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EXPLANATIONS

CONCERNING

SACRED MYSTERIES

BY

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TABLETS

DANIEL, 12:9

“And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”

EXPLANATION ON THE NINTH
VERSE OF THE 12TH CHAP-
TER OF DANIEL.

“And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”

By “the time of the end” is meant a time in which the darkness of ignorance, injustice and the abomination of desolation, will pervade the world. Then the Sun of Knowledge, equity, purity, restoration and reconciliation will dawn.

As the daylight does not appear in the heavens until after the darkness of night is ended; so also, the days of ignorance, doubt and suspicion end in the early dawn of the Sun of Assurance and Revelation. It is not that there is an “end” for the times, or any termination or limit to the days, as the creation, in comparison with the Creator, resembles the rays in connection with the sun; therefore as long as the sun lasts, the rays will necessarily exist with it.

The second meaning intended by "the time of the end," is the termination of the prophetic cycles at the dawn of the Day of Divinity and Deity; for, as long as the understanding of men has not reached the point of maturity the Divine Manifestations reveal themselves in the name of Prophethood and Apostleship, explaining their revelations through dreams, and in illuminated verses, appointing Gabriel and the Holy Ghost as means and intermediaries, and expressing their works in a sealed, hidden and symbolical way. But when the prophetic cycle ends; when the Day of the Coming of the Lord and the Appearance of the Sun dawns from the Horizon of the Unseen, then dreams change into real vision, and intermediaries will not be needed. Then the verses, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;" "And God Himself shall dwell with them"; will be brought to light. Then the sealed words will proceed from behind the veils of secrecy; the Hidden Mystery will be unveiled, the time of concealment will come to an end, and the hour of disclosure and unfoldment will arrive.

Another meaning intended by "the time of

the end," is the end of the scattering of the holy people (Israelites). Two explicit promises are given in the Bible, to the Israelites; one is, their scattering, humiliation, destruction, and the descent of calamities and afflictions upon them; and the other is their coming together for the second time, the return of their everlasting honor, the restoration of their country, the assembling of their scattered divisions in Jerusalem, tears being wiped away from their eyes, and God's dwelling with them. The time of the fulfillment of these two promises is interpreted to be "the time of the end," to which the removal of the seal of the book alludes. These two promises are not alone assigned to the Israelites, for all of the prophets have given the same assurances to their own people, from the beginning before which there was no beginning; because the followers of each prophet have been called "holy people" in the early days of His Manifestation, but when His Cycle ended, and the abomination of desolation was set up in the Jerusalem of the Divine Faith and Knowledge, then His people became scattered, and destruction and ruin befell them.

If we read the histories of nations, we will find that all the people upon the earth, some of whom, in this day, are known as Idolators, while others are utterly denying the Ancient Essence and believing in nature—have been in the beginning of their rise, worshippers of God and believers in Unity, and have been accounted holy people and saints; but in course of time, the Light of Unity has disappeared from among them, and the darkness of the night of ignorance and neglect prevailed, until the holy people and sacred nation have become polluted with the abomination of desolation.

Every nation has been promised in its Book, concerning the “time of the end” and the “end of days.” If you question all present peoples and nations as to whether the news concerning the dispersion of men, the end of the days, the restoration of their honor, and the Appearance of a Savior is recorded in their Books, they will unanimously answer in the affirmative, and will show these references from their books. According to the prophecies given in their Books, they are all awaiting the perfect Manifestation of God in the latter days.

Therefore the Blessed Perfection has said in the Book of Akdas. "All Manifestations are ended by this Great Manifestation." In another place He has said: "All the days are ended in this great Day." Also: "All the hours are ended in the best of the hours." Also: "All the laws are ended by these great laws." Also: "The Father hath indeed come, and hath fulfilled that whereunto ye were promised in the Book." Each one of these Verses is revealed according to the terminology of one nation.

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Another meaning intended by "the time of the end" is the time when a traveller toward God, reaches the last degree of *reason*. This is the first degree of love; and, according to the terminology of the Gospels, it is the first condition in which man may be spiritually born into the Kingdom; as it is written: No one shall see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again.

After the three days of vegetable, animal and intellectual humanity are ended, then the Day

of Faith and the Kingdom will dawn. When the Day of the Kingdom is ended, then the Dawn of Divinity appears. Then the seals of the Book of Creation and Laws are opened, the Sun of the Day of God shines, and the earth will become illuminated with the Light of its Lord. So the morn of "the day in which God will satisfy all with His Abundance," appears.

This is a brief explanation of the meaning of "the time of the end." There are innumerable other meanings for this, which we have not mentioned here.

THE SEAL OF THE COLLECTIVE WORDS OR BOOK.

Know that there are numerous meanings intended for the words "sentence" and "book." According to the ordinary understanding of the public, a word is an articulation which conveys a special meaning. The word, for instance, is either a noun, such as "heaven," "earth," etc., or a verb, such as "heard," "said," "hear" "say," or again it may be some other part of speech, such as "of," "till," "from," etc.

A sentence is a phrase composed of many words, conveying useful meaning. For example,

it is said: "Jesus is the Son of God," or "Abdul-Baha is the Centre of the Covenant." These sentences are composed of nouns, verbs and some other parts of speech.

A book is a collection of pages and leaves, which contain a number of sentences upon sciences, fiction, etc.

Each one of the terms "*word*," "*sentence*" and "*book*" is of two kinds: collective and creational. The collective is that which is written in pages and leaves. For instance, first the letter is written, then words are formed by the composition of the letters; sentences are formed by words; paragraphs are the composition of sentences; chapters are composed of passages, and books are compiled by the collection of chapters. Consequently the compilation of a book by the composition of words, sentences, passages and chapters, is called a collective book.

As to the creational, according to the terminology of the prophets and divine philosophers, the whole world of creation is called the creational book, and each class of the matters therein, is called a part of that book, such as the mineral substance, vegetable, animal, man, and

spirits. Different species therein are considered as chapters, passages, stories, words, verses and letters. The letters therein are of two classes, letters of the Exalted Paradise and letters of the Hell (remorse), or in other words, letters of Light and letters of Darkness; letters of Affirmation and letters of Negation.

Therefore, we submit that the Scriptural verse, "The words are closed and sealed up," becomes true of both the *creational* and *collective* words.

In the state of *collective words*, by this verse is intended that the mysteries, meanings, words and verses of the Heavenly Book are closed up, and no one can become cognizant thereof, until at "the time of the end." By "the time of the end," is meant the hour spoken of in the Book, which began with the Hour in which the first point arose, and in which the explanation of the realities of all things and the meaning of the book became manifest. It ended in the hour in which the Blessed Perfection appeared.

At previous times it has been explained that the word *Hour*, according to its primary nature, means the person of the Manifestation of God;

while in its secondary nature, it means the hour in which the True One declares His mission. Therefore, it was proven that by the promised Hour is meant the hour in which the Blessed Perfection appeared. This hour is "the time of the end," recorded in the Scriptures; (the evening of the 32nd day after the sun enters the sign of Aries, which corresponds to the first hour of the Feast of Rizwan, the King of all Feasts.)

When the Blessed Beauty of the True One shone forth from behind the veils of the *unseen*, all the sealed and closed mysteries of the Heavenly Books became solved and unveiled. The Hidden Treasury was uncovered, and the sealed choice Wine was opened, through the Powerful Fingers of the Blessed Perfection. That is to say, He unveiled all the mysteries of the Books with the traces of His Blessed Pen and His Holy Utterances. Therefore, the words of the *collective Book*, which were closed and sealed up, were unsealed and the custodians of mysteries became cognizant thereof. That is, the firm ones in the covenant became informed of those mysteries, while the violators and wicked ones, were veiled.

These sealed up words are interpreted in the Scriptures as being the heavenly food or bread, or the spirit, spoken of in the 6th chapter of St. John v. 27: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed." Likewise it is said in the 33d v.: "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world." Therefore, it is evident that the bread which cometh down from heaven means the Divine Words. The mysteries of these words are, at every cycle, unveiled according to the capacity and comprehension of the people of the age, through the Utterances of the Divine Manifestations. But the former Manifestations have respectively promised their people that all they could not bear or understand in their days would be unveiled to people in the latter days through the Great Manifestation of God, which fact is recorded in the Gospel of St. John, ch. 16, v. 12 and 13: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come,

he will guide you unto all truth," etc.

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At this time we briefly speak of the opening of the seal of the words. First, let it be known that the difference between the world of God and the world of creation, is that the former has neither beginning nor end, and is infinite, but the latter is confined within definite limits. For instance, the mineral world ends in the vegetable, the vegetable world in the animal, the animal world in man, the human world in the world of spirits, and the spirits in the World of God, while the World of God is unlimited and endless. Therefore, whatever may proceed from man, whether it be words or other names and attributes, all is finite and limited; while whatever emanates from God is unlimited and infinite. Consequently, there are infinite meanings for each word which has proceeded from the tongues of the Manifestations of God. It is said by the First Point that each of the words, which is uttered by the tongue of the Manifestation of God, has, in all the infinite worlds of God, a creation and a meaning.

As the meanings of the Word of God are infinite, therefore no one is able to interpret them, except the Divine Manifestation Himself. For this reason, the meanings of the Words of God are sealed up until the Day of the Manifestation of God. And when the Day draws nigh, God opens the seal of the Words through His power, and informs people of the mysteries and meanings thereof, according to their capacity.

For example, before the Appearance of the Blessed Perfection, no one was properly informed of the mysteries and meanings of the verses in the Gospels, wherein Jesus explained the Signs of His Second Coming—thus: “During the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give its light.” No one would imagine that by the words “tribulation of days,” “darkness of the sun, moon and heaven,” etc., numerous meanings have been indicated and that by these terms Christ has intended their inner significances, not the literal ones. But after the Manifestation of the Blessed Perfection, the seal of the words was opened, and the real meanings became unveiled. Were one to read the Books

and Tablets revealed by the Pen of the Blessed Perfection, he would find that He has explained infinite meanings for each one of the words. He has opened such a Door of Knowledge that should one explain numerous meanings for each word, within the duration of heaven and earth, still there would be no end to them. As it is said by God: "Say, if the sea were ink to write the words of My Lord,—verily, the sea would fail, before the words of My Lord would fail."

Likewise, He has, in His Utterances, opened doors to the meanings of the Resurrection, Paradise, Hell, Death, etc., which pen and tongue fail to set forth. When a discerning man considers those Utterances he will find that all the words have been sealed and closed from the beginning before which there was no beginning, until the present day, and that no one has been cognizant of their meanings, except the Manifestations of God. It is for this reason that the Lord said to Daniel: "Go thy way, for the words are closed and sealed up till the time of the end."

But, in this day, the people of Baha and those who are firm in The Covenant of God, should

thank God, for He has, through His Bounty, caused them to partake of this sealed choice Wine, and in order to show forth their gratitude they should arise to guide and to satisfy the needs of the hungry and thirsty ones, and the seekers of the Truth, throughout the world.

This is a brief account of the meanings of the collective book being sealed up.

THE SEAL OF THE CREATIONAL WORDS OR BOOK.

It is said by God, the Bahi-UL-ABHA (Glorified is His Grandeur), in a Tablet revealed to the late Sheik Salman:

“The forms of words are the Treasury of the True One, and the meanings deposited therein are the pearls of the Knowledge of the Sultan of Oneness, and the Hand of the Divine Preservation prevents people from being cognizant thereof. When the Will of God desires to open their seal, then people will comprehend them. For instance, consider the words of the Koran, all of which have been the treasuries of the

Knowledge of the Ancient Beauty; all the doctors would read them nights and days, and write commentaries thereon: Yet they were not able to disclose even a letter of the pearls hidden in the stores of the words. But when the promised time arrived, the Hand of the Power of the Manifestation previous to Me, moved the seal of the stores, according to the grades of people and their capacity. Therefore the children of the age, who had not apprehended even one letter of the material sciences, became cognizant of the hidden mysteries according to their own measure, in such wise that a child would discomfit the doctors of the age in explanation. This is the power of the Divine Hand and the pervasion of the Will of the Sultan of Oneness. Were one to reflect upon the mentioned utterance, he would consider that even no atom moves except after the Desire of God, and no one has known any letter except through His Will (Exalted is His Power! Exalted is His Dominion! Exalted is His Grandeur; Exalted is His Command, and Exalted is His Grace above all in the Kingdom of Heaven and earth!)”

As to the meaning of the seal of the Creational words and the opening thereof: First let it be known that except a man has striven in the station of journey towards God, and unless the eye of his soul is opened, and his ears are made attentively hearing, he will not be able to understand this subject. This is a subject assigned to the people of sight, that is, to those souls the mirrors of whose hearts are in this day turned toward the Supreme Kingdom, and who are assisted by the Centre of the Covenant. Such souls have their eyes discerning and can perceive the realities of things; their ears are made to hear spiritually and thus they can hear the call of all things. These are souls who hear the loud voice of all the atoms of the universe unanimously calling: "Abdul-Baha, the Center of the Covenant." Were they to look through the Microscope of Knowledge, they would see that the light of the Covenant is manifest and shining within every one of the existent atoms; its light manifested from the Sun of Baha, from which source all things have borrowed light.

The prayer—"O my God, I beg of Thee, by Thy Baha and its Abha, and all Thy Baha is

Behi. O my God, I beg of Thee, by Thy perfect Baha," in which the Name of Baha' Ullah is mentioned 1269 years before His appearance, is an evidence of the above statement. The Exalted Name is also spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, in Isaiah, chapter 2nd and other chapters.

That soul, the mirror of whose heart is illuminated with the Light of Baha, can see the realities of things with the eye of Abha, can hear the call of all things with the ear of Abha.

The verse "But the wise shall understand," is a meaning of this high subject.

Now we submit that according to the language of all the prophets and Divine philosophers, by the term "Creational Book" is meant all the existent beings. Just as the *Collective Book* was composed of parts, chapters, passages, sentences, words and letters, so also all these classes are comprised in the *Creational Book*, as is formerly recorded. The first Manifestation of the Sun of Truth from the Divine Unknowable Essence, is in the form of a *point*, even as in the *Collective Book* the origin of words is the point. Therefore the Precursor of the Greatest Name

called himself *Point*, that is, the Creational Point of the Book of Existence. When the creation of point attained perfection in its own essence, the letter Ba ensued, and the first manifestation thereof was embodied in the name *Bab*. And when the door of the heaven of the creation of the existent beings was opened, the Sun of the Name *Baha*, which is the Greatest Name of God, became manifest, and through the rays of that Sun of Truth the created beings came into existence and found new life. In connection with this statement, we quote, in the following, one of the Tablets revealed by Abdul-Baha:

TABLET REVEALED BY THE MASTER.

○ ye real friends who long for the Beauty of God!

When the Self-subsistent, Living God manifested Himself with all His Names, Attributes, Perfections and Characteristics to the people of the Universe, and illuminated the Dawning-place of the contingent world with the Lights

of the Orb of the Placeless, and raised fervency and clamour within every component atom of the world of creation, then the shower of Mercy began to fall, the rays of the Sun gleamed, the refreshing zephyr blew, and the Voice of God reached the ears. Hearts began to beat, souls became liberated and free, cheeks were flushed, the (intervening) veils were consumed, and the Face of the Loving Friend became manifest. The hearts of the lovers were ignited with a burning flame, and the eye of the yearning wept with joy. The rose-garden of Unity was ornamented, and the flower-bed of Singleness was arrayed. The Feast of Bounties was celebrated, and the Banquet of Eternity was spread. The throne of the Divine Dominion was established, and the verse, "The Merciful sitteth on the Throne" (Koran), was fulfilled. Afterward, the greatest splendor of the Blessed Perfection became manifest in the Temple of the Testament, in this Eternal Banquet, and shone forth unto all horizons. The Divine Minstrel held the stringed guitar in His Hand, and played a melody and tune after the Persian note, and played this song with a loud voice, as follows:

This is the Ancient Covenant: This is the One Who has the Cup in His Hand; this is the One Who has brought failure in the market of the Joseph of the Merciful God ((on account of His beauty)! This is the Testament of Accord. This is a Covenant to hold to and utterly detach one's self from aught else. This is the cause of stopping the cries of contradiction (made by deniers), through the Divine Mercy. This is the Pre-existent Covenant; this is the weighty Mystery; this is the greatest Secrecy of the Countenance of El-Baha (may My soul redeem His beloved ones)!

Abdul-Baha Abbas.

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It is said by Daniel: "The words are sealed up till the time of the end;" that is, the words of the *Creational Book*.

By the words of the *Creational Book* is meant, in their primary nature, the Prophets and Saints, inasmuch as they are called "the complete words," and these are closed and sealed up till the time of the end. By the "time of the end" is meant the time of the Principal

Manifestation, that is, the Manifestation of the Most Complete Word, the Appearance of Baha' Ullah; because during the time of the appearance of the Most Complete Manifestation, all the "complete words" became manifest, even as they all appeared with the Manifestation of the Blessed Perfection. That time was in the Nineteenth century of the Christian era, when the prophecies given in the books, became fulfilled. There is a Divine Mystery in the fact that the time of the end began in the nineteenth century, before the dawn of the twentieth century. The First Point has explained this subject in the Tablet of Temple, for the Third Letter, who believed in "He Whom God shall Manifest"—that is, Mirza Assad Ullah—entitled Dayan. The Manifestation has elucidated this Tablet in detail, in two Tablets. This Tablet of Temple contains the clear prophecies given by the First Point, concerning the Manifestation of Baha' Ullah, and, God willing, it will be translated in due time, and the Truth-seekers in the West will become cognizant of the mysteries therein. In the Holy Scriptures, this

“Most Complete Word” is represented by the Manifestation of God; as it is said by St. John, in the first chapter of his Gospel: “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.” This Divine “Word” is the origin of the *Creational Book*, that is, the *Creational Book* has been created from the identity of this “Word.” The material world has originated from the incarnation of this “Word,” and the Spiritual World has appeared from the rise of its Spirit; as was explained in the lecture on the interpretation of the *Hour*.

St. John says, in the 2nd verse of that chapter: “The same was in the beginning with God.” That is, the Word is the primal Manifestation of the Unknown. Verse 3. “All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” That is, all the existent beings, both material and spiritual, have existed through this Word, and nothing would be made without It. Then He goes on to say, verse 4: “In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men.” That is, the life and growth of all the existent beings have been

through this Word. In another sense, by *life* is meant sciences and learning, that is, such sciences and learning as are conducive to revival of the souls, and are as light in the dark world of nature. There are also many other meanings for it, which we omit for the present, inasmuch as souls and minds have not yet the capacity to grasp them.

We beg of God to unfold the seal of hearts with the Hand of His Power, to open the eyes, and save the souls from the prison of superstitions, so that they may be able to hear the mysteries of the Words of God.

Consequently, it is proven that by the Word is meant the Most Great Manifestation, the Greatest Name.

Likewise, the term Word has been revealed in numerous places from the Pen of the Blessed Perfection by which He has meant His Own Blessed Manifestation, as is evident in the following verses:

“The Exalted Word hath indeed appeared, whereby the Dove hath cooed on the Sadrat-el-Montaha. Verily, He is He! Turn ye unto Him, and be not of those who are patient (i. e., who pause).”

In another place He has said: "The Word hath indeed appeared and the Hour hath called out, and the Resurrection hath said: "Glad tidings be unto thee, O thou concourse of the earth, for this Blessed and Wonderful Day."

In another place He has said: "The Word hath indeed appeared which was formerly closed. Reflect, and be of those who perceive."

Likewise, there are numerous verses in which the term *Word* is clearly stated, whereby He has meant His Own Blessed Manifestations.

In this sense, by the Primal Word the Person of the Manifestation is intended, and by the *Complete words* is meant the *primal mirrors* which express His Names and Attributes.

Therefore it was said that the words are sealed up till the time of the end; inasmuch as no one knows **them**, except those which have been unsealed by the primal Word, through His Bounty. Even as none had known John the Baptist as being the Elias, until after his Seal was opened by Christ.

SEALED WORDS, SUBSTANCES, SCIENCES, ETC.

In another sense, by the *sealed words* is meant all the words of the Creational Book (the world), such as the human hearts, the simple and abstract substances, the hidden sciences and inventions, and the wonderful signs, all of which have been sealed up before but which appeared and were brought to light during the 19th Century. There are numerous other sealed wonders which will also appear in the future, the appearance of which is spoken of by the Blessed Perfection in his Holy Utterances.

At the time of the end is the time of the appearance of the Truth of truths, and is the divine spring season; therefore all that has been concealed within every tree, or has been deposited in the heart of the earth will become manifest. By the opening of the natural substances, the mysteries of nature appear and by the opening of the seal of human hearts, knowledges and wisdoms are disclosed, and by the the opening of the seal of the spirits, discoveries and visions of the spiritual worlds are obtained. That is, man, even without taking any pains in study-

ing the sciences, no sooner advances toward God than he finds the mysteries of the book unveiled to him. He sees the sealed mysteries with both his physical and mental sight; he sees the Manifestation of God with his outward eye, hears his words of mouth with his ear and eats even the physical food from the Hand of His Table of Bounties. The Lord will wipe away the tears of longing from his eyes as is said by St. John in Ch. 21; likewise he will see the new heaven and the new earth and realize the paradise and hell, and he will know the ungodly violators from the people of unity. He will avoid the violators and dwell with those firm in the covenant, in the Paradise of ABHA. He will consider spiritual angels in material bodies, and will question considering the hidden and sealed matters, and will have the same answered. He will perceive spiritual qualities, morals and characteristics in material bodies.

Herewith we give two words the seals of which have been opened and the reality of which has been disclosed by the Supreme Pen,

according to both the creational and collective way, in the Tablet of Sincerity, so that the understanding thereof may enable the seekers to become cognizant of the meanings of all the other words.

THE TABLET OF SINCERITY.

“To My Name, the Wonderful! The Blood of Sincerity, revealed in Truth from the Presence of the Knowing, the All-informed: It is the messenger of sincerity to the countries to remind people of its high station (the highest station of sincerity), and to make known unto them its exalted grade and its glorious seal; and to show unto them its most beautiful Beauty, its loftiest position, and its impregnable Power, the Mighty, the Wonderful. By the Life of God, verily, it walks and at its right hand, prosperity and at its left hand composure, and at the front honor and behind it the host of reverence. Whereunto testifieth He who causeth the rivers to flow. Verily He is the knower of all things.

It (the book of sincerity) calleth out and saith, "O concourse of mankind, verily, I am come unto ye on the part of the Highest Sincerity to make known unto ye its loftiness and exaltation, its beauty and perfection, its position and its might, and its Baha (i. e., Glory); so that ye may find your way unto its right Path. By God, whosoever is decorated with this primary decoration he is of the people of this luminous station. Beware ye, O people, not to cast Him under the claws of falsehood; fear ye God and be not of the oppersors. Its likeness resembles that of the Sun, which when it riseth from its horizon, the horizons (regions) are illuminated and the faces of those who have attained are brightened.

Whosoever is deprived thereof, he is in manifest loss.

I say, Oh thou Messenger, canst thou enter into cities and countries? Dost thou find any assister for thyself therein? Verily, it says, I have no knowledge thereof, and Thou are the Knowing, the Wise!

Verily, We have revealed this tablet as a favor upon our part so that people might commemorate that which is (given) therein from the Presence of the Great Commander. El Baha be upon you and Fragrance, and be ye of the steadfast.”

* * *

Now consider the words SINCERITY and *falsehood*, which belong to the collective and Creational Books. No one had from the beginning of the world understood beyond their literal meanings. These meanings and mysteries, both creational and collective, which are explained in the above mentioned, have been concealed and closed within these two words until the day of the Manifestation of the Blessed Perfection. When the time of the end came, the Manifestation opened their seals and the real forms of “sincerity” from behind the veils. Likewise he disclosed the meaning of “falsehood” which is in the form of a ferocious beast.

Now the meaning of “the words being sealed” and the opening thereof is understood, and the above blessed Utterance elucidated also what

was meant by the saying of the divine philosophers that in the day of Resurrection all the morals, deeds and characters would be resurrected. This is the explanation of one of the mysteries of "Destiny," which is revealed in one of the former Communes thus: "This is a treasured sea; embark not on it; and this is a densely dark night, walk not in it." The Blessed Perfection has said in the "Seven Valleys" thus: "Whosoever comprehendeth this point, he must needs conceal it, and were he to divulge it a bit, or to disclose it, his head would be surely raised on the gallows." The unfoldment of these mysteries and the appearance of the meanings and realities sealed up in the words are prophesied by the heavenly Books to appear in the latter days. They have promised that when the Greatest Resurrection arises and all the beings, heavenly and earthly, marine and terrestrial, are seized with death and no living thing remains except the Essence of the True One; that is, when the life of the world and all else save God comes to an end, then again the Breath of Life is blown through the Divine Word and all the existent beings are

created anew. To this sense have reference the words of St. John the Revelator in the 21st chapter of his book, v. 1 and 2: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," etc. It is not possible for a soul to apprehend this subject, unless that soul is in touch with the Divine Confirmation which will enable him to comprehend it in its due time. Therefore we have to confine our belief to the literal form of this subject, which is clearly explained by the Blessed Perfection, and as you have seen and heard, it is also clearly implied by Isaiah and other Israelitish prophets in many places of the Holy Scriptures. But realizing it depends upon the special confirmation of our Lord, Abdul-Baha. If man is confirmed by Him, he will be able to solve and unfold this enigma. I beg of His Bounty to open before our hearts a door of the Doors of His knowledge which pervades all in the world, because God has given the Keys of heaven and earth into the hands of the Centre of His Cov-

enant. This is a part of the meaning of the following verse of Daniel: "And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and concealed until the time of the end."

Now we turn our hearts with the utmost humbleness and supplication toward the Supreme Kingdom, and beg of God the Exalted to open the Doors of His Knowledge before our hearts, so that in these days, "days of the end," we may attain to that which we are intended to reach. In the following we give one of the Communes revealed by the Blessed Perfection, which he has commanded to be chanted every morn and eve:

"Read this prayer at every morn and eve:

"He is El ABHA!

"Glory be unto thee, O my God! I beg of thee by the lights of Thy Beauty, the Exalted, the Supreme, and by the appearance of the Might of Thy Dominion betwixt the heaven and earth, and by the Baha of Thy Face, whereby the denizens of the cities of Eternity are illumined; not to withhold me from the wonders of the Appearances of the Sun of Thy Knowl-

edge, nor to deprive me of entering the Sanctity of the Might of Thy Meeting. Verily Thou art the Powerful in that which Thou willest. Verily Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful. O my God, I am he who has turned away his face from the faces of all the created beings and has turned unto the Face of the Holiness of Thy Oneness; and he has fled from himself and from all else save Thee, and sought shelter in the shadow of the Tree of Thy Singleness. Therefore, O my God, leave me not to myself, nor to anything of what is created betwixt the heavens and earths. Then cause me to enter, O my God, into the Tents of Thy Nearness, and the pavilions of Thy Love. Then disclose to me, O my God, that which is concealed from the sight of Thy servants and that which is veiled from the knowledge of Thy creatures. Then grant, O my God, that I may be of such as have entered the Fortress of Thy Assistance and abided in the neighborhood of Thy Mercy. Verily Thou art the Doer of whatsoever Thou willest and Ruler over that which Thou desirest. Then protect me, O my God, from my enemies, and from all that is not loved by Thy

good Pleasure. Then cause to descend upon me from the heaven of Thy Generosity that which may sever me from all the creatures and may cause me to reach unto Thyself the Supreme, in this most pure and brilliant Garment."

Whosoever wishes to become cognizant of the mysteries of these subjects, let him refer to what is written on the mystery of the "Daily Sacrifice," in which these things are clearly explained.

Peace be upon such as may reflect upon the mysteries of the Words of God!

At the end of the lecture I quote two verses which were revealed from the pen of the Blessed Perfection, so that the ending passage may be adorned with the Fragrance of the Blessed Utterances. In one of the Persian Tablets He has said: "A Word which is uttered by the True One; a wonderful spirit is breathed therein and the fragrances of Life are blown from that Word unto all things, both outwardly and inwardly. (Now it depends on) the time and age when the signs of the Divine Word appear from the universal and individual Appearances." In the same tablet He has said: "Imagine ye not that the Manifestation of the True

One is one assigned to declare the outward (i.e., material) knowledge and to change ordinances which are established among people. Nay, rather, at the time of the Manifestation all things have and will become the bearers of innumerable capacities and bounties, which will become manifest in accordance with the exigency of the time and the material means.”

Trans. by Ali Kuli Khan.

THE DAILY SACRIFICE.

EXPLANATION OF THE MYSTERY OF THE DAILY SACRIFICE.

In His Name, The Most Glorious.

It is recorded in the 28th chapter of Numbers, 3rd verse: "And thou shalt say unto them, this is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the Lord; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering." In the 6th verse, He says: "It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained in Mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord."

Let it be known that the Manifestations of God have special tongues and terminologies which are not understood by any, save those who are cognizant of the Mysteries of God. Should the people of the world read their words forever, they will only comprehend the literal

meanings. We have explained this in our lesson on the Collective words and Creational words.

These terminologies are given according to the state of the understanding of the traveler toward God.

Seven states were appointed for the traveler (toward God) before the appearance of His Highness, Baha' Ullah (Glory be to Him!). A Book was written by the Blessed Perfection, entitled "The Seven Valleys" for one of the philosophers. In that Book He says (and all He utters is the Most Glorious!) that seven degrees are appointed for the traveler from the earthly abode to the Heavenly. The names of the seven degrees, or valleys, or conditions, are as follows:

1. The Valley of Research.
2. The Valley of Affection.
3. The Valley of Knowledge (of God).
4. The Valley of Oneness (of God).
5. The Valley of Content.
6. The Valley of Perplexity (embarrassment of spiritual riches).
7. The Valley of Poverty.

The Blessed Perfection, after stating the seven degrees, valleys, or conditions, wrote the following Words: "Those who soar in the atmosphere of oneness and reach the shore of complete self-renunciation, have considered this state, which is the state of immortality, the last condition of seekers of Truth in this Valley. But by Me the meaning of this condition or state is the first station of the heart; that is to say, the first entrance of humanity into the city of the heart, and four degrees are appointed for it. If people of greater understanding should appear, these degrees will be explained to them. As soon as the pen reached the point of stating this condition, it was broken and the paper became torn (so great was the importance of it!)."

For the souls standing in the Valley of Research, the teachings, terminologies and idioms are according to that Valley (or condition). For souls who reached the Valley or condition of Affection, the words and idioms are of the condition of affection. There are numerous terminologies and expressions for the Valley of Affection, of which the people of the Valley of

Research have no portion, and the same applies to the other Valleys. For instance, compare those who are in the Valley of Research and those in the Valley of Perplexity; they would have no idea of each other.

Therefore, the traveler toward God, as long as he has not reached a certain Valley or condition, will not know the idioms and terms of that condition. Consequently, we say that the daily sacrifice was one of the expressions of the mysteries of Mount Sinai, where Moses taught the saints. And they (the saints) took a portion of the spiritual meanings thereof, as much as they had the capacity to receive, but as the rest of the people were not prepared to comprehend those mysteries and had not entered the Kingdom of Spirituality, and as (His Holiness) Moses wished that all the people should share in this Heavenly Table so that the Bounty of God might become universal, he commanded the daily sacrifice to be made. This command was carried out for the good pleasure of the LORD.

This subject is similar to that of baptism, which was formerly explained. Therefore, one

of the meanings of the "daily sacrifice," expressed in its outward appearance, is bounty, of which all should partake, both saints and the rest of the people. And the outward fruit thereof is the abundance of alms and charity for the assistance and help of the poor and needy, and at the same time a means of nearness (unto God) for those who offer.

There are other meanings for this offering, of which some were manifested in the cycle of His Holiness, Jesus Christ; some others in the Day of Mohammed, and some were hidden to "the time of the end."

Inasmuch as to-day is "the time of the end" and the seal of the hidden words was broken by the Blessed Pen of His Highness, the Lord of the world, the Great Baha'Ullah, these meanings were manifested from behind the veil of the word.

It is hoped that the firm ones in the Covenant of the Blessed Perfection may become cognizant of the mysteries and meanings therein. So it was recorded in the Book: "The wise shall understand,"—meaning the firm ones in God's Covenant.



It is important to understand what is meant by the taking away of the daily sacrifice. We understand from the sacred Utterances and blessed Writings that the divine Manifestations are as one Light; their Words are God's Words, and the Words of God are everlasting. The command for the daily sacrifice was a Command of God; how then can it be removed or taken away? Moses declared that the commands and precepts of the Bible were everlasting. Jesus said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Mohammed said: "The ordinances and laws of the Koran will last until the day of resurrection."

The proof thereof lies in the fact that the commands of the heavenly Books are the Words of God, and the Words of God must be eternal. Consequently the removal of the Commands of God does not agree with their endless permanence, unless there are evident meanings and reasons for the changes, such as the sound judgment may accept.

The taking away of the daily sacrifice is mentioned, not only in the Book of Daniel, but in numerous places in both the Old and New Testaments. We have explained this subject in the lesson given on "The sealing of the words," which is written in the 9th verse of the 12th chapter of Daniel.

The difference between the Words of God and those of the people is that for each Word of the former there are innumerable meanings, while there is one limited meaning for every one of the latter. In the previous lessons we mentioned the blessed Words of the First Point (the Bab) (May my life be a sacrifice to Him!). These divine Words, the meanings of which are numerous, are given in every period according to the state of the understanding of the people. Therefore the commands regarding the daily sacrifice and other offerings were given to the Israelites of that time. The offering of sheep and lambs was thus commanded and enjoined upon all. One of the spiritual meanings of this act is the abandoning of the satanic qualities and habits, and characterizing oneself with the divine and angelic attributes. This

was for the saints to perform.

As the world advanced and Jesus Christ was manifested, the *spiritual* sacrifice became a universal command. The material and corporeal sacrifices were changed into spiritual ones. The animal soul, which was interpreted as a lamb, was killed through the Divine Teachings of His Holiness, Christ, and became manifested with the angelic attributes and qualities and received spiritual life. This was explained in the lesson on the "Mystery of Death," that death is a sacrifice of the lower degrees for the life of the higher, as it is mentioned in the Book.

"Whosoever died in Adam lived in Christ," that is to say—whosoever sacrificed himself in the state of the corporeal and material Adam, and withdrew from the animal qualities, received the spiritual and divine life. As Paul, the Apostle, says in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, 15:45-49: "And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that

which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from Heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Hence we see that changing satanic qualities into angelic ones was a sacrifice they offered every morn and eve; and the substitution of the heavenly attributes and characteristics, which was a cause of joy and happiness to the Lord, was their daily sacrifice.

This daily sacrifice, in the cycle of Mohammed, was changed into the offering of prayers five times daily, (in a day and night). Through praying five times and directing themselves unto God, five earthly states would be rejected. This number—five—symbolized the appearance of the First Point, the Bab. At the end of the cycle of Mohammed, which was the conclusion of the thousand, two hundred and sixty (1,260) years, the real prayer was the Holy Being of the Bab. This is written in detail in the lesson on the "Mystery of Prayer."

The sacrifices offered for sins were changed into those of repentance and seeking forgiveness

from God. In the blessed age of Jesus, sins were forgiven, but when the First Point, the Bab, was manifested, He who was the Forerunner of the Blessed Perfection, His Highness, Baha' Ullah, then the spirit of the former sacrifices of lambs and cattle reappeared as the spiritual sacrifices of saints and angelic beings in martyrdom. Even as you have heard, thousands and thousands of saints and holy men gave their lives in the Path of the Blessed Perfection. If any one desires to know the exact number of martyrs in the Path of Baha' Ullah, the Great, he will not be able to attain this knowledge. It is impossible to know the real number, as they were innumerable.

So you find that the daily sacrifice, in the days of Moses, was in the condition of infancy, and in the days of the Blessed Perfection, reached the state of maturity and perfection. As this command (the daily sacrifice) arrived then to the degree of perfection, the real mystery thereof was revealed in Kitab-el-Akdas. The verse will be quoted later. In every cycle, as the believers in God advanced, the spiritual meanings of the Words would be strengthened

and disclosed in greater measure. The more the spiritual and inward meanings of the Words were unfolded, the more would the material and outward appearances thereof pass away. As the daily sacrifice was a material form, which lasted up to the appearance of Mohammed, and then was taken away, its spiritual meaning was then strengthened. For this reason, if you consider and look to it with a clear insight, you find that the daily sacrifice was not really taken away but was strengthened and brought unto perfection. Although the corporeal and outward form thereof disappeared, yet its essential, spiritual and inward reality was manifested. The material Adam died, while the spiritual man was made alive. This is the meaning of the declaration of Moses that the Commands of the Bible would last forever. This is what Jesus meant by saying—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

From the beginning of the taking away of the daily sacrifice, which was at the time of the beginning of the appearance of Mohammed, up to the time of the Manifestation of Baha'Ullah

(His Name be glorified!), fulfills one thousand, two hundred and ninety (1,290) days. This is evidently referred to in the 12th chapter of Daniel, where he says that from the time when the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days.

We have explained this subject in the lesson given on the historical prophecies. Whoever wishes to know concerning these prophecies must refer to the said lesson.

* * *

Now we will refer to the deeper meanings of the "Daily Sacrifice," as explained in the Kitab-el-Akdas by Baha'Ullah.

"Hearken to what the Tree chants to you from the Utterances of God. Verily, it is a decision for guidance from God, the LORD of the beginning and the end. By it the souls soar to the dawning-points of Revelation, and the minds of advancers will be brightened. It is incumbent upon ye to follow the Commandments (contained in Kitab-el Akdas). These

are the Commands which ye are instructed to perform, (namely): "Do all things in fragrance and spirituality: This is best for ye if ye are of the knowing. *Chant the Utterances of God every morn and eve.* Whosoever does not chant them fulfills not the Covenant of God and His Testament, and whosoever turns his face from them, verily, he has turned away from God; The Everlasting: The Eternal. O ye servants of Mine, believe in God, all of ye!"

Consider how much the times have advanced: In the day of Moses, a means of nearness to God was the killing of lambs and cattle and burning the flesh in the fire, which they performed to give pleasure to God through the savour thereof, but in this age the means of nearness to God is the reading the divine Verses every morn and eve. The melodies of chanting the Verses are made the means of happiness to the Lord, causing the souls to soar to the spiritual realms, and to be released from the prison of the world; as stated in the Kitab-el-Akdas (page 40): "Those who chant the divine Verses with sweet melodies will comprehend what cannot be compared with the sovereignty

of heaven and earth. Through this they will find the fragrances of My Worlds, which are not apprehended by any save those who receive spiritual perception through the bountiful Gift from My Supreme Station. Say, verily, it attracts the pure hearts to the spiritual worlds which cannot be expressed by words nor indicated by symbols. Blessed are those who hear!"

That sacrifice which was appointed especially for the *saints* in the time of Moses, has become, in this day, a universal bounty.

He says: "Read the Verses of God every morn and eve. Whosoever does not read has not fulfilled the Covenant of God and His Testament." Ponder well over the meaning of this verse. Where did God make the Covenant with his people that they should read the heavenly Utterances every morn and eve? Yet now He says that whosoever does not do so, has neglected to follow that Covenant. This verse shows that God has made this Covenant at some time. Therefore it is said that Moses made a Covenant with the saints in Mount Sinai, which Covenant was that they (the saints) should read the Words of God every morn and eve,

which was the real meaning of the daily sacrifice; inasmuch as they were the holy people, and the *spiritual* Command pertained to them, while the material Command was for those who worshipped not spiritually.

As the Commands of God have an universal meaning, therefore the saints also performed the material acts of worship together with the spiritual. The proof that the full and original purpose was not completed in the material acts, is this; that in this day, which is a Day of the LORD, in which the realities and hidden mysteries are to be disclosed, the material sacrifices should be renewed and performed if they were in reality the expression of that sacred Covenant. Yet we find that, in the Kitab-el-Akdas, which is the crowning of all the Books, that Command is revived in the statute of morning and evening prayer. He said. "Whoever does not read the Utterances of God, has not fulfilled the ancient Covenant."

God has made this Covenant with all His Manifestations, and each one of the Prophets has made the same with his own people. The story of Adam and the Garden of Eden is an

account of this Covenant. The Ark of Noah explains this Covenant. The everlasting Covenant with Abraham and his seed was this same Covenant. Again, the record of Mount Sinai and Moses is that of this Covenant. The word "Rock," in relation to Peter, upon which Christ's church was to be built, refers to this Covenant. The account of Fama-Gadeer (where Mohammed made the covenant for the people to turn to his successor, Ali.) is concerning this Covenant. The Covenant which the First Point, the Bab, made with the people of the Beyan, commanding them to follow Baha'Ullah, "He Whom God shall manifest," refers to this Covenant, and the descent of the Kitab-el-Ahd, which was written by the blessed hand of the Manifestation, establishes this very Covenant.

This Covenant is a cause of the orderly system of the world. Everything is created and made alive by the Word of God. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God!" God alone creates, and the Word is His means of creation.

O ye possessors of intellect and hearing: The Blessed Perfection made the reading of the

Verses a fulfillment of the Covenant, by His Declaration that the believers should read the Verses every morn and eve. An inner meaning is enclosed in this Utterance. Do ye know what verses should be considered every morn and eve in order to fulfill this Covenant? They are verses written in the Kitab-el-Akdas and the Kitab-el-Ahd, wherein He appoints the Center of His Covenant: "The will of God is this—that the branches (Aghsan), twigs (Afnan) and relatives (moontessabeen) shall all turn toward the Greatest Branch. Consider what was revealed in Kitab-el-Akdas: "When the Sea of Meeting sinks, and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn to Him who is desired by God, who is branched from this pre-existent Root. The aim of this blessed Verse is the Greatest Branch. Thus We manifested the Command as a favor from before Us, and I am The Generous! The Bountiful!"

In another place He says: "O people of creation! When the Dove soars from the bower of praise and aspires to the Supreme Purpose, ask whatever ye do not understand in the Book,

from the Branch, who is branched from this pre-existent Root.”

Therefore, whosoever reads the above mentioned Verses every morn and eve, and turns to the Center of the Covenant who is desired by God, has verily fulfilled the Covenant of God; and whosoever does not so do, has turned his face from God, although he may read the Utterances day and night.

This is what is intended by the saying that whoever does not read the Words of God, has not fulfilled His Covenant. It is evident that those who do not read the above mentioned Verses, and do not turn themselves to Abdul-Baha, the Center of the Covenant, have not fulfilled the Covenant. He (the Blessed Perfection) says: “Whosoever turns away from these Verses, verily, he is of those who have turned away their faces from God forever. O servants of Mine, believe in God, all of ye!” Thus it is evident that in these Commands, the stress laid upon the Covenant and the chanting of Verses is to accomplish this purpose (namely), that the Bahais shall read the Verses every morn and eve, and after the Departure of the

Blessed Perfection shall turn as one body to the Center of His Covenant, Abdul-Baha, in order that there may be no dissensions or discord; that all the people of the world shall gather under the tent of agreement and union, and that the earth may become a Paradise of El-ABHA. The Blessed Perfection says, in numerous Tablets; "God accepted all calamities and hardships for the unifying of the world, and the original purpose of the Manifestations of God is to establish union between the peoples of the world." In one of the Tablets, revealed by Him, it is written: "Ye are all fruits of one tree and leaves of one branch." Again, He says: "Ye are all leaves of one tree and drops of one sea." In another place, it is said: "The religion and the law of God is descended from the Heaven of the Will of the Possessor of Eternity, for the purpose alone of harmonizing and bringing into unity the people of the world."

This supreme intention will be attained when all shall turn to one Point. It is through such Verses as these that God has established His Covenant in all times, even as Moses, in

Mount Sinai, made a covenant with the saints that, after the setting of the sun of *his* beauty, they should turn to Joshua, and that, by worship every morn and eve, they should take warning to obey the command to follow Joshua. This was the daily sacrifice which the saints used to offer; that is—as they sacrificed their own purposes for that of Moses, their lower natures for his high nature, so after His Sun was set, they sacrificed in the same manner, looking toward Joshua as their Leader. They burned their own selfish desires and personalities to obey Moses and Joshua.

Hence, the spiritual meaning of the daily sacrifice was that which was comprehended by the saints; they seeing Moses reflected in the mirror of Joshua, and therefore, obeying him even as they obeyed Moses. Similar sacrifice was performed by the disciples of Christ after His departure, they looking to the Apostles and saying; that Christ, after three days, had risen from the dead. (Acts, Ch. 2.)

The followers of Mohammed, after his departure, similarly kept the law of sacrifice, looking to his successors, the Caliphs. They

said: "Our beginning is Mohammed, our ending—Mohammed and our all—Mohammed."

So, this same sacrifice was observed by the firm and steadfast believers in Baha'Ullah, after the setting of His Beauty, they turning themselves to Abdul-Baha, in accord with the decisive Command of the Manifestation. They are those who use the Verses every morn and eve, and who have fulfilled the Covenant of God, and who chant according to the Verse: "Turn thy face to Him who is desired by God." If the Verses be chanted with fragrance and spirituality, it is better than the heedless reading of many books.

The First Point says: "If ye read a single one of the Verses of Him Whom God shall manifest, it is better than to read the whole Book of Beyan, inasmuch as that Verse will save ye in that day, while the Book of Beyan will not." Also, in one of the chapters of Beyan, He exhorts his followers not to be hindered by the Book of Beyan from accepting Him Whom God shall manifest. At the end of that chapter, He says that it is incumbent upon every soul to read that chapter every nineteen

days, as that chapter contains the Covenant made with His people for Him Whom God shall manifest. Although all the chapters of the Book of Beyan were written by Him, yet He commands all to read that special chapter.

* * *

Now, these Utterances elucidate the fact that those verses, which the Blessed Perfection commands us to consider and obey, are the ones which contain the mention of the Center of His Covenant, and therefore He says that the one who does not read those verses does not fulfill the Covenant. This is the greatest and most important Command, even as that Chapter of the Beyan was the most important Chapter. Here we will quote a Tablet revealed by the Blessed Perfection—(His Name be magnified!)—wherein He mentions those who fulfilled the Covenant and their sublime stations; also those of the Nakazeen and their degradation:

“He is holy above all definition and expression. Verily, the Tree (the Blessed Perfection) calls with a loud Voice and summons all

to God, The Mighty! The Powerful! Some people attached themselves to passions, turning from God, the Lord of the people, and some of them directed themselves toward the Supreme Horizon, while saying: "I believe in Thee, O Thou who art imprisoned, and I confess the Truth which Thou bearest, O Thou who are oppressed. Whosoever adorns himself with the mantle of faithfulness between the heaven and the earth, for him the Supreme Concourse will pray, but whosoever violates the Covenant, he will be accursed by the people of the earth and of the Kingdom. Blessed is he who holds fast to the rope of firmness in this Cause wherein the feet were shaken and the hearts were troubled. Thou shouldst be in such a condition that nothing of this world shall sadden thee, nor any delusions of the deniers prevent thee from God, The Precious! The Favorite! Verily, We have mentioned thee as a favor from before Us, so that thou shalt remember thy LORD, the Possessor of the seen and the unseen."

No one should think that what has been mentioned is intended to confine the reading of the Utterances of the Blessed Perfection to the two

Verses only which have been named. No! The Utterances of the Blessed Perfection are the Words of God, and should be read by every one at morn and eve, because they contain Life for all the contingent beings. Yet there is much difference between the verses: For instance, in one verse He appoints the Center of His Covenant; in another He provides material ordinances, such as those for ablutions for the sake of purity. All are the Words of God, but even as all things in the contingent world are created by His Word, so are there found great differences in the words from the highest to the lowest. There is a wide difference between the common stones and the diamond. The verses above mentioned are sparkling diamonds among the Utterances of God. They are like the heart in the body of man, like the spirit in the creatures, like the sun in the universe compared to the twinkling stars. All things revolve around them, and a proof thereof is as follows:

From all the Utterances of the Blessed Perfection, the Verse: "Turn your faces to the Branch who was branched from this pre-exist-

ent Root!" is the only one that is quoted by Him in His last Will, Testament and Covenant, He thus showing that this Verse was the Center of all Verses. Even as this Verse is the appointed Center of the "collective" Verses, so is Abdul-Baha the Center of the "creational" Verses. Through this living Verse the foundation of the Religion of God is made firm, the servants of God are trained, the tent of Peace and Union is established, dissensions are removed from the people, and the prophecies are fulfilled.

Thus we explain the Mystery of the "Daily Sacrifice." O ye listeners if ye are well-informed and can give better explanations, proceed. Therefore we say: One of the meanings of the daily sacrifice, which is the outward appearance thereof, is the killing of lambs and cattle. Another is the abandonment of satanic qualities and clothing oneself with divine attributes: Another is chanting the Verses of God and being firm in the Covenant of God.



There is another deep and sweet meaning for the daily sacrifice, which is not comprehended by any save the lovers of the Beauty of God. Unless a soul be revived by the spirit of affection, it will not come to the realization of that meaning. This was formerly indicated. This meaning was that which was comprehended by His Honor, Aghar Seyid Esmahed—in Bagdad.

The seven martyrs, in Teheran.

Kurat-el-Ayn attained to it in Teheran.

His Honor, Badi, in Teheran.

The King of Martyrs and his Brother, the Beloved of Martyrs, in Ispahan.

His Honor, Vargau, and his Son, Ruh'Ullah, in the prison of Teheran.

Hadji Mohammed Razar, in Iskabad.

His Honor, Mulla Sadek, in Baku.

His Honor, Hojad, and the Martyrs of Zanjan, in the city of Zanjan.

His Honor, Vahid, and the Martyrs of Nariz, in Nariz.

The Martyrs of the castle of Tabarsi, and

His Honor the Bab-el-Bab, in Tabarsi.

His Honor, Kuddus, in the city of Barfurush.

His Highness, the First Point, the Bab, in the city of Tabriz.

Also many Martyrs, in many places.

His Holiness, Abdul-Baha, in a Tablet to the "House of Justice" in Chicago, yearns to attain to the sweet mystery of that Station of the daily sacrifice.

[There are many meanings for "morn" and which cannot be now explained.]

Dear Brothers! No one should think that there is no connection between the daily sacrifice mentioned in the Scriptures and all that we have mentioned in this article. One may say that these explanations are far-fetched; another, that they are imaginations; indeed, each one will comprehend according to his understanding and power of reception.

Consider a seed, which, to him who is not familiar with it, appears to be but a bit of hard substance like stone, dry and lifeless. Yet he who understands, knows well that from that seed, under proper conditions, a fruitful tree

will grow. Compare the human seed, the embryo, with the matured man; then that man with the citizen of the Spiritual World; then the Spiritual World with the Supreme Voice from the Burning Bush, declaring "I AM GOD!" Contrast the sons of men upon the earth and the Son of God—Abdul-Baha. The difference is incomparable.

The explanations, which may appear to some to be misapplied, are those which must be comprehended by the reality of man, but cannot be perceived until one shall have attained to that reality. The words which appear to be irrelevant, are in fact the disclosers of the inner significances which are like the heart giving life to the whole body. If one finds himself unable to comprehend all of the meanings, it may be wise for him to wait and pray and test the truth of the Commands.

Peace be upon them who follow the right Path in this Day of Salvation!

Trans. by Mirza Ameen' Ullah.

MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM.

**TABLET REVEALED BY THE MASTER,
ABDUL-BAHA, TO A BELIEVER IN
PERSIA, CONCERNING THE
KINGDOM OF ABHA.
HE IS GOD!**

O thou venerable questioner! Thou hast asked concerning the Supreme Horizon. His Holiness, Ala (the Bab) said: "Verily, I am alive in the Horizon of EL-ABHA!" In the Tablets it has been revealed by the Blessed Perfection: "We will see you from My Horizon, the ABHA!" Also in some places—"Kingdom of ABHA" is mentioned.

Know thou that, in language, "Kingdom" is the superlative of "dominion," meaning a reign. In the terminology of the people of Truth, the Kingdom is the World of God, which encompasses the world of dominion, and it is holy above the qualities, particulars, limits, and imperfections of the world of dominion. It is single, perfect, ancient, brilliant, Spiritual,

neither in the world nor out of the world, placeless, and not apprehended by the corporeal senses. The worlds of intellect and of spirit in the human temple are likenesses of it, surrounding the material mold (form), and are the managers of all things, the members, parts, powers, senses and qualities of the human world, being neither in nor out, because entrance, exit and admixture are attributes of the corporeal world. In short, the worlds of God are numberless. One of the worlds of God is this world of nature, which is a symbol of the other worlds. As the short-sighted (unspiritual) ones have not the power of perception, thinking that the only world is that of dominion, they are veiled by the nature of this world from (perceiving) the Divine Worlds.

The Horizon of ABHA and the Kingdom of Ala signify the World of God and the Divine Universe. It is the abode of the Spiritual Reign, and for the enjoyment of the angelic friends. The Blessed Perfection and the Greatest Name (My spirit be a sacrifice for His friends!), before His Dawning into this world, and after His Appearing on the Throne of

Glory, was in that World of Reality. It is so now, because there is no rising or setting, no appearance or disappearance, no beginning and no ending for His Holy Essence. It has ever been in the Apogee of Holiness. These (material) states are in connection with His Appearance in the Honored Temple, not with the Essence or Reality. Upon thee be Baha!

(Signed) Abdul-Baha Abbas.

Trans. by Mirza Ameen 'Ullah.

CONCERNING THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM.

(*By Mirza Assad' Ullah.*)

Let it be known that numerous meanings are intended by "The Kingdom," every one of which is mentioned according to the exigency of the place where it is mentioned.

First: When Kingdom is mentioned with Dominion, then by Dominion is meant the material or phenomenal world, and by the Kingdom, the spiritual and mental world. In this sense, the material body of man is his world of Dominion and his spiritual temple is his Kingdom.

Second: Kingdom is the state of the supremacy and perfection of things in compari-

son with all other states. In this sense, the body of man is called Kingdom in comparison with the other existent beings, inasmuch as it is more excellent than all the bodies, and moreover, all that exists in the other created bodies, the same is existent in the body of man. Therefore, it is revealed in the Blessed Words of Baha' Ullah thus: "If it be said in one sense that the temple of man is the Kingdom, this is a truth, and there is no doubt therein, because examples of everything exist and are manifest therein. Although some have named it the least world, yet We testify that it is the greatest world."

Third: Kingdom signifies the meaning and mysteries which are hidden in the words. In this state, the words and sentences signify the material world, while the meanings are the Kingdom.

Fourth: Kingdom is the dominating and conquering power which appears in the world. In this state, it is interpreted by the phenomenal kingdom and dominion.

Fifth: Kingdom is the spiritual and divine power which proceeds from the Manifestations of God, and, in another sense, it means the teachings, customs and enlightenment which

appear among creatures through the Prophets.

Sixth: Kingdom is the appearance of the universal peace, love, union, harmony, equity, and other divine characteristics on the earth.

Seventh: Kingdom is the Manifestation of God in the flesh.

There are many other meanings for Kingdom, revealed in the Tablets of the Blessed Perfection, one of which is quoted as follows: "Were ye to clear and purify all the mirrors of the existence, then the Sun of the words: 'God doeth whatever He willeth,' and 'God ordereth whatever He desireth,' will be pictured upon them." Likewise, in other places, other explanations are revealed, which will not be mentioned here.

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As to the question, regarding what kind of a Kingdom is that which will appear on the earth: Let it be known that the highest station of the Kingdom is the Manifestation of God in the body of man, and all the Prophets have prophesied that, in the latter days, God will appear on earth in the flesh. By this statement is

not meant that it is the Unknowable Essence of God which would appear in the flesh; nay, rather it is intended that the Essence will transfigure Itself with Its Names and Attributes in the Temple of the Greatest Manifestation, in a way similar to man transfiguring himself upon a mirror. For example, the picture of a man in the mirror is the same as the man himself, while on the other hand, it is evident that the picture is no other than a similitude of man, and not his identity. Likewise, the Unknowable Essence of God hath been permanently Holy above any ascent or descent, entrance or exit, and it is only His Names and Attributes which become manifest in man; that is, in the Greatest Manifestation. This is what is meant by the Manifestation of God in the temple of man. All the Prophets have been the Manifestations and the Mirrors of God, but everyone of them hath, in his day, expressed the Sun of Truth according to his own capacity until finally, during the Nineteenth Century, which is the greatest among all centuries and the Age of the Blessed Perfection, all the Manifestations terminated in the Blessed Manifestation

of Baha' Ullah, and everything that was promised in the Holy Scriptures became fulfilled: Consequently, the Blessed Perfection hath said in the Kitab-el-Akdas and other Tablets: "All the Manifestations have terminated in this Greatest Manifestation." That is—all that the contingent world has the capacity to receive from the Manifestation of God was manifested by the Appearance of the Blessed Perfection. This is the highest station of the Kingdom and whosoever hath attained the honor of meeting the Blessed Perfection during His Manifestation, attained the Kingdom of God on earth.

The other station of the Kingdom, which is the Signs, Verses and the Teachings of the Blessed Perfection, can be attained by everyone in this day, but the only Door through whom one can enter the comprehension and understanding of these wonders and signs, is His Highness, Abdul-Baha. Because the Blessed Perfection hath said that, after the disappearance of the Sun of His Beauty, all should turn unto His Highness, Abdul-Baha, and ask Him concerning the interpretation of the Books and Verses, inasmuch as He hath appointed Abdul-

Baha as His Absolute Representative, in accordance with the Blessed Verse which He hath revealed in the Book. Therefore, whosoever drinketh from the limpid water of His knowledge and enlightenment, hath entered the Kingdom of God.

Another sense of the Kingdom, which is the appearance of the universal peace, love, union, harmony, equity, the most great cordiality, and other divine manners and characteristics among the creatures,—is the teachings in which His Highness, Abdul-Baha, instructs the people of this day.

But the highest grade of the Kingdom is attaining to the meeting of God; that is, man should believe in God in the Day of His Manifestation. If this position is attained by man in this life, he will attain the same in all the worlds after his death. If it is not attained by him in this world, he will not obtain it in the next worlds. “Whosoever is blind in this world, he will be also blind in the world to come.” But, in the absence of a Manifestation, one can enter the Kingdom of God by only believing in God.

Moreover, there are many grades for the Kingdom, as is said by Christ: "In my Father's house, there are many mansions." But when man enters the Kingdom in this world, he will also advance in the next life and attain high stations, and this is clearly stated by the Blessed Perfection.

In this day, by Kingdom is meant, to keep firm in the Covenant and Testament of the Blessed Perfection, and to adhere to the pure Hem of His Highness, Abdul-Baha. Whosoever really is firm in his love for Abdul-Baha, and arises to serve the Cause of the Blessed Perfection, is of the Kingdom, is moved by the Divine Breezes, enjoys the heavenly foods, the doors of spirit are open before his face, is able to comprehend the mysteries and realities in the heavenly books without study, hears the voice of the Supreme Concourse with his spiritual hearing, and the Bounties of the Blessed Perfection are successively showering upon him. But he who is deprived of this station, and is not firm in the Covenant of God, is of the hell, the doors of the Kingdom are closed unto him, he is captured and imprisoned in the worlds of

dust and nature. I take my refuge in God! How great will be the punishment which is appointed for such a soul after his leaving the body.

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As to the question, concerning the Blessed Verse: "The river Jordan hath surely joined with the Most Great Sea, and the Son in the Sacred Valley calleth 'Labeik, I am ready, O my God, I am ready!'" this Blessed Verse is one of the Utterances of the Blessed Perfection. As no one is permitted to interpret the Verses of the Blessed Perfection, except in accordance with the interpretation made by His Highness, Abdul-Baha, therefore this question should be asked of Him. But all that I have gathered from the Blessed Utterances, regarding this Verse is, that, by the "Most Great Sea" is intended the Blessed Perfection Himself, and by the "River Jordan," the "Branch who is extended from this Ancient Root"; that is, His Highness, Abdul-Baha. By the "Son crying in the Sacred Valley: 'Labeik, I am ready,'" is meant

the same "Branch extended from the Ancient Root," who hath arisen in the Sacred Valley of the Holy Religion, calling in servitude. When the Blessed Perfection addressed all the created atoms and said: "Am I not your Lord?" the first person who responded to His Call was Abdul-Baha. This is what is meant by "Labeik, yes! yes!"

This I submit to your notice, but if you desire to know the interpretation made by Abdul-Baha, you should ask this question from Him. Verily, He is well-informed of the Words of God! By saying, "Labeik (here I am)," is not meant simply uttering the words; nay, rather is meant to arise and perform the requirements of servitude. After the departure of the Blessed Perfection, this meaning was only realized in Abdul-Baha, who singly and alone hoisted the Standard of Assistance to the Cause of the Blessed Perfection throughout all regions. In this day, whosoever is illuminated with the rays of the Sun of Servitude, and arises as Abdul-Baha, to spread peace, and to love the people of the world, he is accounted of those who are firm in the Covenant and the Testimony, and

as one of the dwellers in the Tabernacle of Peace. Blessed are those who attain! Glad tidings to those who enter therein!

* * *

Now hearken ye to the Voice of Abdul-Baha in a Tablet revealed by Him to the Paris believers:

“O ye men and women who are attracted to the Beauty of El-Baha!

Verily, in this moment I mention ye with my utmost longing for your visit, and with my fervor in the love of God, because, verily, ye are the holy souls who are ignited with the Fire of Love, and are quickened by the Breath of the Holy Spirit, during this wonderful age and this century, which is glittering with the Lights of the Glorious Lord! Verily I beseech God to confirm you through the Angels from the Supreme Concourse and through the Hosts of the Kingdom of El-Baha, so that ye may spread the Frangrances of God in those regions, and invite the people unto the general agreement, unto harmony, prosperity, universal peace and love; to quicken souls through the

Fragrances of Holiness; to bring up the people according to the Teaching of God, the Powerful, the Living, the Self-subsistent. Because, verily, the earth is in the pitch-darkness of disagreement and discord, but the Cause of God is a Sun which shines forth unto all regions, and the Word of God was uttered, proclaimed, announced and shone forth to all horizons from the Sun of Truth. Holy souls shall soon appear from this Call, who will respond to it, rise to circulate the Teachings of God, refine souls, justify characters, brighten eyes, purify hearts and dilate breasts (of people) with joy through the Light of the Knowledge of God. Then ye will find the earth as a part of Paradise and of the Garden of the Merciful, and as a part of the Heaven of ABHA, wherein naught will be heard except the Praise of God, naught will be seen except the Lights which are shining forth from the Sun of Truth, naught will be inhaled except the Holy Fragrances being diffused from the Flowers of the Garden of the Kingdom of God.

Sever yourselves from aught else save God; be ornamented with the Attributes of the Merciful.

ful; withdraw from the worldiness of the people of the world; show perfect love toward all the nations of the world, and wish good to everyone of the inhabitants of the earth; be endowed with pity and mercy, which are the qualifications of the people of God; be a shelter to every fear-stricken soul, a protection to every captive, a physician to every sick person, a friend to every exile, a helper to every one who needs help, so that your souls may be adorned with the Qualities of the Merciful, with Divine Gifts, human virtues and brilliant characters. This is indeed the greatest prosperity! This is manifest light!

Verily, I implore God and beseech the Divine Might and His Threshold of Holiness, to assist you in all these matters, and I will never forget you.

May greetings and praise be upon ye!

(Signed) Abdul-Baha-Abbas.

Trans. by Ali Kuli Khan.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH.

Know thou, that there are innumerable degrees for death, and naught hath ever existed in the world unless it were at every moment subject to death and life, except the Sanctified Essence of God (Exalted is His Glory), which hath been forever living and beyond the reach of death. God hath referred to this fact in one of the Heavenly Utterances, thus: "Everything is mortal except the Face of God." Likewise: "He is the Living Who will never die!" Should the eye of the innate perception of man become a little opened, he would see that all the existing atoms are, at all moments, changing from death to life, and from life to death.

Consider the mineral kingdom: When the seed of the tree is planted in the ground, it will not germinate unless its mineral form decomposes and dies. Therefore, the disintegration suffered by the mineral form of the seed is its death, while the growth thereof in the form of plants, is its new life. Likewise, with the vegetable kingdom; except the vegetable form of the plant be disintegrated and die, how could it grow into new life and attain animal form. Likewise, the animal; except it die from the animal state, it can never attain new life in the kingdom of man. Likewise man; except he die from the qualities and states of the flesh, and make himself as nothing before God, he cannot attain eternal life or immortality.

In the following, we quote from a poem composed by one of the bygone oriental philosophers regarding our subject:—

It is said by Moulevy, of Roum (Turkey):
“I died from mineral and became vegetable;
“I died from vegetable, and entered into the animal kingdom;
“I died from the animal and became man;
“Therefore, why should I fear! When became

I less by death ?

“Yet again I will die from man ;

“Then I will bring forth wings of angels.

“And more, I will fly from angels,

“And will become something which is beyond
imagination.

“Then again, I will start from that station ;

“Everything is mortal save the Face of God !

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Likewise, consider the body of man : All the parts of the body of man are in constant dissolution, and all the time it is superseded by food. Should it not be fed anew, all parts thereof would become utterly disintegrated. Were it not in constant dissolution, man, at the age of eighty, would be of enormous bulk.

Likewise, consider all the particles of the Universe, both the material and spiritual ; every moment each one of them strips itself of the old garment and assumes the new. Therefore, the Angel of Death unceasingly takes life from all things, while at the same time the Angel of Life confers new life. But this dual function is so instantaneous in its operation that no

one is able to detect when the death occurred, or when new life was conferred.

Likewise, life and death play the same roll in the worlds of soul, mind and spirit; even in these states, everything dies in one condition and attains life in another. For instance, when the reality of man attains perfection in the state of soul, then he dies therein and enjoys new life in the state of mind; when he attains perfection in the state of mind (Mentality), he dies there and receives new life in the state of spirit; when he attains sanctity in the state of spirit and becomes as nothing before God, then he dies to that station while attaining everlasting life, through the permanence of God. Therefore, as by his death in every stage, he ascends to a loftier summit, so he is never made less by death. Thus it was said by the philosopher: "Therefore I fear not: when did I become less by death?" It is for this reason that the Saints of God long for death as doth a baby for the breast of its mother. That death causes advance, is true, if the soul of man is inclined to progress, while if it is in decline,—that is, if the face of the soul is turned unto the ma-

terial world of the flesh and the lustful desires therein—it is at every moment in the state of decrease. In such case, human qualities, in every instant, die, and man is stripped of them, while instead, brutish and carnal inclinations become alive in him. Thus he will continue to be subject to such death (of spirituality) and life (of materiality) until he is finally declined and dead from out the rank of man, and is accounted of the brute. But as such a man is clad in the garment of the human body, his real self does not become manifest so long as he is in this world; but after his physical death, he will appear with a brutish form (nature) in the next life. I take refuge in God for that which happens to such a man after his death!

If we said that the real state of such a man is hidden so long as he lives in the flesh, by this is not meant that it is veiled from the Manifestations of God and His Saints; nay, rather, it is unveiled and clear to them, but they conceal it from others. It is only veiled from other people.

This subject is one of the mysteries of the question of the Covenant and the Testament.

Whosoever is, in this day, firm in the Covenant and the Testament of God, and turns unto Abdul-Baha in compliance with the decisive command of the Blessed Perfection, he is of the people of the Kingdom; he is of the companions of the right hand, and is of the exalted letters; such a soul is day by day in advance and progress, and his death is conducive to loftiness and eternal life. On the other hand, whosoever violates the Covenant of the Blessed Perfection, and turns away from Abdul-Baha, the Center of the Covenant, he is at every instant declining, is a follower of natural desires, one of the companions of the left hand and one of the letters of the hell fire. The divine attributes and characteristics die, and brutish qualities become alive in him, and after his exit from this world, he will appear in a brutish form (nature), which is his real form in the next world. In this day, the companions of the Red Ark (i. e., true and firm believers), can see him in his internal form even in this world and recognize him, yet they conceal it. This is one of the meanings of death in connection with the human soul. There are also many

other meanings for death, which are not mentioned here. The Blessed Perfection hath also revealed in His Tablets some statements which allude by inference, to the aforesaid subject. In the Tablet of Trustworthiness and in the Tablet of Faithfulness, He has unveiled the internal form of a trustworthy soul, as well as that of a traitor, in the most eloquent explanation. In the following, we quote the Tablet of Trustworthiness, as follows:

“He is King over the Dominions of El-Beyan!

We were meditating in the earth, and we heard its story and news. Then a brilliant Houri issued forth from a chamber of the chambers of Paradise, and she walked until she stood in the middle of the sky and proclaimed in the sweetest voice: ‘O Concourse of the earth and heavens: Verily I am an Houri named ‘Trustworthiness’ in the registered and written epistle. I have already uncovered my face through the permission of my Lord, so that ye may gaze unto my grace, my glory, my beauty, my form, my character, and witness my black

eyes, my red cheeks, my brilliant brow and my black tresses. I solemnly declare unto ye, O Concourse of Creation, by the Lord of mankind, and by the Sultan of the life to come and the present one, not to cover me with the veils of treachery, avarice and lust, and not to abandon me to their hands. By the Life of God, treachery is one of my enemies, and its inherent qualities are rancor and animosity. I beg of ye, by the One, the Single God, not to let my severest enemy (treachery) influence me.

Then have pity on me, O people of the earth, and be not of those who oppress.'

Thus we have revealed verses unto thee, and have made known to thee by reference, what was inflicted upon us in the Greatest Prison (Acca) so that ye may be of the knowing!

Verily we are thankful for the afflictions which befell us in His Right Path. As to thee: verily, when thou mayst read the Tablet and understand that which is in it, then remember my beloved ones on my part, and salute their faces on the part of this Oppressed Exile."

Trans. by Ali Kuli Khan.

CONCERNING "PRAYERS FOR THE
DEAD," "THE COMFORTER" AND
"THE REDEEMER."

CONCERNING "PRAYERS FOR THE
DEAD," "THE COMFORTER" AND
"THE REDEEMER."

The question is asked whether by "the prayer for the dead" is meant prayer for the spiritually or physically dead.

Let it be known that every prophet has revealed prayers for his people and this is one of the styles of the writings of the Divine Manifestations, which style is interpreted as "the river of milk" in the Holy Scriptures. This subject I have described in my interpretation of the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Genesis. Prayer is effective, both for the spiritually and physically dead, and also for those who are living, and all are commanded to it.

I, myself, have heard many times from the Blessed Tongue of Baha' Ullah (Glorified is His Grandeur!), saying, "Pray ye. Prayer

has effect." Also in the Visiting Tablet prayer was revealed from His Blessed Pen in behalf of parents and relatives. He has also revealed certain Utterances, the meaning of which is as follows:

"The people of Baha should pray for those who have not believed in God, so that God may direct them (the latter) to His Right Path." There is no doubt that those who are not believing in God are considered as spiritually dead; therefore, we have to pray for them,—perchance the Divine Providence may overtake them and enable them to advance toward God and attain everlasting life. Prayer will tend to the saving of the dead.

It is also inquired as to who is meant by the "Comforter" and the "Holy Spirit."

Know that by the "Holy Spirit," the "Comforter," the "Spirit of Truth," the "Father," and the "Lord of Hosts," and other similar names which are recorded in the Old and New Testaments and other Holy Books is meant The Most Great, Baha' Ullah. Numerous verses have been revealed from the Tongue of the Blessed Perfection, in which He has said: "I

am the Comforter." Here we quote one of His Blessed Utterances: "Verily, the Comforter hath come in Truth, but the children are in manifest error; they know Him not, after He has come to them with a power which hath dominated all in the heaven and upon earth, and in His Great Glory." In another place He hath said: "The Spirit of Truth hath come, to direct you unto all Truth; verily He speaketh not from before Himself, but from the Presence of the Knowing, the Wise." In another place he has said: "Verily, the Father has come, the Possessor of Great Glory. Blessed are such as have hastened to Him; verily, such are those whose names are registered forevermore, and whom the Supreme Concourse will praise. Thus has the matter been decreed from the Presence of the Spirit in this Wonderful Tablet."



It was also questioned concerning that in the Old Testament it is recorded that God alone is the Redeemer, while in the New Testament we find that the blood of Christ is the Savior, and

that the sins would not be forgiven without the shedding of His blood; but Paul has said that we are saved through His life.

Know that in order to understand this subject it is necessary to know the meaning of redemption, and, second, to know the meaning of the blood and the flesh of Christ, and when these two subjects are understood, then it would become evident that all the three above mentioned statements are as one. As to the meaning of redemption, Jesus Christ in this phenomenal world had a material body, but a divine spirit; and He gave these two as a sacrifice in the Path of God, for the salvation of the world. By the sacrifice of His Spirit was meant the teaching that He was unceasingly giving to His Disciples, from His Advent until the Day of His departure; those teachings were the Divine Spirit and whosoever ate them attained new life, as He has said in many places in the Gospel of St. John, and this Spirit He interpreted to be His blood! Chap. 6, v. 54: "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." That is to say—whosoever follows my teachings: In one sense blood signifies

Divine Love. One cannot attain eternal life save through loving God. He has interpreted His flesh to mean bread. This means that He entirely abandoned material luxuries and finally crucified His body, so that people may be severed from this mortal world, turn unto the Divine Words, and be saved from mortality and death. Therefore, by the saying of Paul: "We are saved by the life of Christ," is meant that we are saved from material worlds through the spiritual life which was granted us by His Teachings, and that we entered the Everlasting Kingdom; and by the saying, "The blood of Christ saves us," as alluded to in the New Testament, is meant His spiritual teachings and love, which saved His disciples from the ruin of ignorance and heedlessness. By the saying: "Verily, God alone is the Redeemer," as is recorded in the Old Testament, is intended that no one is the Savior save God, even as Christ said—Whosoever sees the Father in Me, is already saved and has entered the Kingdom. Consequently, the purpose of these three statements is one.

[As to the time of the removal of the Daily Sacrifice (See "Mystery of Daily Sacrifice"), this was in the beginning of the rise of Moham-
medanism, when the armies of Islam besieged Jerusalem and took possession of it. Then that sacrifice was taken away, even till the present day. The interval between the rise of Mohammed and the Appearance of Beha' Ullah was 1290 years, as is prophesied by Daniel in the 11th verse of the 12th chapter of His Book.]

(Trans. by Ali Kuli Khan.)

**THE MYSTERY OF THE
FIGURE "9."**

THE MYSTERY OF THE FIGURE "9" BEING SACRED IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER NUMBERS.

First, let it be known that the excellence of every name depends upon the excellence of the one who bears it. The reason why the Names of God are more excellent than other names lies in their relation with the Divine Manifestations. For instance, at every age, when a Manifestation of God appears, with whatsoever Name He manifests Himself, it is the greatest and noblest of all names. Just as, during the Mosaic age, the Name "Moses" was the most noble of names; in the Messianic cycle, the Name "Christ" was the most excellent; in the day of Mohammed his Name was the highest; in the time of His Holiness, the Bab, his Name; and in the day of the Blessed Perfection the Name "Baha' Ullah" is the greatest of all

names. As His Manifestation is the greatest of all the Manifestations, therefore His Name, "Baha" is the greatest of all names. Although all the Best Names are belonging to the Blessed Perfection, yet, as He has called Himself by the Name of Baha, this Name is called the greatest of all Names. Therefore it is said that the greatest Name is Baha.

This sacred Name has been recorded in the Holy Scriptures, but no one was cognizant of its being the Greatest Name; and Isaiah has mentioned it in many places in his Book. This concealed Name has been one of the mysteries of prophethood, and it, or its synonym, each one of the prophets would entrust to his successor just before his departure. Jesus Christ entrusted this Name to His disciples in the Name "Father" and "Light," because in certain senses "Light" and "Baha" are synonymous. But since the minds of people had not yet attained the capacity to apprehend the station of the Name "Baha," and the time of His Great Manifestation had not arrived, therefore Jesus mentioned the term "Light," saying, "I am the Light which will illumine the world of the

spirit," so that they might be prepared to apprehend the day of the Manifestation of Baha' Ullah.

This subject contains an important mystery, and it is that the Arabic and Persian meaning of the word "Light" is Nur (Noor), which was the residence of Baha' Ullah. With reference to this fact, the Blessed Perfection has revealed in certain Tablets, thus: "Verily, My Name is Baha' Ullah; My city is Nur." This blessed statement indicates the difference and distinction between the word "Nur" (i. e., Light) and Baha.

In the age of Mohammed, a prayer was revealed to be said before sun-dawn, during the fasting month, in the text of which the Revealer has sworn that the Greatest Name of God is in that prayer. The first paragraph of that prayer reads thus: "O my God, I beg of Thee, by Thy Baha with its AḤHA, and all Thy Baha is Bahi (i. e., luminous): O God, I beg of Thee by the whole of Thy Baha." The Mohammedans did not become cognizant of the fact that the Greatest Name of God was "Baha," for many other Names of God are equally recorded in that

prayer. But the First Point has clearly explained in the Book of Beyan, that the Expected, Promised One would appear in the Name of Baha' Ullah. Consequently, it is proved that the Greatest Name of God is "Baha."

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According to the Arabic calculation of each letter's numerical value, that of the Name "Baha" is the figure 9. Thus: B = 2, H = 5, A = 1, and A = 1; total = 9. Among the numbers, the figure 9 has the final value. The figures from 1 to 9 are all made in different forms, each unlike the other. Therefore these were called units. But when numbers transcend the limit nine and attain to tens and upward, then they are formed of the repetition of the units with the addition of a cipher or ciphers. For instance, the figure 1 becomes ten with the addition of a cipher; the figure 2, with a cipher added, becomes 20. Likewise the hundreds thousands and millions, etc., are composed by the adding of ciphers to the nine original figures, the units, among which the figure 9 is the

final and most complete. Consequently the perfection of numbers depends on their reaching the figure 9, and ending therein; because from the number nine upward all the numbers, no matter how great they may be, are the repetition of the units which end in the figure 9. Therefore it is said that the figure 9 is the greatest of all numbers, and that all the numbers end in it. Thus a name, the numerical value of which is equivalent to the number nine, is said to be the greatest among all the names, for this number contains the perfection and endowment of all the other numbers, which are of necessity subordinate to it. Just as the most great Manifestation of Baha' Ullah contains all the perfections with which the by-gone Manifestations have been endowed; which fact is evident from the following statement revealed by Baha' Ullah in many places: "All the Manifestations have indeed ended in this Most Great Manifestation, and whosoever lays claim to a Mission before the completion of one thousand perfect years, he is an impostor and liar."

Moreover, all the former Manifestations have unanimously prophesied in the Holy Scriptures

concerning the Manifestation of the Lord of Hosts, God of the universe, in the "last day"; that is, in the 19th century of the Christian era. The calculations made by the bygone historians also correspond to the second coming of Christ in this century (the 19th). Consequently, all the Manifestations who will appear after the lapse of one thousand years will be subordinate to this Most Great Manifestation, and will be accounted as Branches derived from this Dispensation, just as all the numbers are derived from the figure 9, and from the other units subordinate to it. And as the figure 9 contains the value of all the respective numbers subordinate to it, therefore it is said that the other numbers are derived from the figure 9. Likewise, all the subsequent Manifestations are subordinate to the Most Great Manifestation, Baha' Ullah. The numbers from one to nine are considered as a throne for the manifestation of 9.

The figure 9 at the front of books implies that the book bearing it is related to the people of Baha, and this figure is used as a symbol of excellence.

As to the fact that each morning the Greatest Name (Allaho ABHA!) is to be repeated ninety-five times: This Command was revealed in the Kitab-el-Akdas, so that by reciting the Greatest Name, the heart of man may be illumined with the light of Baha' Ullah. Ninety-five is the numerical value of the Arabic word "Lellah" (i. e., for the sake of God! $l = 30$, $l = 30$, $h = 5$; = 95).

This is a short account of the mystery of the figure 9. It is impossible to explain and put down all the meanings of this Name, even though all the trees might be changed into pens, all the seas into ink, all the heavens and earths into pages of paper, and all the people might attempt to write them throughout the duration of heaven and earth. In this day no one is properly informed of the mysteries of this Name, except the Expounder of the Book, the Commentator of the Verses, the Center of the Covenant, the Successor of the Blessed Perfection, Abdul-Baha. (May our lives be a sacrifice to Him!)

We beg of the Blessed Perfection to confirm all of us in His Covenant and to protect us

from slandering and backbiting of the violators of the Covenant.

Verily, He is The Protector! The Helper!
The Assister! Praise be to the Beloved of all
the creatures!

(Translated by A. K. Khan, Chicago, December 8th, 1901.)

THE MYSTERY OF JONAH.

EXPLANATION ON THE MYSTERY OF JONAH.

Let it be known that the story of Jonah in the Bible is one which has many spiritual meanings, and which cannot be interpreted literally. In it are contained symbols concerning the states of the traveler toward God in his journey from the world of nature to the Divine World. A portion of the explanation of these symbols was mentioned in the instructions regarding the early chapters of Genesis. It is a method of all the Manifestations, the Prophets of God, to explain the spiritual facts by material parables, so that such may be an universal bounty. The people of Truth perceive the spiritual meanings thereof, while others are satisfied with the outward appearance of the relations. Every one partakes according to his capacity.

By Jonah is meant the human spirit; by the three days are signified three different states or kingdoms, as those of the vegetable, animal and human. After spending three days (periods) in these different conditions, the spirit may reach the station of the "Kingdom" and be freed from the limitations of the lower kingdoms.

In one of the blessed Tablets, revealed by His Highness, Abdul-Baha, to a believer in Persia, whose name was Jonah, and written in the year 1893, he gives, in eloquent words, the following explanation of the parable of Jonah:

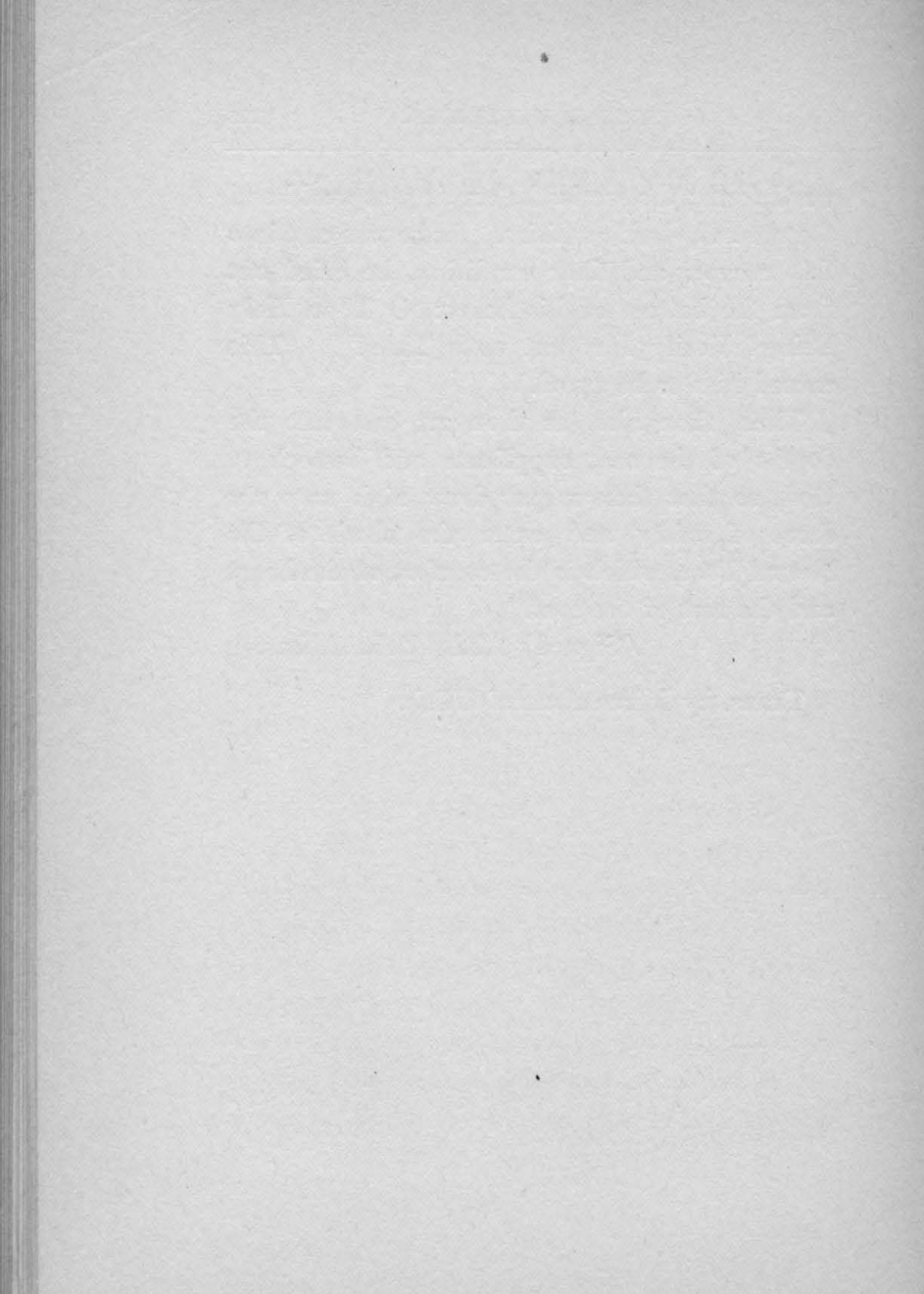
"He is EL-ABHA! O thou fish of the fathomless ocean! As His Highness, Jonah (Upon him be peace!) became familiar with the interior of the "great fish" of nature and its elements, and suffered from the darkness of the depths of the sea of the world, so he was separated from the World of the Kingdom of Existence where are the Lights of the Placeless, and became a dweller in the world of place. Therefore the real meaning of Jonah is his *reality* (the essence of man); the fish is the corporeal body, the human temple and his out-

ward form; the sea is the contingent world and the natural, dark qualities. As he was cast into this narrow and dark condition, he cried out from the bottom of his heart: 'O Thou Holy Being! Verily I repent unto Thee!' (This caused him to be saved.)

Thus, thou also, as thou art cast into the depths of the sea, supplicate and beseech to God, so that thou mayst draw nigh unto the shore of safety and enter the shade of the blessed Tree, which is the comfort of the heart and the rest of the soul."

(Signed) Abdul-Baha Abbas.

Trans. by Mirza Ameen' Ullah.



THE MYSTERY OF FASTING.

EXPLANATION ON THE MYSTERY OF FASTING.

Know thou that Fasting is a command given in all the Holy Books in all times. The outward appearance thereof is restraining the self from that which is prohibited in the Books. Special times are appointed and particular forms are ordained by every religion. The Zoroastrians have certain forms, the Jews have others; the Christians, the Mohammedans, each differ in their forms, and the Bahais have forms of fasting differing from all former religions. These apparent or outward differences were according to the exigencies of the times when given. The outward fruit thereof is the preservation of the material health through the purifying of the body once a year. The inward fruits pertain to the other states of existence.

In the world of Soul its fruit is the sanctifying of the soul from the animal qualities and clothing it with the intellectual attributes, thereby releasing the soul from the world of lower human nature.

In the world of Mind, it is the process of filtering, sifting out the dust and taints and dross of the world of the self, and soaring to the Spiritual and Divine Kingdoms.

In the world of Spirit, it is the longing, the aspiring to the Stations of Divinity and Lordship, and attaining to the meeting of God in both this world and those to come after death.

Thus one of the doors, through which one may attain to the meeting of God and entrance into His Kingdom, is fasting; but success depends upon following the forms prescribed in the Heavenly Book. Therefore, whoever, in this day, is firm and steadfast in the Covenant of the Blessed Perfection and keeps himself from turning to aught else save the Center of His Covenant, Abdul-Baha, is of those who fast. Yet it is incumbent that he shall adorn himself with the attributes of His Highness, Abdul-Baha, and shall follow His example in

dealing with the people of the world. He must consider the benefits of others rather than his own. He must consider the promotion of the Word of God, and the spreading of His Fragrances, even as the material gain of business, the cause of wealth and the capital of his prosperity.

Nothing, after prayer, will cause the development of the spirit, save fasting. The First Point, the Bab, ordained for all the people to fast until they should reach the age of forty-two, but the Blessed Perfection said: "We love fasting! Unless the people become old and weak, they should fast." Thus the limit for fasting was appointed. One should begin to observe the fast from the age of fifteen, and continue the observance of it until the body may become too weak to do so without injury. His Holiness, the Blessed Perfection, used to fast throughout the set time every year.

In the Kitab-el-Akdas the rules for fasting are as follows: Eating and drinking should cease before the rising of the sun and until the setting thereof. The traveler, the sick, pregnant women and those who give suck are

free from this obligation.

In Mark, 9, 7-29, is related the story of the afflicted child who was brought to Jesus by his disciples after their vain efforts to cast out from him the spirit which tormented him, and of his being healed by Jesus, who said, in reply to a question from the disciples, that: "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

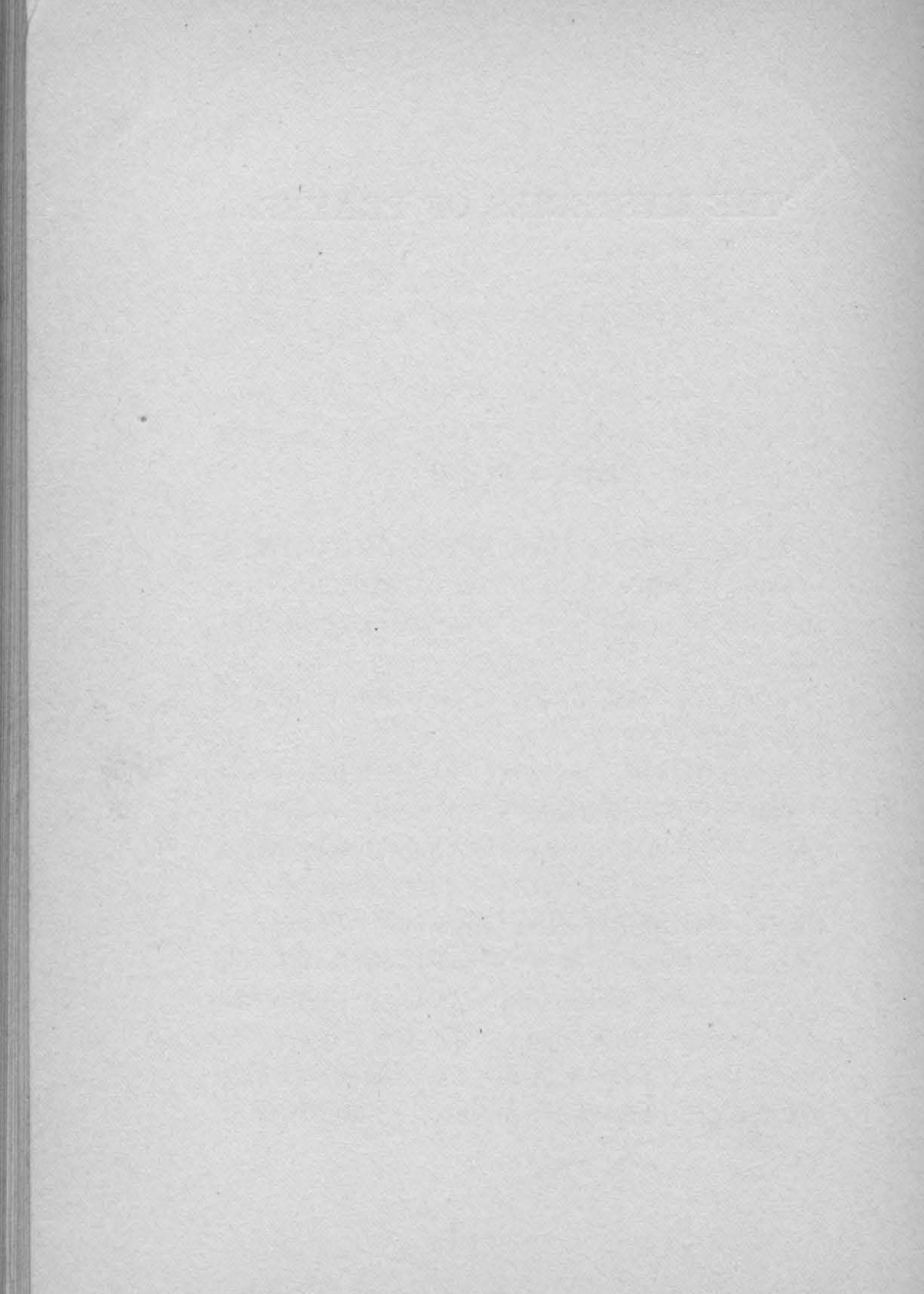
Thus Jesus taught that fasting and praying give strength to the spirit of man, so that it may become enabled to heal the different violent and strong sicknesses which possess him.

The results and fruits of these acts are innumerable, but the few that have been mentioned are the principal ones. We ask the merciful LORD that this blessed act may become a cause of quenching the fires of lustfulness, animosity and hatred.

Peace be upon him who follows and carries out the Commands revealed in the Heavenly Books!

Trans. by Mirza Ameen' Ullah.

THE MYSTERIES OF PRAYER.



EXPLANATION OF THE MYSTERIES OF PRAYER.

In the Name of God, El-Bahi-El-ABHA :

We will explain the fruits which result from the acts of worship, such as praying, fasting, etc.

First, we wish to know what the results of these acts are.

Secondly, who derives the benefits therefrom ?

One of the commandments which exists in every religion is prayer. What is the benefit of prayer, that man should stand three or five times a day and read certain words ? Is it performed because it is a Divine Command ? Or does the world of humanity and spirituality derive benefits therefrom ? We say there is no doubt that the ordinances and precepts of God are for the purpose of promoting humanity to

a higher station. Therefore, the benefit of praying must be something which elevates man to a lofty and spiritual station, and to set him free from the prison of this mortal world of nature.

In explaining this subject, we cannot but hold to the Utterances of God, which descended through the tongues of His mouth-pieces and prophets, inasmuch as it is beyond the power of the human mind to comprehend all the mysteries of the ordinances of God. And so *intellectual proofs* are not sufficient. God says: "The *act* of praying is a pillar of religion." The religion of God is likened unto a tent, and the act of prayer unto the pillar thereof. If the pillar falls down, the whole tent will drop! In another place, He says, "That prayer is like the sight of the eyes in the Cause of God." The temple of the religion of God is guided by the light of prayer. He says, "If the prayer of the sincere believer is accepted and answered, verily, all the rest of his acts and deeds will be accepted; and if his prayers are not accepted, verily, all the rest of his acts will be disapproved and rejected."

Now, let us see what benefits, in praying, there are for the spirit of humanity. We say it is beyond the power of the human intellect to apprehend the benefits and fruits of the ordinances and commandments of God, except that which is explained in His Utterances. These Divine ordinances are like the remedies and medicines which the skillful doctor gives to the patient (the sick). If the sick person wishes to know the benefit to be derived from this medicine, the elements thereof, and its effects upon nature,—it will be necessary for him to gain a knowledge of the medical art. Consequently, it is better for the patient to use the medicine, and simply obey the physician, in order to recover from his sickness.

Now, the Divine Doctor (or Physician), God, knows the sicknesses of the spirit of humanity, which is imprisoned in this material body. The *ordinances* and *precepts* are the remedies He has given for these sicknesses. One of the ordinances is—"to pray." God says: "Prayer prevents the human being from disapproved and foul actions." That is to say, the remedy, which delivers the man from the foul

acts disapproved by the human intellect and caused by passion and satanic desires, is—praying to God. That is, if he continues to pray, he will overcome these evil habits!

That is why His Holiness, the Blessed Perfection, in the Kitab-el-Akdas, commands every one to pray.

Therefore it was made evident that the first benefit is derived by the one who offers the prayer. This will save him from committing foul acts and from pursuing lustful desires. And it is certain that by leaving or abandoning the disapproved habits, the human soul is elevated to a holy and lofty station, and it is saved from the prison of the world of nature.

* * *

It has been asked whether, in praying, it is necessary to follow forms and customs laid down, or will it suffice to turn the attention of the heart toward God?

Let it be known that the precepts and commands appearing in the Heavenly Books ought to be followed exactly as they are given, inasmuch as they are for certain purposes in accord

with wisdom.

In all times and with different religions, certain forms and customs of praying have been prescribed, such as with one, standing only; with another, standing and sitting; again—standing, sitting and kneeling; also, standing, sitting, kneeling and bowing the head to the ground. As the commands for prayer are those of God, no one has authority to object or question why these forms are commanded, because God alone is cognizant of the mysteries contained within the ordinances.

In order to illustrate this subject we will submit an instance, as follows: A physician gives medicine to his patient and prescribes that he shall take the medicine at certain fixed hours. If the patient should take that medicine all at once it would undoubtedly harm him, and perhaps cause other illnesses. This would be the fault of the patient, as he had not strictly followed the orders of the doctor. The Divine Commandments are likened to those of a physician, as they are for the healing of spiritual sicknesses. The servants of God should follow the Commandments as they are written in the

Book, so that they may gain the desired result and be protected from injuries.

There is no doubt that the essence of prayer is the turning one's heart under all circumstances toward God. The great importance of turning the heart toward God, being understood, why should special material actions be necessary? If prayer in its essence consists of the approaching God with the heart, why should it be needful to mention Him with the tongue? The answer is as follows: The aim, the intention of turning the heart, the tongue, the limbs, the members of the body toward God in worship is this: that the prayer of the man to God shall be with his whole being, and that all of his members shall take part in the act of worship. His heart should turn to God; his tongue should mention His Name; his limbs should bend in humbleness and his whole body should show obedience and servitude. Thus the light of prayer may shine through the lamp of his whole soul, spirit, intellect and body; not that the heart alone shall be enlightened with the light of prayer but that every part of the man shall share in that illumination.

In the holy prayers given by the Blessed Perfection there are many references to this. In one of the prayers He says: "O Thou, My God, I confess Thy Oneness by my outward and inward tongue, my limbs and members, and my bones and flesh." Abdul-Baha has many similar expressions in His Communes. The prayer must be likened to a perfect man with all of his members complete. When the Commands are exactly followed, such will be the result. If the spirit approaches the Presence of God and the body is not partaker therein, it is as though one should worship in dreams while his body were asleep. If, however, the body acts in prayer, while the spirit is directed elsewhere, it would be like the movements of a child without thought, and thus aimless. But when the spirit, heart, tongue and all the members unite in worshipping God, then it will be as a perfect man performing an important act with reason and intellect.

Consequently, the first principle of prayer is the turning of one's heart to God. Second—the united and harmonious action of all the

parts and members. If a man offers such a prayer, the fear of God is in his heart, and, when he fears God, he will become characterized with Divine virtues. When he attains to these two qualities, the fear of God and the angelic virtues, he will no longer commit foul actions. Thus it is said that prayer prevents men from committing foul deeds.

* * *

It is revealed through the Blessed Pen of Baha 'Ullah (Glory be to Him!) in the Book of Appearances: "First Appearance: When the Sun of wisdom dawned from the Horizon of Heaven, He uttered the following Words: People of wealth and possessors of riches and power must honor the religion with the best of what is in existence. They should observe that this is an evident Light and an impregnable Fortress for the protection and preservation of mankind, because the fear of the Lord compels people to do kindness in this day. If the Light of Religion is hidden, confusion appears; the stars of equity and justice and the sun of confidence and trust will be prevented from

shining. Every knowing one will bear witness to this."

Now, consider—here the Blessed Perfection says that the fear of the Lord compels people to kindness and prevents them from cruelty, and there it was said that prayer prevents men from committing foul deeds: Hence it has been made evident that prayer will become a means of creating the fear of God in man, and, when the fear of God exists, he will be prevented from committing bad actions.

In the fourth Appearance (Ishrakat) He says: "In this Dispensation the conquering hosts are good qualities and deeds, and the leader of this army is the fear of God. This is a commander and a possessor of all things." So it is declared in the Psalms (Ps. 111, v. 10): "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments." Also in Proverbs (14:27): "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Also in Jeremiah (32:40): "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Therefore it became known that the first important thing for man is to characterize himself with the virtues of God and instil the fear of Him in his heart. These two qualities will be attained by continual prayers made in accordance with the forms provided in each religion. These forms required by each prophet should be used by his followers.

It is narrated that a native of Baghdad, who is known to be one of the holy men and a possessor of the mysteries, was, in the beginning of his life, a committer of all kinds of wickedness, but at the same time he was accustomed to pray to God. Once upon a time, as he was passing along the street, he heard a certain man read the following verse of the holy Scriptures: "Has not the time arrived for those souls, who believe in God, to fear God in their hearts?" As soon as he heard this verse, he began trembling and shaking with fear, and cried out: "Yes! it is the time! It is the time!" He immediately went forth from the city and took his abode in a cave, where for forty years he was praying and offering worship. Through these acts he attained to a high and lofty sta-

tion. This was the same man who used formerly to commit foul deeds, but through prayers, the fear of the Lord took possession of his heart; he was awakened and gave up all his former actions.

For this reason, His Holiness, Abdul-Baha, commanded the Believers to pray, for the sole purpose of their spiritual development. Now, let us listen to what Abdul-Baha says: "Is it not a time for the beloved of God to be united and to promote love, peace and union? Is it not time that they should spread the fragrance of God and render service to His Cause?"

In reply, we should say: "Yea! Yea! It is time! and We are ready to give our lives in His Path!"

* * *

Let it be known that, in each cycle, the holy Being of the Manifestation is the reality of Prayer, inasmuch as He is the clear Mirror reflecting the Supreme God. The First Point, the Bab (May my soul be a sacrifice to Him!) said: "Prayer, in its prime reality, is a name for the Manifestation of God." For example—

in the cycle of His Holiness, Jesus Christ, He was the real prayer: In the time of Mohamed, He was the reality of prayer: In the blessed day of "Him Whom God shall manifest," the Blessed Perfection was the perfection of prayer. Thus one of the divine Manifestations said: "I am a prayer for those who pray."

Those who are well informed of the mysteries of the heavenly Books can easily comprehend this fact. In the Gospel of St. John (4:25) it is said that "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." Paul refers to the same thing in the 3rd chapter of Phillipians. The inner meaning is that the true worshippers recognized in Jesus the Spirit of God, and those, who thus perceived, were able to really worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The 24th verse of John, 4th chapter, says: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Therefore, those souls, who attained to the beauty of the meeting of Jesus in his blessed time and be-

lieved in him, were the spiritual offerers of the real prayer.

Likewise, in this new century, whosoever attained to the knowledge of the Blessed Perfection (Glory be to Him!) and was honored with meeting Him, has attained to the reality of prayer. Thus, when Jesus was asked about fasting and prayer, he replied that *then* was the time of marriage and happiness (Luke 5:33-35), and that the time of fasting would come later after the bridegroom should be taken away; meaning: "This is the day of the Manifestation, the time of the Beloved; *this* is the real prayer to which you should attain, and which you should offer. This was the reality of prayer, to which his disciples attained. Unless people are able to perceive the Manifestations to be of God, they are unable to pray really "in spirit and in truth."

The Jewish people prayed for years that they might become prepared to offer the real prayer when their promised and desired One should come, but, when Jesus was manifested, a few people attained to the real prayer, and the others failed to do so. After him there appeared

three other Manifestations, but the Jews are yet waiting and praying for his appearance, and are without the effulgence of the Light of Truth. The people of Furgkan offered their prayers day and night five times daily, asking God for the approach of their promised One, but when the morning of hope arrived and the First Point appeared, they remained in the sleep of their negligence, with the exception of a few, who awakened. The people of Beyan were daily expecting the Real Prayer; that is, —the appearance of “Him Whom God shall manifest,” but when the Sun of the Beauty of Beha ’Ullah dawned, some failed, but—praise be to God! they were but few, and those who believed were many.

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Therefore, it is seen that one of the doors, through which one may enter the Kingdom and attain the meeting of God, is prayer, but it should be offered exactly according to the rules laid down in the heavenly Books. To-day the firm ones in the Cause of God and His Covenant must thank God and give glory to Him that they have been awakened from the sleep of neg-

ligence. They have heard the call to the Real Prayer from the blessed tongue of Abdul-Baha, have arisen to render service to the Cause of God, and have endeavored to promulgate His Verses widely. Now, in thanksgiving for this great mercy, we must strive to offer the *real* prayer, rather than merely the literal one. We must realize the true meaning thereof; that is—we should clothe ourselves with the attributes of the Blessed Perfection and become adorned with the divine qualities of His Mystery and the Center of His Covenant, that we may be of the few who are chosen, and not merely of the many who are called.

At the time of the appearance of the First Point, after the Bab-el-Bab became a believer, His command was this—that His name should not be mentioned to any one, and He predicted that seventeen pure souls would become believers without hearing His name, but only by reading the Utterances (explanations upon chapters of the Koran). They would thus be spiritually informed of the coming of the Forerunner, and this occurred as predicted. His Highness, the Bab-el-Bab, never mentioned to them the name

of the First Point or told them that He had appeared. Each one of the seventeen was occupied, in his own place, in praying, and while so employed, the face of the Bab appeared transfigured before them. In addition to them were two others, His Honor, Ismullah-el-As-tak, and Hadji Seyid Javad, Kerbelai, who, each in his own way, stated how they became believers, declaring that while praying, they saw the Bab appearing before them. This was on account of the purity of their hearts. This purity cannot be attained except through praying, fasting, and showing love to all. This is why, in all religions, the commands are given for fasting and prayer. These commands are not given as obligatory, but as a favor from God. The Blessed Perfection, in the Kitab-el-Akdas, says: "We commanded not, but rather unsealed the choice wine with the fingers of Might and Power." That is to say, that the seals of the Wine of Eternal Life were broken by Him as a favor to His servants.

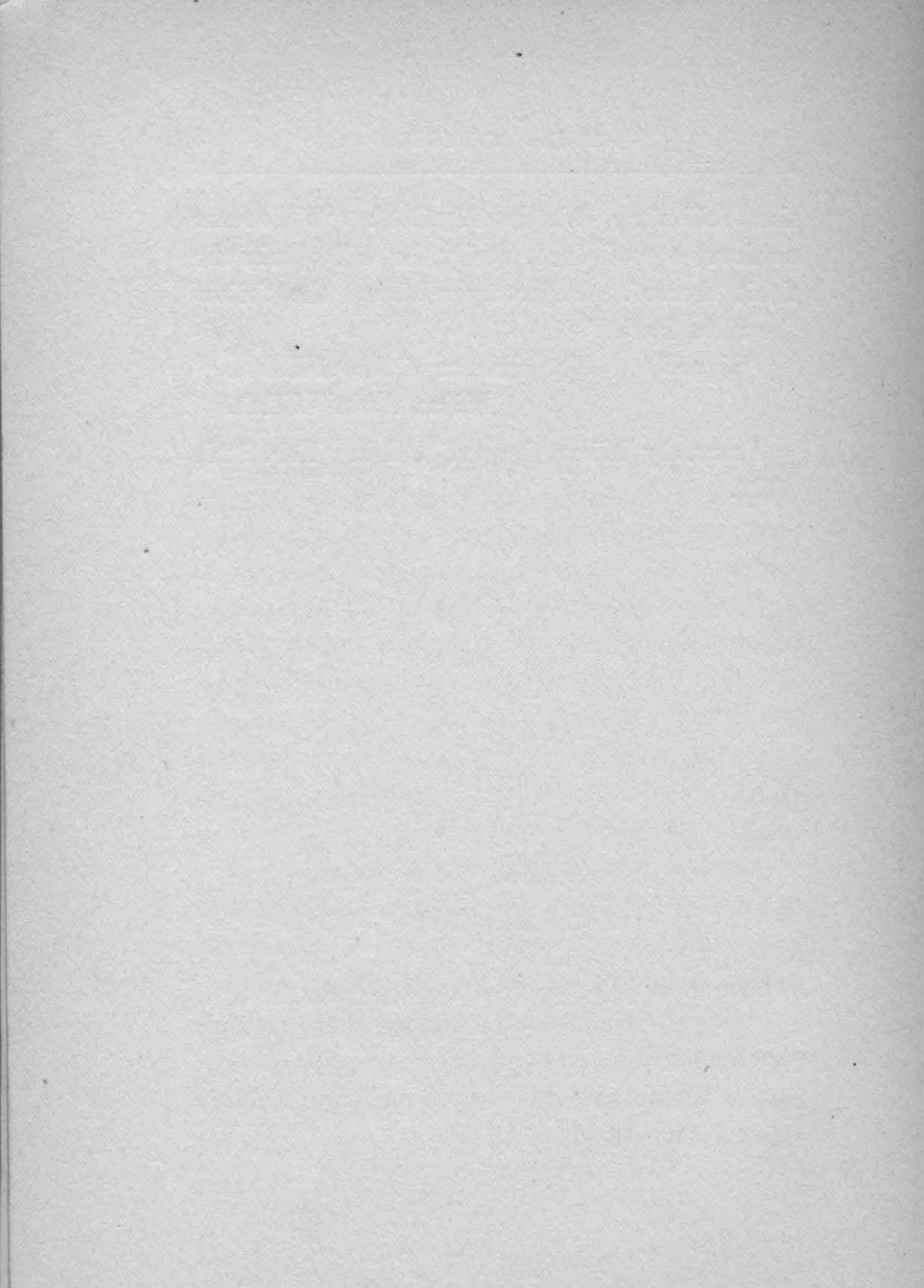
Whosoever desires to accept such favor, and to avail himself of the opportunities thus offered, is wise. We will close this address with

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the following Words of God: "Whosoever achieves a good deed, verily, he will obtain the fruit thereof. Peace upon them who follow the right Path!"

(Signed) The servant of Abdul-Baha,
Mirza Assad' Ullah.

Trans. by Mirza Ameen' Ullah. Feb. 22d,
1902.



TABLETS.

That this book may be decorated with a true adornment, there are added to it the three following beautiful, instructive and precious Tablets from the Master, the Center of the Covenant, Abdul-Baha. May our lives be His sacrifice!

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A TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA
TO THE BELIEVERS IN
PERSIA.

HE IS EL-ABHA!

O ye friends of the Beauty of ABHA!

O ye firm ones in the Testament of the Countenance of Ala! (The Bab.)

O ye servants of the Holy Threshold of His Highness, the Eternal ONE!

Praise ye the Greatest Name and the Self-subsistent, Eternal and Pre-existent Beauty, for that He hath, through His Great Kindness, made (ye) the true friends, stedfast in the Covenant and firm in the Testament of God. He made ye brilliant lamps and sufficient proofs, burning flames and shining stars, signs of Oneness and standards of Singleness, trees of the Paradise of the Covenant and lights of the Sanctity of God.

Therefore, in thanksgiving for this great Favor, ye should endeavor to promote peace, union and harmony. Ye are immersed in one Sea and receive radiance from one Sun: Ye are drawing from one Horizon and radiating from one Dawning-point: Ye are drawing from one source and receiving Bounties from one Place: Ye are soaring in one Atmosphere and looking to one Center: This is the Essence of Oneness and the Reality of Singleness.

Whosoever proves firm, his breath is the breath of God; whoever slightly doubts and wavers, his whisperings are contaminating, no matter who he may be. It is incumbent on us to arise to serve the Holy Threshold, and to

endeavor to show humbleness before the Divine Door. So, we may become cognizant of the providences of the Supreme World and bounties of the Sublime Kingdom.

If the friends disagree (in spiritual matters) whether great or small, they must absolutely keep silence (i. e. avoid altercation), act lovingly toward one another, and inquire (of Abdul-Baha) until an answer be given. At all events, whoever causes dissension among the friends, they should withdraw from him and shun him. Praise be to God, the fountain of Assurance is flowing and the clear, divine River is running. There is no place for doubts and scruples, no room for perplexity and error.

If the reality of a thing is not known unto ye, inquire regarding it and it will be made clear.

Upon ye be Baha' Ullah-el-ABHA!

(Signed) Abdul-Baha Abbas.

Trans. by Mirza Ameen 'Ullah.

A TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA
TO THE BELIEVERS IN
SAMARKAND, RUSSIA.

HE IS GOD!

O ye Friends of God! Do ye know in what cycle ye are created and in what ages ye exist? This is the age of the Blessed Perfection, and this is the time of the Greatest Name. This is the century of the Manifestation, the age of the Sun of the Horizons, and the beautiful spring-time of His Holiness, the Eternal One.

The earth is in motion and growth; the mountains, hills, plains and prairies are green and pleasant; the Bounty is overflowing and the Mercy universal. The rain is descending from the cloud of Mercy; the brilliant Sun is shining; the full Moon is ornamenting the horizon of ether the great Ocean-tide is flooding every little stream; the Gifts are successive, the Favors consecutive; the refreshing Breeze is blowing, wafting the fragrant perfume of the

blossoms; boundless treasure is in the hand of the King of kings: Lift the hem of thy garment in order to receive it.

If we are not cheerful and joyous at this season, for what other season shall we wait, and for what other time shall we look? Now is the time for growing and the season for joyous gathering. Take the cup of the Testament in thy hand; leap and dance with extacy in the triumphant procession of the Covenant. Place your confidence in the everlasting Bounty and turn to the Presence of the Glorious God. Ask assistance from the Kingdom of ABHA, and seek confirmation from the Supreme World. Turn thy vision toward the Horizon of eternal Wealth and pray for help from the Source of Mercy.

Soon shall ye see the friends attaining their longed-for destination and establishing their tents while we are but in the first day of our journey.

Baha be upon ye!

(Signed) Abdul-Baha Abbas.

Trans. by Mirza Ameen' Ullah.

A TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA

TO HIS HONOR.....

HE IS EL-ABHA!

O thou who art looking to the Kingdom of God!

In this great century, as the powers of the Lord of Might have encompassed all the existence, the holy fragrances of the Blessed Perfection have perfumed all the horizons, the waves of the great Ocean have gemmed the bordering shores with pearls, the cloud of Mercy of the Lord has refreshed the earth to become a garden of roses, and the lights of the Horizon of Wealth have brightened the faces of the chosen ones; therefore, endeavor to gain a great portion of these Favors of God, to share largely in this great Bounty, to become a manifestation of the signs of His great Mercy, through these heavenly Gifts, among the people of the world, and

a dawning-point of the lights of His great Providence so that thou mayest find an eternal castle in this mortal world, and to plant in this low earth a tree, the branch of which shall reach up to the Heaven.

El-Baha be upon thee and upon the people of Baha, who are the people of affection!

(Signed) Abdul-Baha Abbas.

Trans. by Mirza Ameen 'Ullah.