

# A Tablet from the Writings of the Báb

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## Introduction and background:

This brief yet luminous Tablet was revealed by the Báb during the days of His incarceration in the mountain fortresses of Ádhirbáyján. Whether composed within the open vastness of MáKú or in the more grievous stronghold of Chihríq cannot be determined with certainty, though the opening verse—*“No star hath shone forth, nor hath the bird of the Mist of the Unknown (Amā) warbled, nor hath the dove beat its wings—in fine, all is imprisoned within the Mountain”*—would appear to suggest the latter. In accents of lofty dignity and unshakable assurance, it reflects the resignation, the serenity, and the invincible fortitude with which He endured the rigours of His captivity.

Clothed in the cadences of the Qur’án, its verses breathe a spirit of utter trust in the decrees of God, and summon the faithful to that fear of God which alone opens the gates of deliverance and assurance. With a majesty all His own, the Báb likens Himself to a lion enchained—its might undiminished, its glory undimmed, its dignity unblemished by the fetters that bind it. In this striking metaphor He conveys not lamentation, but a lofty affirmation of the inviolable power of the Cause of God—a power that no prison walls can abase, nor any earthly chain subdue.

Exalting detachment above all earthly loss, the Báb counsels’ contentment amidst the trials of this fleeting life, and bids His followers prepare themselves for the destined encounter with their Lord. Concluding with verses resonating with the eternal Word of God, this Tablet stands as a testimony alike to the majesty of His resignation and to the sublimity of His summons.

What follows is a provisional English rendering, translated with utmost reverence and care, of this luminous Epistle, originally revealed in Arabic. The Arabic text is published in *Khūshih-hā-yi az Kharman-i Adab va Hunar*, no. 6, *Dawrih-yi Bayān* (152 B.E./1995), P. 6.

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## The Báb Reveals:

### ***“In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful***

*Upon thee be the salutations of God.*

*No star hath shone forth, nor hath the bird of the Mist of the Unknown (Amā’)<sup>2</sup> warbled, nor hath the dove beat its wings—in fine, all is imprisoned within the Mountain.<sup>3</sup>*

*We raise no complaint against the decree of God. For the lion<sup>4</sup> feeleth no shame in its chain.<sup>5</sup> Verily, it behoveth thee to fear God, glorified be His Remembrance.<sup>6</sup>*

*For He, the All-Wise, hath said: ‘Whosoever feareth God, He shall make for him a way of deliverance, and shall sustain him from whence he reckoneth not.’*

*And whosoever relyeth upon God, He is sufficient for him. Verily, God consummateth His purpose; He hath ordained a measure for all things.*

*The utmost limit of certitude is that thou shouldst fear nothing in the presence of God. The utmost limit of contentment is that thou grieve not for aught that hath passed thee in this earthly life.*

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<sup>2</sup> The term ‘Amā’ (عماء), here rendered as “the Mist of the Unknown”, as employed in mystical and Bábí-Bahá’í writings, signifies the “Reality of Realities” or the “Divine Oneness” (*Haqq al-Haqā’iq, Ḥaḍrat al-Aḥadiyyah*). In Islamic, Bábí, and Bahá’í theological usage, it denotes the inaccessible, hidden Essence of God—the unknowable Reality from which all vision is barred—a meaning distinct from mere blindness or error, as clarified by the context. In Sufi and philosophical dictionaries, including the works of Qaysarī, ‘Amā is associated with the metaphysical realm of the unseen (*lāhūt al-‘Amā*), where God’s hidden Essence remains imperceptible to all created beings. As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains in the *Lawḥ al-Asrār*, the term also evokes the subtle, ethereal cloud: “it is seen, yet not seen; if one observes closely, something is perceived, yet by mere glance it is not visible.” Mystical commentators understand this as the Absolute Reality, existing in simplicity and unity, untainted by multiplicity, corresponding to the station of divine Oneness—the hidden treasure referenced in sacred traditions.

<sup>3</sup> Here the term “Mountain” alludes to the sites of the Báb’s incarceration in Ádhirbáyján, namely the remote fortress of MáKú (designated by Him as *Jabal-i-Basit*, “the Open Mountain”) and the fortress of Chihriq (named by Him as *Jabal-i-Shadid*, “the Most Grievous Mountain”). The Báb was confined in MáKú from July 1847 until April 1848, and thereafter in Chihriq from April 1848 until June 1850. These successive imprisonments marked the final years of His ministry and culminated in His martyrdom at Tabriz on July 9, 1850.

<sup>4</sup> “Lion” here functions as a conventional emblem of spiritual strength; “silsila” (chain) denotes both literal fetters and the yoke of persecution. The clause conveys the thought that dignity and courage are not abated by physical bondage.

<sup>5</sup> The line, “We raise no complaint against the decree of God. For the lion feeleth no shame in its chain,” quoted by the Báb, is derived from Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī’s *Masnavī-yi Ma’navī*, Book I, Section 148 (line 3160). This section recounts the story of the arrival of a beloved companion who visits the Prophet Joseph (Yūsuf), and the dialogue that follows concerning the trials and tribulations endured by Joseph.

<sup>6</sup> The phrase “the Remembrance” (*Dhikr*), or more fully “the Remembrance of God” (*Dhikr Allāh*), is a title assumed by the Báb, particularly in His early writings such as the *Qayyūmu’l-Asmā’*. Within the Báb’s own corpus, and as corroborated by modern scholarship, *Dhikr* designates the Primal Will, the divine Logos, the very Word of God through which all reality is summoned into being.

*And seek refuge for the day of thy meeting with thy Lord, for verily it is a mighty day. And safeguard both thy secret and thy public affairs through fear of God, glorified be His Remembrance.*

*Say: 'Naught shall befall us save that which God hath decreed for us; He is our Guardian.'*

*And upon God let the faithful place their trust. Glory be to thy Lord, the Lord of Might, above all that they attribute unto Him. And peace be upon the Messengers.*

*And all praise be to God, the Lord of all worlds."*

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عليك سلام الله

ما لاح كوكب

و ما تغرد طير العماء و دف

مجمل القول في سجن الجبل

نیست ما را از قضای حق گله

عار نايد شیر را از سلسله

فعليك بتقوى الله عزّ ذكره. فأنّه قال ومن يتق الله يجعل له مخرجاً و يرزقه من حيث لا يحتسب ومن يتوكل على الله فهو حسبه ان الله بالغ امره قد جعل الله لكل شيء قدراً . و ان حد اليقين ألا تخاف مع الله شيئاً و ان حد الرضا ألا تحزن بما فاتك في الحياة الدنيا و استعدّ ليوم لقاء ربك فأنّه ليوم عظيم و اسكن سرّك و علانيتك بتقوى الله عزّ ذكره قل لن يصيبنا الا ما كتب الله لنا هو مولينا و على الله فليتوكل المؤمنون و سبحان ربّ العزّة عما يصفون و سلام على المرسلين و الحمد لله رب العالمين