

“SEAL OF THE PROPHETS” (Q. 33:40) & “DIVINE PRESENCE” (Q. 33:44)

**WHY THESE TWO KEY VERSES SHOULD BE READ
TOGETHER**

Christopher Buck, Ph.D., J.D.

Sunday, June 26, 2022

Baha'is of Clearwater, Florida



Dedicated to the
memory of:

**KAMĀLU'D-DĪN
BAKHTĀVAR, BAHĀ'Ī
SCHOLAR & MARTYR**


KAMĀLU'D-DĪN BAKHTĀVAR, BAHĀ'Ī SCHOLAR & MARTYR

- ▶ Dedicated to the memory of Bahā'ī scholar and martyr, Mr. Kamālu'd-Dīn Bakhtāvar—who was executed by a firing squadron on 26 July 1981 in Kashmar, province of Khurasan, Iran (Vahman 2019, 187 and 189) for his faith. As a Bahā'ī scholar, Mr. Bakhtāvar was the author of *Risāla-yi Istimrār-i Ṣuhūrāt-i Ilāhiyya* [Treatise on the Continuity of the Manifestations of God], in which Bahā'u'llāh's *Lawḥ-i Ḥasan-i Shāhābādī* [Tablet to Ḥasan Shāhābādī]—which Stephen Lambden (2018, 80) calls the "*Lawḥ-i khātām al-Nabiyyīn*" ["Tablet of the Seal of the Prophets"]—was published 1974.

THE CONTEXT

Behold and observe! This is the finger of might by which the heaven of vain imaginings was indeed cleft asunder. Incline thine ear and hear! This is the voice of My pen which was raised among mystics, then divines, and then kings and rulers.

- Bahá'u'lláh, *Ishráqát*, p. 260 (provisional translation by Nader Saiedi), “Replacing the Sword with the Word: Bahá'u'lláh's Concept of Peace” (2019).



Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but the Messenger of God, and the Seal of the Prophets; God has knowledge of everything.

Qur'an 33:40

THE PROBLEM

Beware lest any name debar you from Him Who is the Possessor of all names, or any word shut you out from this Remembrance of God, this Source of Wisdom amongst you. . . . Take heed lest the word 'Prophet' (*al-nabī*) withhold you from this Most Great Announcement (Q. 78:2), or any reference to 'Vicegerency' (*al-walāya*) debar you from the sovereignty of Him Who is the Vicegerent of God, which overshadoweth all the worlds.

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 80 (Par. 167).

THE STUDY QURAN

- ▶ That the Prophet is the Seal of the prophets is understood to mean that he is the last Prophet sent to humanity. The Prophet is reported to have said, "No prophethood shall remain after me, save for true visions" (IK, Q), and "Messengerhood and prophethood have ceased. There will be no messenger or prophet after me" (IK). The most frequently cited *ḥadīth* pertaining to his place as the Seal of the prophets states, "My likeness among the prophets before me is that of a man who has built a house, completed it, and beautified it, yet left empty a place for a brick. Then the people come to the house, are amazed by it, and say, 'If only you were to place this brick, your house would be complete!' I am this brick" (IK, Q).

THE STUDY QURAN

- ▶ According to the Prophet, being the Seal of the prophets is one of six qualities that distinguish him from other prophets: "I have been favored above the prophets in six things: I have been endowed with consummate succinctness of speech; I have been made triumphant through dread; war booty has been made lawful for me; the whole earth has been made a place of worship for me and a means of purification; I have been sent to all created beings; and the succession of prophets has been completed in me."

- *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*,
by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Editor-in-Chief (HarperOne, 2015).

SŪFĪ COMMENTARIES ON THE QUR'ĀN IN CLASSICAL ISLAM

- ▶ In sum, definitive knowledge (*al-ʿilm al-qaṭʿī*), necessary certainty (*al-yaqīn al-ḍarūri*) and the consensus (*ijmāʿ*) of the pious predecessors and descendants all agree on the fact that there is no way that anyone can have knowledge of the precepts of God referring to His command and prohibition except by way of the messengers. And the one who says, “Here is another way by which to know His command and prohibition without the messengers,” so that he dispenses with them, is an infidel (*kāfir*) who should be killed. His repentance should not be sought and there is no need for questions and answers from him. It is a belief in the perpetuation of prophets after our Prophet whom God has made the seal of His prophets and messengers. There is no prophet or messenger after him.

- al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, vol. 11, pp. 40-41; quoted in Kristin Zahra Sands, *Ṣūfī Commentaries on the Qurʾān in Classical Islam* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 87.

THE PROBLEM

It is clear and evident that whenever the Manifestations of Holiness were revealed, the divines of their day have hindered the people from attaining unto the way of truth. . . . Furthermore, among the "veils of glory" are such terms as the "Seal of the Prophets" and the like, the removal of which is a supreme achievement in the sight of these base-born and erring souls. All, by reason of these mysterious sayings, these grievous "veils of glory," have been hindered from beholding the light of truth.

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 165 (Pars. 177 & 178).

THE PROBLEM

I saw a film today, oh boy
The English Army had just won the war
A crowd of people turned away
But I just had to look
Having read the book

The Beatles, “A Day in the Life” (1967)

THE
KITÁB-I-ÍQÁN
THE BOOK OF CERTITUDE
—
BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

THE PROBLEM

How strange! These people with one hand cling to those verses of the Qur'án and those traditions of the people of certitude which they have found to accord with their inclinations and interests, and with the other reject those which are contrary to their selfish desires. "Believe ye then part of the Book, and deny part?"

Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán (¶ 181)

THE SOLUTION:
AFTER QUR'AN 33:40,
READ FOUR VERSES LATER:
QUR'AN 33:44

THE STUDY QURAN

- ▶ The greeting of "Peace" may be from God, the angels (Aj), the other people of Paradise (T), or perhaps all of them. This is one of several verses that speak of the greeting of "Peace" that awaits believers in the Hereafter, as in 16:32: Those whom the angels take while they are in a state of goodness. They will say, "Peace be upon you! Enter the Garden for that which you used to do" (see also 7:46; 10:10; 13:23–24; 14:23; 19:62; 25:75; 36:58c; 39:73; 56:25–26).
- ▶ **Comment by Buck:** Here, there is no hint of a future prophetic revelation. Therefore Bahá'u'lláh will "unseal" this verse.

Note:

**If God cannot be seen directly,
then what does “meeting God” mean?**

Bahá'u'lláh explains.

“SEAL OF THE PROPHETS” & DIVINE PRESENCE

- ▶ Even as the Lord of being hath in His unerring Book (Qur’ān), after (*ba’d az*) speaking of the “Seal” in His exalted utterance: “Muḥammad is the Apostle of God and the Seal of the Prophets” (Q. 33:40), hath revealed unto all people the promise (*va’da*) of “attainment unto the divine Presence (*liqā’-yi khudā*).”
- ▶ To this attainment to the presence of the immortal King testify the verses of the Book, some of which We have already mentioned (vide par. 148, Q. 29:23; Q. 2:46; Q. 2:249; Q. 18:110; and Q. 13:2).
- ▶ The one true God is My witness! Nothing more exalted or more explicit than “attainment unto the divine Presence” hath been revealed in the Qur’ān. (*va khudā-yi vāḥid shāhid-i maqāl ast kih hīch amr-ī a’zam az liqā’ va asraḥ-ī az ān dar furqān zikr nayāftih.*) Well is it with him that hath attained thereunto, in the day wherein most of the people, even as ye witness, have turned away therefrom.

“FORMER VERSE” (Q. 33:40) & “LATTER” VERSE (Q. 33:44)

- ▶ And yet, through the mystery of the former (*avval*) verse, they have turned away from the grace promised by the latter (*thānī*), despite the fact that “attainment unto the divine Presence” in the “Day of Resurrection” (*liqā’ dar yawm-i qiyām*) is explicitly stated in the Book (Qur’ān). It hath been demonstrated and definitely established, through clear evidences, that by “Resurrection” is meant the rise of the Manifestation of God to proclaim His Cause, and by “attainment unto the divine Presence” is meant attainment unto the presence of His Beauty in the person of His Manifestation.

THE REVEALER OF ... THE SEAL ... IN THE DAY OF HIS PRESENCE

- ▶ For verily, "No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision." (Qur'án 6:103) Notwithstanding all these indubitable facts and lucid statements, they have foolishly clung to the term "seal," and remained utterly deprived of the recognition of Him Who is the Revealer of both the Seal and the Beginning, in the day of His presence. ...
- ▶ But apart from all these things, had this people attained unto a drop of the crystal streams flowing from the words: "God doeth whatsoever He willeth, and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth," they would not have raised any unseemly cavils, such as these, against the focal Center of His Revelation.

THE GENIUS OF SHOOGHI EFFENDI AS TRANSLATOR

- ▶ In his dual role as authorized translator and interpreter of Bahā'ī scriptures within his overarching mandate as the designated "Guardian" of the Bahā'ī Faith from 1921 to 1957, Shoghi Effendi (1897–1957), provides a word-for-word, literal translation in rendering the Persian/Arabic text of the *Īqān*, ¶ 182, in part, so: "And yet, through the mystery of the former."
- ▶ Then Shoghi Effendi—in the process of translating from the source language to the target language, while preserving the meaning of the former—inserts one word for amplification: "verse."

THE GENIUS OF SHOOGHI EFFENDI AS TRANSLATOR

- ▶ This word (Arabic: *āya*) is not found in the original Persian of the *Īqān* in this key passage.
- ▶ Shoghi Effendi's subtle, yet highly significant, one-word gloss disambiguates the text, narrowing the reading.
- ▶ The result is an episodic sequence of prophetic/eschatological events –i.e. the “Seal of the Prophets” followed by “Divine Presence”–to a textual, Qur'ānic sequence of verses in close proximity (Q. 33:40 and 33:44), descriptive of this same sequence of eschatological events.
- ▶ This makes perfect sense since the preposition “after” (*ba'd az*) can also mean “next.”

SEAL OF THE PROPHETS & DIVINE PRESENCE

- ▶ Muḥammad is not the father of any one of your men, but the Messenger of God, and the Seal of the Prophets; God has knowledge of everything.
- Qur'an 33:40 (tr. Arberry).
- ▶ On the day when they will be brought into the presence of their Lord, their greeting to each other will be, "Peace be with you." God has prepared an honorable reward for them.
- Qur'an 33:44 (tr. Muḥammad Sarwar).

COMMENT BY DR. NADER SAIEDI

- ▶ **Sorry for not responding immediately. I had to check the originals.**
- ▶ **I had not noted the subtle point you are discussing. Your comments makes great sense to me, and it opens up a new level of meaning within the text.**
- ▶ **I think the usual understanding of it, namely the reference to the general issues is also accurate, but what you have explicated is a higher level of meaning within it.**
- ▶ **Thank you for the perceptive note and sharing it with me.**

– Nader Saiedi (August 26, 2019, shared with his permission).



MR. BAKHTĀVAR
EXPLAINS

**THE MEANING OF
QUR'AN 33:44**

“ATTAINMENT UNTO THE DIVINE PRESENCE” EXPLAINED

- ▶ In describing the exalted station of this Revelation, it suffices to mention that the sacred books of the past, the Islamic sources and the Qur’ānic verses for defining the grandeur of the next revelation—that is, the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh—named it “attainment unto the divine Presence” (*liqá’u’lláh*).
- ▶ Whereas, after the verse, “Muḥammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the Prophets” [Qur’an 33:40], the Qur’án has given the people the glad-tidings of “attainment unto the divine Presence,” and states, “Their greeting on the day when they shall meet Him shall be ‘Peace!’” [Qur’an 33:44], that means that their greetings, on the day when they meet God, is peace.

- Kamālu’-d-Dīn Bakhtāvar, *Risāla-yi Istimrār-i Ṣuhūrāt-i Ilāhiyya* [Treatise on the Continuity of the Manifestations of God] (1974), pp. 101-102, part 1. (Translation by Sohrab Kourosch, Ph.D. June 25, 2022.)

FURTHER ON THE MEANING OF QUR'AN 33:44

- ▶ In this verse, the pronoun of the word, *yalqawnahu* (يلقونه , "when they shall meet Him"), is in reference to God and means the Universal Manifestation of God, as it is obvious that God Almighty will never descend from the station of abstraction and perfection and embody Himself into an imperfect and limited human temple.
- ▶ Therefore, it is clear and obvious that wherever the noble Qur'án gives the glad-tidings of the Revelation and presence of God, it is meant the Universal Manifestation of God (*Ḥuhūr-i-Kullíy-i-Iláhí*).

- Kamālu'd-Dīn Bakhtāvar, *Risāla-yi Istimrār-i Ḥuhūrāt-i Ilāhiyya*
[Treatise on the Continuity of the Manifestations of God] (1974), pp.
101-102, part 1. (Translation by Sohrab Kourosch, Ph.D. June 25, 2022.)

COMMENTARY BY DERGHAM AQIQI, NATIVE SPEAKER OF ARABIC

- ▶ We find three or four Qur'anic verses in these two paragraphs. But we do not find the full text of the "latter" verse, Q. 33:44.
- ▶ Here is where some "Islamic literacy," meaning a good familiarity with the Qur'an itself, would be expected on the part of Baha'u'llah's immediate audience, who, after all, were Babis particularly and Muslims generally.
- ▶ In fact, Baha'u'llah did not quote the full "Seal of the Prophets" verse of Qur'an 33:40, and simply alluded to the "meeting God/attainment unto the divine Presence" verse at Qur'an 33:44.
- ▶ Baha'u'llah's audience would be expected to recognize this latter, next reference.

- Dergham Aqiqi, "[The Seal of the Prophets, Unsealed](#)" (June 30, 2021).

COMMENTARY BY DERGHAM AQIQI, NATIVE SPEAKER OF ARABIC

- ▶ Speaking for myself, Baha'u'llah's reference to Qur'an 33:44 as the "latter" verse is perfectly obvious to me, as a native speaker of Arabic, with a good familiarity with the Arabic text of the Qur'an as a whole.
- ▶ So, by Shoghi Effendi's adding the word "verse" – which is a skillful "idiomatic" translation from the source language of Persian/Arabic into the target language of English, and also a masterful interpretation of this passage as well – the two issues can be considered in light of these pair of interrelated verses, in close textual proximity to each other.
- ▶ One wonders why the text of Q. 33:44 was not included in the final text.
 - Dergham Aqiqi, "[The Seal of the Prophets, Unsealed](#)" (June 30, 2021).

SAME IDEAS AND SIMILAR APPROACHES

PARALLEL BĀBĪ AND BAHĀ'Ī TEXTS

THE BĀB, PERSIAN BAYĀN (3:7)

- ▶ The Eternal Essence cannot be comprehended or described, or qualified, or seen, though by It all things are comprehended, described, qualified, and seen; and therefore what is meant in the Heavenly Books by “Meeting with the Lord” is meeting with the Manifestation of the Point of Truth, which is the Primal Will.
- ▶ Thus in the Qur’ān by “Meeting with the Lord” is meant meeting the Apostle of God, even as it is said of the true believer, “To behold him is to behold the Prophet of God, and to behold the Prophet of God is to behold God.” ...
- ▶ Whoever attains to the Meeting with Him whom God shall manifest, attains to the Meeting with God.
- ▶ - [The Bāb, Persian Bayān 3:7](#), translated/summarized by Edward Granville Browne 1988 Browne, Edward Granville. 1988. “A Summary of the Persian Bayān.” In [Selections from the Writings of E. G. Browne on the Bābī and Bahā’ī Religions](#), edited by Moojan Momen, pp. 316-406 (pp. 340-41). Oxford: George Ronald.

SURA OF PATIENCE (REVEALED FIRST DAY OF RIDVĀN, APRIL 22, 1863)

- ▶ Recite then unto them that which the celestial Dove of the Spirit hath warbled in the holy Ridvān of the Beloved, that perchance they may examine that which hath been elucidated concerning “sealing” by the tongue of him he who is well-grounded in knowledge in the prayer of visitation for the name of God, [Imām] ‘Alī. He hath said—and his word is the truth!—:
 - ▶ “[He (Muḥammad) is] the seal of what came before Him and the harbinger of what will appear after Him (*limā ya’tī mina’l-mursalīn min ba’dū*).”
- ▶ In such wise hath the meaning of “sealing” been mentioned by the tongue of inaccessible holiness. **Thus hath God designated His Friend [Muḥammad] to be a seal for the Prophets who preceded Him and a harbinger of the Messengers who will appear after Him.**”
- ▶ - **Baha’u’llah, “Sura of Patience” (*Sūriy-i-Ṣabr*)**. (Emphasis added.) Provisional translation (and transliteration) by Omid Ghaemmaghami (personal communication, April 3, 2017, and posted on the Tarjuman listserve, April 1, 2017) and published online: “[Muhammad: the Last Prophet?](#)” (May 15, 2017).

GEMS OF DIVINE MYSTERIES (JAWĀHIR AL-ASRĀR)

- ▶ Know then that the paradise (*hadhihi al-janna*, lit. “this Garden”) that appeareth in the day of God (*yawm Allāh*) surpasseth every other paradise and excelleth the realities of Heaven (*ḥaqā’iq al-riḍwān*).
- ▶ For when (*ba’d alladhī*, lit. “after”) God–blessed and glorified is He–sealed the station of prophethood (*maqām al-nubuwwa*) in the person of Him Who was His Friend (*ḥabībihi*), His Chosen One (*ṣafiyyihi*), and His Treasure (*khiyaratihi*) amongst His creatures, as hath been revealed from the Kingdom of glory: “but He is the Apostle of God and the Seal of the Prophets” (Q. 33:40), He promised all men that they shall attain unto His own presence in the Day of Resurrection (*wa’ada al-’ibād bi-liqā’ihi yawm al-qiyāma*).
- ▶ In this He meant to emphasize the greatness of the Revelation to come, as it hath indeed been manifested through the power of truth. (Bahā’u’llāh 2002a, 42–43, par. 58.)

EPISTLE TO THE SON OF THE WOLF

In truth I say: On this day the blessed words “But He is the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the Prophets” [Q. 33:40] have found their consummation in the verse “The day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds.” [Q. 83:6] Render thou thanksgiving unto God, for so great a bounty.

Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 114.

- ▶ Here, the translator, Shoghi Effendi, follows Rodwell's translation of Q. 83:6: “The day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds.”



AKA "TABLET OF THE
SEAL OF THE PROPHETS"

**TABLET TO HASAN
SHĀHĀBĀDĪ**

عذیب



هو المشرق من افق سما لعرفان بالحكمة والبيان

يا حسن استمع نداء الحسين الذي سجن في حصن عكا بما كتبت ايدي الغافلين لو يسئل احد من احد بني حرم حسبه
يقول انه اتى بشريعه اخرى انها لا توافقنا فيما كنا فيه شيه بذلك كتابا الذي سمي بعفان من لدى
رب العالمين ان انظر ما ارزله الرحمن فيه ولكنه رسول الله وخاتم النبيين انا نقول قد صدقت فيما
نشهد به ختمت الرساله والنبوة ومن يدعي بعد هذا المقام الاعلى انه في ضلال مبين وانك يا ايها السائل
ان استمع نداء هذا القائل انه يقول ان افتح ابصر لترى منظر الاكبر الذي فيه ينطق ما لك اقتد
تانه به ظهرت الساعه وقامت القيومه وانشق العسر وبرى الحبل في حشر ستم ان انت من المنقر
تانه قد طمسه ما بشر به رسل الله من قبل وما ارزله الرحمن في لعفان بقوله تعالى يوم يقوم الناس
لرب العالمين قد طوى بساط النبوة واتى من ارسلها بسطان مبين هذا هو الذي نطق عند
ظهور الاشياء الملك لله الملك العزيز الحميد هذا هو الذي طالعت اعناق الاصفياء لظهوره وانظر كل نبي
لقائه في هذا اليوم البديع هذا هو الذي به ظهر غيب المكنون الذي ما طلع به الانفسه المهيمه على العالمين ان
اقر القرآن وكتب الله من قبل لتعرف هذا اليوم الذي انا من انوار وجهه بك الظاهر لمبين كذلك
افق سما اللوح شمس كلمتنا التي بها خلق الله خلق الاولين والآخرين احمد الله رب العالمين .

شاه آباد جناب حسن آقا

TABLET TO HASAN SHĀHĀBĀDĪ

- ▶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Lawḥ-i-Ḥasan-i-Shāhābādī*, original Persian and Arabic text.
- ▶ Published in:
- ▶ Ishrāq-Khāvarī, 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd, ed., *Muḥāḍirāt*, Vol. 3, p. 250 (ed. Vahid Ra'fati; Hofheim, Germany: Bahá'í-Verlag, 2009).
- ▶ Courtesy of:
- ▶ Omid Ghaemmaghami (July 16, 2022).

هفته نوزدهم

۱۹-۱: لوح حضرت بهاء الله دربارۀ عظمت ظهور جمال قدم جلّ جلاله دربارۀ عظمت ظهور می فرماید قوله تعالى:

هو المشرق من أفق سماء العرفان بالحكمة والبيان
يا حسن أن استمع نداء الحسين الذي سجن في حصن عكا بما اكتسبت أيدي الغافلين
لو يسئل أحد من أحد بأى جرم حبستموه يقول إنه أتى بشريعة أخرى إننا لاتوافقنا فيما
كنّا فيه يشهد بذلك كتابنا الذي سمى بالفرقان من لدى الله رب العالمين. أن انظر ما أنزله
الرحمن فيه: «ولكنه رسول الله وخاتم النبيين».

إننا نقول قد صدقت فيما نطقت ونشهد به ختمت الرسالة والنبوة ومن يدعى بعده
هذا المقام الأعلى إنه في ضلال مبین و إنك يا أيها السائل أن استمع نداء هذا القائل إنه
يقول أن افتح البصر لترى المنظر الأكبر الذي فيه ينطق مالك القدر تالله به ظهرت الساعة
وقامت القيامة و انشق القمر و نرى الكل في حشر مستمر إن أنت من المتفرسين. تالله
قد ظهر ما بشر به رسل الله من قبل و ما أنزله الرحمن في الفرقان بقوله تعالى: «يوم يقوم
الناس لرب العالمين».

قد طوى بساط النبوة و أتى من أرسلها بسلطان مبین هذا لهو الذي نطقت عند ظهوره
الأشياء الملك لله الملك العزيز الحميد. هذا لهو الذي طالت أعناق الأصفياء لظهوره
و انتظر كل نبي لقائه في هذا اليوم البديع. هذا لهو الذي به ظهر الغيب المكنون الذي ما
اطلع به إلا نفسه المهيمنة على العالمين. أن اقرأ القرآن و كتب الله من قبل لتعرف هذا
اليوم الذي أنار من أنوار وجه ربك الظاهر المبين. كذلك نورنا أفق سماء اللوح بشمس
كلمتنا التي بها خلق الله خلق الأولين و الآخرين و الحمد لله رب العالمين. ■

TABLET OF THE “SEAL OF THE PROPHETS” (TO HASAN SHĀHĀBĀDĪ)

- ▶ He shineth from the Horizon of the Heaven of true Knowledge with Wisdom and Utterance!
- ▶ O Ḥasan! Hearken unto the Call of Ḥusayn [Bahā’u’llāh], Who hath been incarcerated in the Prison-Fortress of ‘Akkā, by reason of that which the hands of the heedless hath wrought. If one were to question them, “By what reason have ye imprisoned Him?”, they would reply:
- ▶ “Verily, He hath come with a new Sharī’a and this new Sharī’a doth not accord with the Law which we have been under. To this matter testifieth our Book, which is called the Qur’ān, a Book that is from God, the Lord of all mankind. See that which the All-Merciful hath revealed therein: ‘Verily, He [Muḥammad] is the Messenger of God, and the Seal of the Prophets.’” [Q. 33:40b.]

TABLET OF THE “SEAL OF THE PROPHETS” (TO HASAN SHĀHĀBĀDĪ)

- ▶ To this, We reply:
- ▶ “Indeed thou speakest the truth. We do testify that through Him [Muḥammad], Messengership and Prophethood (*al-risāla wa’l-nubuwwa*) have both been sealed; and any one, after Him, claiming this most exalted station (*al-maqām al-’a’lā*) is in manifest error.”
- ▶ Nevertheless, O Questioner! Hearken unto My voice which sayeth:
- ▶ “Open thine eyes that thou mayest behold the Most Great Beauty, through Whom speaketh the Lord of divine decree. By God! Through Him the ‘Hour’ hath appeared, and the ‘Resurrection’ hath come to pass, and the ‘Moon’ hath been cleft asunder and thou wouldst behold all in an ongoing ‘Regeneration,’ if thou be of them that possess insight.”

TABLET OF THE “SEAL OF THE PROPHETS” (TO HASAN SHĀHĀBĀDĪ)

- ▶ “Verily, through His Advent hath come to be fulfilled the Advent about which glad-tidings have been given by the Messengers of God, from all eternity, and there hath come to pass about which God hath revealed in the Qur’ān (*al-furqān*): ‘On that Day they shall all rise before the Lord of mankind.’ [Q. 83:6.]
- ▶ Truly the Cycle of Prophethood (lit., the “carpet of Prophethood,” *bisāt al-nubuwwa*) hath been rolled up, and He Who hath sent down the Prophets hath come, arrayed with a manifest and perspicuous sovereignty (*bi-sulṭān mubīn*, = Bahā’u’llāh).”

TABLET OF THE “SEAL OF THE PROPHETS” (TO HASAN SHĀHĀBĀDĪ)

- ▶ “He, verily, is the One at Whose Advent all created things have given this utterance: ‘The Kingdom is God’s, the Sovereign, the Almighty, the All-Praised.’ He is the One for Whom the necks of God’s chosen Saints have been outstretched in longing and ardent expectation, and every Prophet hath awaited His Presence in this wondrous Day. He is the One through Whom the ‘One Unseen and Hidden’ hath been made manifest, the One Whom no one hath known save He Himself, the one King over all mankind.”
- ▶ “Peruse ye the Qur’ān—and all God’s Books revealed in the past—that haply ye may recognize this Day, illumined by the Countenance of thy Lord, the Manifest, the Perspicuous One.”
- ▶ Thus have We illumined the horizon of the firmaments of this Tablet with the Luminary of Our Word, a Word through which God hath brought into being all creation, from all eternity to all eternity. Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds!

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- ▶ Thanks to Nader Saiedi, Omid Ghaemmaghami, Khazeh Fananapazir, Stephen Lambden, Dergham Aqiqi, Sohrab Kourosch, William Collins, Todd Lawson, Nosratollah Mohammadhosseini, Jeremiah Adams, John Pilz, and Jonah Winters for their kind input and advice as to this slide presentation, generated in Apple's Keynote app, version 12.1.

