

**A TABLET OF MĪRZĀ HUSAYN ʿALĪ BAHĀ'U'LLĀH TO JAMĀL-I BURŪJIRDĪ:
A FULL PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION. Khazeh Fananapazir**

The tablet (*lawh*) of Bahā'u'llāh translated below is one of the many addressed to Jamāl-i Burūjirdī. The Persian text of it was first printed in the volume entitled *Powers (Iqtidārāt, Bombay 1310 A.H./1892-3 C.E. pp. 218-223, reproduced after the translation)* -- a compilation of revelations of Bahā'u'llāh in the handwriting of His prominent apostle Miṣḥkīn Qalam. An outstanding but arrogant Bahā'ī teacher Jamāl-i Burūjirdī was ultimately numbered among those who broke the Covenant of Bahā'u'llāh at the time of Bahā'u'llāh's passing (1892 C.E.). He was thus stigmatized by Shoghi Effendi as one "powerful and perfidious".¹ Though about half of the English translation of a significant revelation addressed to him has long been known -- since it is printed in Shoghi Effendi's well-known *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh* (Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, [London] 1949 Section V pp.5-9) -- the full text of this Tablet is provisionally translated below. Of particular interest are the opening paragraphs in which diverse perceptions of Bahā'u'llāh's station or claims are said to be "acceptable" as long as no contention results. The last paragraph makes it clear that teachers of the Bahā'ī Cause should, though levels of knowledge and insight differ, manifest the "utmost unity".

* I am grateful to Stephen Lambden for his advice and assistance during the preparation of this translation.

¹ Refer *God Passes By* (Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois 1987) p.248. See also Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh* Vol. 2 (George Ronald: Oxford 1977) pp.118f, 264ff.

TRANSLATION

" The Ocean of Divine Revelation which is hidden within the Supreme Pen hath sprinkled forth in the form of these Words:

O Jamāl! Thou didst arrive in the Most Holy Presence and attain the Most Great Vision. With thine outer eye thou didst witness the waves of the Ocean of Divine Significances and with thine own ears didst hear the Consummate Words, each of which is a Treasury of the pearls of Wisdom and Utterance. As far as understanding is possible and befitting for thee, thou didst apprehend the merciful, all-encompassing Bounties and the all-embracing Compassion directed towards all mankind.

O Jamāl! On this Day it is befitting that you should exhibit such love, compassion, humility, detachment and sanctity that none of the servants [of God] may inhale from your words and deeds, the unsavoury odour of the words and deeds of past communities who, on hearing merely one word, would immediately anathematize and curse one another, for "We have created souls (*al-nuḥūs*) to be in diverse states (*atwār^{an}* [= Qur'ān 71:13[14])."² There are those who have attained to the highest levels of spiritual comprehension (*al-lā marātib-i 'irfān*) while others are different therefrom. For example, one person envisages the Unseen, the Transcendent, the Inaccessible One (God; *ghayb-i manī^l lā yudrak*) in the Person (*haykal*)³ of the Manifestation (of God; *zuhūr*) without making any distinction (*fasl* ; or

² The verse of the Qur'ān partially cited or alluded to by Bahā'u'llāh here (71:13) has been variously rendered. The word *atwār^{an}* is an accusative plural the singular of which, *tawr*, literally means something like, a 'stage, state, limit, degree, or condition'-- the word is a Qur'ānic hapax legomenon [it occurs only once in the Qur'ān]. George Sale translated it "...since he hath created you variously". A. J. Arberry, has "...seeing He created you by stages" (*The Koran Interpreted* OUP: Oxford [=The World's Classics] 1986 p. 609. The above translation takes into account Bahā'u'llāh's application of these words to the spiritual state of the individual.

³ The word *haykal* here could also be rendered 'temple', 'form' or 'body'.

division) or connection (between them; *wasl*; or union).⁴ Others there are who recognise the Person (*haykal*) of the Manifestation (of God, *zuhūr*) as the Appearance of God ([Himself] or theophany, *zuhūr'u'llāh*) and consider the commands and prohibitions of the Manifestation (of God, *zuhūr*) to be identical with such as originate with the one True God. These two positions (*maqām*) are both acceptable before the throne of God. If however, the supporters of these two positions should contend and quarrel with one another in their exposition of the two perspectives, both groups are, and hath ever been, rejected. This inasmuch as the purpose of the spiritual understanding (*irfān*) and the exposition (*dhikr*) of the highest levels of the elucidation of the teachings (*bayān*) is to attract the hearts, cause fellowship between souls, and further the propagation of the Cause of God. As a result of contention and disputation amongst those who hold to these two positions, there hath been and will ever result the dissipation (*tadyī'*) of the Cause of God and both groups shall return to the hellfire despite the fact that they, in their own estimation, soar in the highest horizon of spiritual understanding (*bi-ā'lā ufuq-i'irfān*).

O Jamāl! The Unseen, the Inaccessible, the Transcendent One (God; *ghayb-i manī' lā yudrak*)⁵ lamenteth and weepeth for He inhaleth not the fragrance of that which, in this Day, is beloved (of God). The community of the True One should manifest the virtues of God for He is the Concealer of faults, the One Who Knoweth things hidden, the Forgiver of sins.

" This is the Day whereon the Ocean of God's mercy hath been manifested unto men, the Day in which the Day-Star of His loving-kindness hath shed its radiance upon them, the Day in which the clouds of His bountiful favour have overshadowed the whole of mankind. Now is the time to cheer and refresh the down-cast through the invigorating breeze of love and fellowship, and the living waters of friendliness and charity.

⁴ This sentence probably refers to such persons as envision the Essence of God and the Manifestation of God as One and the same Reality. They neither make any distinction between them nor speak of their connection or union -- apparently because they are envisaged as a single Reality.

⁵ The Godhead is again referred to in this elevated manner -- see above. Having outlined two viewpoints regarding His station -- both of which are referred to as "acceptable" (*maqbul*) -- it is of interest that Bahā'u'llāh here refers to the "The Unseen, the Inaccessible, the Transcendent One [God]" as the One Who "lamenteth and weepeth". Shoghi Effendi, in *Gleanings*. LXXXIV (= *Iqtidārāt* pp.157-8, an untitled Tablet), translates *ghayb-i manī' lā yudrak* as "Him Who is the invisible, the inaccessible, the unknowable Essence".

They who are the beloved of God, in whatever place they gather and whomsoever they may meet, must evince, in their attitude towards God, and in the manner of their celebration of His praise and glory, such humility and submissiveness that every atom of the dust beneath their feet may attest the depth of their devotion. The conversation carried by these holy souls should be informed with such power that these same atoms of the dust will be thrilled by its influence. They should conduct themselves in such manner that the earth upon which they tread may never be allowed to address them such words as these: "I am to be preferred above you. For witness, how patient I am in bearing the burden which the husbandman layeth upon me. I am the instrument that continually imparteth unto all beings the blessings with which He Who is the Source of all grace hath entrusted me. Notwithstanding the honour conferred upon me, and the unnumbered evidences of my wealth – a wealth that supplieth the needs of all creation – behold the measure of my humility, witness with what absolute submissiveness I allow myself to be trodden beneath the feet of men."

Consider the divines (*‘ulamā’*) and the mystics (*‘urafā’*) of the past. Although they soar in the atmosphere of Divine Unity (*tawhīd*) and expound the grades of Divine Singleness (*tajrīd*) and Praise (*tahmīd*) not a word (*kalimah*) which emanateth from such souls found acceptance before the One Who is Himself the Word (*Kalimah*). Indeed, when he who cannot even pronounce the word of Unity (*kalimah-yi tawhīd*) attains certitude in the station of the Manifestation (*maqarr-i zuhūr*) even that person's undone deeds are rendered acceptable and his unsung praise is beloved by God. Learn ye a lesson about this matter, O men endowed with discernment!

I swear by the waves of the Mystic Ocean (*bahr-i ma‘ānī*) which is truly hidden from the eyes of men! There hath never been nor is there now anyone capable of proffering a befitting description (*wasf*) of the essential nature of this Most Great Manifestation (*zuhūr-i a‘zam*). Wherefore, *"show forbearance and benevolence and love to one another. Should any one among you be incapable of grasping a certain truth, or be striving to comprehend it, show forth when conversing with him a spirit of extreme kindness and goodwill. Help him to see and recognize the truth without esteeming yourself to be, in the least, superior to him or to be possessed of greater endowments."*

The whole duty of man in this Day is to attain that share of the flood of grace which God poureth forth for him. Let none, therefore, consider the largeness or smallness of the receptacle. The portion of some might lie in the palm of a man's hand, the portion of others might fill a cup, and of others even a gallon-measure.

Every eye in this Day should seek what will best promote the Cause of God. He Who is the Eternal Truth, beareth Me witness! Nothing whatever can, in this Day, inflict a greater harm upon this cause than dissension, and strife, contention, estrangement and apathy, among the loved ones of God. Flee them, through the power of God and His sovereign aid, and strive ye to knit together the hearts of men in His Name the Unifier, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

Beseech ye the one true God to grant that ye may taste the savour of such deeds as are performed in His path, and partake of the sweetness of such humility and submissiveness as are shown for His sake. Forget your own selves, and turn your eyes towards your neighbour. Bend your energies to whatever may foster the education of men. Nothing is, or can ever be, hidden from God. If ye follow in His way, His incalculable and imperishable blessings will be showered upon you. This is the luminous Tablet, whose verses have streamed from the moving Pen of Him Who is the Lord of all worlds. Ponder it in your hearts, and be ye of them that observe its precepts."

Before those souls who, at the behest of God in this Day are engaged in the propagation of the Cause and who have received the special loving providence of God, all should manifest due humility. This submissiveness before them [teachers of the Bahā'ī Faith] is, in truth, referable to God for it originateth from His command and returneth, therefore, unto Him. Such as have received this special bounty [of teaching] should demonstrate and manifest amongst themselves the utmost unity. Apart from and beyond this matter the degrees of understanding and knowledge amongst them [the teachers] is perfectly evident unto God and shall always remain so. Thus have We ignited the Lamp of Utterance amongst mankind. Blessed be the one who seeketh illumination from its niche and is enlightened by its radiance. That one is of those who have attained and of those who have been honoured. Praise be to God the Lord of all the worlds.

THE ORIGINAL PERSIAN TEXT OF THE TABLET ⁶

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قولم تعالی
 بحر حقی که در قله اعلی است
 ای جمال بقدر قدس و ارد شدی و منظر اکبر فائز گشتی
 امواج بحر معانی الهیه را بچشم ظاهر مشاهده
 نمودی و کلمات تا مات که هر یک مخزن لسانی حکمت و
 و بیان بود بگویش خود اصفا کردی و فیوضات
 منبسطه رحمانیه و رحمت و اسعه الهیه را نسبت بکل بریه
 بقدریکه عرفان آن ممکن است علی مابین بنی لاک دراک
 نمودی ای جمال الیوم باید بحجت و رحمت و خضوع و خشوع

⁶ See above and cf. also Bahā'u'llāh, *Mūntakhabātī Az Āthār-i-Hadrat-i-Bahā'u'llāh*
 = *The gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh* (Hofheim-Langenhaim: Bahā'ī Verlag
 1984) [V] pp. 13-14.

و تقدیس و تنزیهی ظاهری شود که احدی از عباد از اعمال
و افعال و اخلاق و گفتار شمار و شرح اعمال و گفتار
اوست قبل استشمام نماید که بجز استماع کلمه
یکدیگر را سب و لعن مینموند انا خلقنا النقبوس
اطوارا بعضی در اعلی مراتب عرفان سازند و بعضی
دون آن مثل انفسی غیبی مع لایدرک را در همیکل
ظهور مشاهده مینمایند من غیر فضل و وصل و بعضی همیکل
ظهور را ظهور الله دانسته و او امر و نوای او نفس
او امر حق مینداند این دو مقام هر دو لدی العرش
مقبولست و لکن اگر صاحبان این دو مقام در بیان
این دو رتبه نزاع و جدال نمایند هر دو مردود بوده و
خواهند بود چه که مقصود از عرفان و ذکر اعلی مراتب
جذب قلوب و الفت نفوس و تبلیغ امر الله بوده و
از جدال و نزاع صاحبان این دو مقام تضییع
امر الله شده و خواهد شد لذا هر دو بار را جند اگر چه

بزرگم خود با علی افق عرفان طائرند ای جمال غیبی
لایدرک نبوح و یکی چه که استشمام مینماید آنچه را که ایوم
محبوبت الهی حق باید با حسی اطلاق او ظاهر شوند آنه هو
شمار العیوب و عظام الغیوب و غفار الذنوب
امروز روزیست که بحر رحمت ظاهراست و آفتاب عنایت
مشرق و سحاب جود مرتفع باید نفوس پر مرده را بنام
مجتب و مودت و میاه مرحمت تازه خسترم نمود خجای
الهی در بحر جمع و محفلی که جتمع شوند باید بستی حضور
و خشوع از هر یک در تسبیح و تقدیس الهی ظاهر شود
که ذرات تراب آن محل شهادت دهند بخلوص آن جمع
و جذب بیانات روحانیه آن نفس زکیه ذرات آن
تراب را اخذ نمایند آنکه تراب بلسان حال ذکر نماید
انا افضل منکم چه که در حمل مشقات فلاصین صابریم
و کل ذی روح اعطای فیض فیاض که در من و دیعه
گذارده نموده و مینمایم مع همه این مقامات عالیه

و ظهورات لائحه که جمیع مایحتاج وجود ازین ظاهر است
 با حدی فخر نموده و نیستنمایم و بجمال خضوع در زیر
 قدم کل ساکنم ملاحظه در علماء و عرفای قبل نمایند
 مع آنکه در هوای توحید طائرند و بذکر مراتب تجرید
 و تحمید ناطق کلمه از آن نفوس لدی الکلمه مقبول نقیاد
 و نفسیکه از تکلم لفظ کلمه توحید عاجز بود چون بمقترا
 ظهور موقن شد اعمال نکرده اش مقبول شد و شنای
 نکفته اش محبوب افتاد فاعبته و ایا اولی الالبصا
 قسم با مواج بحس معانی که از ابصار ستور است که
 احدی قادر بر وصف این ظهور عظیم علی ما هو علیه
 نبوده و نیست لذا باید کل بایکدی بکبر فقی و مدارا و محبت
 سلوک نمایند و اگر نفسی از ادراک بعضی مراتب عاجز
 باشد یا نرسیده باشد باید بجمال لطف و شفقت
 با او تکلم نمایند و او را متذکر کنند من دون آنکه در خود
 فضلی و علوی مشاهده نمایند اصل الیوم اخذ از بحر

فیوض است دیگر نباید نظر بچگونگی بزرگی طرف باشد
 یکی کفنی اخذ نموده و دیگری کاسی و همچنین دیگری کوبی
 و دیگری قتری امر و نظر کل باید با موری باشد
 که سبب انتشار امر الله کرد در حقش اهد و گواه است که
 ضری از برای این امر الیوم عظیم از فساد و نزاع و جدال
 و کدورت و برودت مابین اجاب بنوده و نیست
 اجتناب بقدره الله و سلطانه ثم القوا بین القلوب
 باسمه الموفق لعلم بحکم از حق جل جلاله بخواهید که
 بلدت اعمال در سبیل او و خضوع و خشوع در حق او
 مرزوق شوید از خود بگذرید و در سایرین نگریدنهای
 چند در تربت ناس مبذول دارید امری از حق پوینده
 بنوده و نیست اگر رضای حق حرکت نمایند فیوضنا
 لاتسناهی فائز خواهند شد اینست کتابی که از قلم
 امرت لعالمین جاری و ظاهر شد تفکر و ایما نزل فی
 و کونوا من الهامین نفوسیکه الیوم من عند الله

ما مورد نسبت بلیغ امر و تخصیص داده شده اند بعنایات
 مخصوصه او کل باید نسبت با ایشان خاضع باشند
 چه که آن خضوع لله واقع میشود چون با مرقت بحق
 راجعت و لکن آن نفوسیکه تخصیص داده شده اند
 باید کمال اتحاد ما بایشان برهن و ظاهر باشد
 دیگر در ایج عرفان و مراتب آن نفوس عند الله شعور
 بوده و خواهد بود که لک او قدما سراج الیهیمان
 بین الامکان طوبی لمن اقبس من مشکاة و استضاء
 ما نواره انه من لهن آثرین المکرین و الحمد لله رب العالمین