, however, of those who emigrated in the same year as the Ancient Beauty, hath been awarded to their heirs, and this is a bounty of God bestowed upon them.

¹⁰¹ Question: Concerning the law on treasure trove. Answer: Should a treasure be found, one-third thereof is the right of the discoverer, and the other two-thirds should be expended by the men of the House of Justice for the welfare of all people. This shall be done after the establishment of the House of Justice, and until that time it shall be committed to the keeping of trustworthy persons in each locality and territory. He, in truth, is the Ruler, the Ordainer, the Omniscient, the All-Informed.

¹⁰² Question: Concerning Ḥuqúq on real estate which yieldeth no profit. Answer: The ordinance of God is that real estate which hath ceased to yield income, that is, from which no profit accrueth, is not liable to payment of Ḥuqúq. He, verily, is the Ruler, the Munificent.

¹⁰³ Question: Concerning the holy verse: "In regions where the days and nights grow long, let times of prayer be gauged by clocks..." Answer: The intention is those territories that are remote. In these climes, however, the difference in length is but a few hours, and therefore this ruling doth not apply.

¹⁰⁴ In the Tablet to Abá Badí', this holy verse hath been revealed: "Verily, We have enjoined on every son to serve his father." Such is the decree which We have set forth in the Book.

¹⁰⁵ And in another Tablet, these exalted words have been revealed: O Muḥammad! The Ancient of Days hath turned His countenance towards thee, making mention of thee, and exhorting the people of God to educate their children. Should a father neglect this most weighty commandment laid down in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas by the Pen of the Eternal King, he shall forfeit rights of fatherhood, and be accounted guilty before God. Well is it with him who imprinteth on his heart the admonitions of the Lord, and steadfastly cleaveth unto them. God, in truth, enjoineth on His servants what shall assist and profit them, and enable them to draw nigh unto Him. He is the Ordainer, the Everlasting.

¹⁰⁶ He is God, exalted be He, the Lord of majesty and power! The Prophets and Chosen Ones have all been commissioned by the One True God, magnified be His glory, to nurture the trees of human existence with the living waters of uprightness and understanding, that there may appear from them that which God hath deposited within their inmost selves. As may be readily observed, each tree yieldeth a certain fruit, and a barren tree is but fit for fire. The purpose of these Educators, in all they said and taught, was to preserve man's exalted station. Well is it with him who in the Day of God hath laid fast hold upon His precepts and hath not deviated from His true and fundamental Law. The fruits that best befit the tree of human life are trustworthiness and godliness, truthfulness and sincerity; but greater than all, after recognition of the unity of God, praised and glorified be He, is regard for the rights that are due to one's parents. This teaching hath been mentioned in all the Books of God, and reaffirmed by the Most Exalted Pen. Consider that which the Merciful Lord hath revealed in the Qur'án, exalted are His words: "Worship ye God, join with Him no peer or likeness; and show forth kindness and charity towards your parents..." Observe how loving-kindness to one's parents hath been linked to recognition of the one true God! Happy they who are endued with true wisdom and understanding, who see and perceive, who read and understand, and who observe that which God hath revealed in the Holy Books of old, and in this incomparable and wondrous Tablet.

¹⁰⁷ In one of the Tablets He, exalted be His words, hath revealed: And in the matter of Zakát, We have likewise decreed that you should follow what hath been revealed in the Qur'án.