

Tablet of the Báb Revealed in Muscat¹ in Honour of Shaykh Salmán Āl-‘Aṣfūr

Mohammad Norozi²

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Introduction and background:

The Tablet revealed in honour of Shaykh Salmán Āl-‘Aṣfūr—who at the time served as the Imām Jum‘ih (Friday Prayer Leader) of Būshihr and was the nephew of Shaykh Ḥasan Āl-‘Aṣfūr³.

According to Afnán (Āhd-i-A‘lá, p. 83), Shaykh Salmán had previously read a treatise on jurisprudence (Risālih-i-Fiqhiyyah) revealed by the Báb and entrusted by Him to His uncle, Shaykh Ḥasan Āl-‘Aṣfūr. Deeply impressed by the work, Shaykh Salmán maintained a respectful and cordial disposition toward the Báb and His family. On one occasion, when reports concerning the Báb’s public declaration of His claim before the Ka‘bah gave rise to unrest among the congregation in his mosque, Shaykh Salmán promptly arose to defend the Báb and His kindred, successfully calming the agitation and restoring order among the people of Būshihr.

It may be suggested that such displays of integrity and loyalty likely reached the Báb during His stay in Muscat. Perceiving in Shaykh Salmán a figure of trustworthiness and moral influence, the Báb may well have regarded him as someone capable of offering protection and reassurance to His uncle, Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad, during His absence from Būshihr.

This sacred Tablet stands as a resplendent testament to the exalted station of Divine Revelation and the immutable authority of the Word of God as manifested in the Person of the Báb. Revealed during His sojourn in Muscat—sometime between mid-March and early May 1845⁴—its verses are replete with solemn proclamations, powerful warnings,

¹ Muscat is the capital city of present-day Oman, located on the southeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula; in the 19th century, it was a significant port and commercial hub with strong regional and maritime trade connections.

² Contact email: nsm_dist@hotmail.com.

³ Shaykh Ḥasan Āl-‘Aṣfūr was a prominent 13th-century AH (19th-century CE) Shī‘ī scholar and traditionist of Būshihr, originally from the distinguished Āl-‘Aṣfūr family of Bahrain. According to ‘Allāmah Sayyid Muḥsin al-Āmilī in A‘yān al-Shī‘ah, Shaykh Ḥasan, son of Shaykh Ḥusayn and a descendant of ‘Aṣfūr al-Baḥrānī, migrated to Būshihr after his father’s death in 1216 AH (1801–02 CE). There he gained wide esteem, serving as Imām Jum‘ih (Friday Prayer Leader) and judge, until his passing in 1260 AH (1844 CE). He was buried in his home, which became a local shrine, particularly revered by the Akhbārī community of Būshihr.

⁴ According to the Báb’s own testimony (Khutbiḥ-i-Jeddah, “Sermon of Jeddah”), He arrived in Jeddah on 24 February 1845. After staying three days in Jeddah, He left for Muscat on 27 February. Assuming a sea voyage of approximately 14 days, He would have reached Muscat around 14 March. A separate letter addressed to His younger uncle, Siyyid Ḥasan ‘Alí, confirms His presence in Muscat on 1 May. The Báb’s arrival in Būshihr is recorded as 14 May 1845 (see Denis MacEoin, Sources for the Early Bábí Doctrine and History, p. 48). Estimating a 10-day sea journey from Muscat to Būshihr suggests that His departure from Muscat occurred around 4 May. Thus, this Epistle was likely revealed during His stay in Muscat between 14 March and 4 May 1845. Afnán (Āhd-i-A‘lá, p. 80) states that, based on other epistles of the Báb recounting events of His pilgrimage to Mecca and His return to Shíráz, the Báb arrived in Muscat

and luminous exhortations addressed to the people of the Qur'ān and the learned among them. Through this Tablet, the Báb affirms His Divine mission and summons all to recognize the “Remembrance from the Remnant of God,” a title He implicitly assumes for Himself. Drawing richly upon Qur'ānic language and symbolism, the Tablet declares the Revelation vouchsafed to Him to be unassailable in origin, irrefutable in its claims, and transformative in its effects.

With majestic cadence and penetrating authority, the Báb unveils within its verses the signs of the Hour, the decrees of the Book, and the sanctity of Divine preordination. He solemnly warns the heedless of their inevitable fate while extolling the blessedness of those who respond with faith and humility to the signs of God.

The Báb's Sojourn in Muscat: A Mission of Proclamation and Compassion:

While the Báb was journeying through the sacred land of Hijáz, grievous tidings reached Him of the arrest and imprisonment, in the city of Baghdad, of Mullá 'Alí Bastámí—He who had been designated by the Báb as the second Letter of the Living and the first to be martyred in 'Iráq during the Báb the ministry.

Moved by divine wisdom, and desiring to avert the shedding of innocent blood and to safeguard the nascent community of His devoted followers, the Báb chose not to proceed to 'Iráq. Instead, He instructed those who had been anticipating His arrival in that region to journey to Isfahán, there to await His coming.

Following His return from Mecca, and after a brief sojourn in Jeddah, the Báb set His course toward the port city of Muscat. He departed Jeddah on the 27th of February 1845 and arrived in Muscat around the 14th of March of that same year. The purpose of this voyage was twofold: first, to proclaim His divinely ordained Mission to Shaykh Sulaymán, the Muftí of Muscat and a figure of renown among the Sunni clergies; and second, to make every possible effort toward securing the release of His loyal and steadfast follower, Mullá 'Alí Bastámí, then languishing in the prison of Najíb Páshá in Baghdad.

While in Muscat, the Báb entrusted Mullá Ghawhar—who had regarded himself as the rightful successor of Siyyid Kázim—with the delivery of a weighty Tablet, addressed by His own hand to Sulṭán 'Abdu'l-Majíd, through Najíb Páshá, the Governor of Baghdad. He further appealed to him for assistance in securing the deliverance of Mullá 'Alí. Yet,

from Mecca in the early days of the month of Rabí' al-Awwal 1261 A.H., corresponding to mid-March 1845 C.E. This account corroborates the above estimation.

far from responding with sympathy or support, Mullá Ghawhar not only rejected the Báb but demanded instead the execution of that innocent and steadfast Mullá ‘Alí. At length, the Báb departed Muscat around the 4th of May 1845.

During His sojourn in Muscat, the Báb revealed, among other Tablets, two addressed to His uncle, Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad, and one to Shaykh Salmán Āl-‘Aṣḥūr, the Imám-Jum‘ih (Friday Prayer Leader) of Búshihr. The present rendering pertains to the Tablet addressed to Shaykh Salmán.

These three Tablets are closely interrelated and should be read in conjunction with one another to fully grasp their content, context, and purpose. The two Tablets addressed to His uncle will be presented separately in due course, under the respective titles: *Tablet of the Báb to His Uncle, Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad (Khál-i-Akbar), Revealed in Muscat — Part I*, and *Tablet of the Báb to His Uncle, Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad (Khál-i-Akbar), Revealed in Muscat — Part II*.

What follows is a provisional translation of this profoundly spiritual and deeply moving Tablet—an eloquent testament to the Divine Word, radiant with heavenly wisdom and suffused with the luminous grace of revelation.

For the purposes of this provisional translation, I have consulted two manuscript sources: one published in *Ahd-i-A‘lá* by Afnán (pp. 97–98), and the other preserved in the Iranian National Bahá’í Archives (INBA, vol. 91, pp. 52–56).

While the two versions differ only slightly in orthography and stylistic details—differences that do not affect the overall meaning—a significant discrepancy appears toward the end of the Tablet: several verses present in the INBA manuscript are entirely absent from the version cited by Afnán. These omitted verses have been translated and highlighted in red in the present rendering. It is hoped that future scholars and researchers of the Writings of the Báb will further investigate and clarify the nature and implications of these textual divergences.

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

Glorified be He Who sendeth down the Book⁵ upon whomsoever He willeth from among His servants. Verily, there is none other God but He, the Almighty, the All-Praised.

And verily it is a Book wherein the laws of the new creation hath been distinctly set forth—a Revelation sent down from the presence of the All-Exalted, the All-Wise.

These are the verses of the Qur’án, sent down from Our presence upon a manifest Balance. And verily, this is a decree from the Book of thy Lord—unchangeable is His decree—a revelation from Us upon a straight Path.

Follow, then, the decree of that which We have cast unto thee from the Book of Permission, for the Hour hath indeed come in truth, and God is verily the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

They who follow the signs of God in truth—these are they who are rightly guided. And whoso turneth away from My decree, yet reciteth even a single letter of His Book—such are they that are indeed the wrongdoers.

And God, verily, knoweth whatsoever is in the heavens and on the earth; and mankind, in the decree of the Book, were never of one accord.

Say: Were this sent down from aught else but the Remnant of God, they would surely have been able to produce the like thereof. Glorified, immeasurably glorified is God above whatsoever they ascribe unto Him!

These are the verses of the Tablet which God hath revealed in accordance with the hidden decree of the Qur’án, that haply men may be assured of the signs of God.

Recite the Book of thy Lord—there is no God but He—then proclaim unto the people the decree revealed therein, that haply they may be reminded by the signs of God.

Verily, they who disbelieve in what hath been sent down unto thee in that Book, after having recognized the decree with justice—these are indeed the idolaters.

Verily, the true believers are those who, when they hear the signs of God, bow down in adoration. Render then thanks unto thy Lord for the decree that hath been sent down unto thee in that Book.

⁵ In classical Arabic, kitáb may signify a book, letter or epistle, divine scripture, or ordained decree, depending on context. The Qur’án itself employs kitáb in all these senses. Throughout this provisional translation, the term Kitáb has been rendered as “Book”, in keeping with the Báb’s usage and the recognition that all of His writings are regarded as divinely revealed scripture. It should be noted, however, that in certain contexts, “Book” does not necessarily refer to a complete volume in the conventional sense, but may denote a letter, epistle, or any portion of revealed text. The term thus conveys a spiritual and revelatory station rather than a reference to physical extent or literary form.

Then proclaim unto the believers who have followed the signs of God in truth the like of that which We have revealed unto thee in that Book—for such indeed are they who shall be rightly guided.

Proclaim the decree of thy Lord which hath been revealed in that Book; for the appointed Hour of God shall, in very truth, come to pass. Verily, God, thy Lord, shall not suffer the reward of the faithful to be lost.

These are the verses, a proof from the Remnant of God, for whosoever desireth to be among the rightly guided.

And that Book is indeed a proof from Me unto whosoever willeth to believe in the signs of thy Lord and to be among those who bow down in adoration.

It is not permitted unto any soul to judge save by that which We have revealed aforetime in the Book—and God is fully aware of the deeds of men.

There is none other God but He. He shall judge between all on the Day of Resurrection with justice; and never would thy Lord wrong a soul, not even to the weight of an atom. God is mighty, exalted in power.

Say: O concourse of the people of the Qur'án! Fear God, your Lord. There is none other God but He. He knoweth what ye conceal and what ye reveal.

Fear God, then, concerning the Day whereon all shall be gathered unto God. Whoso denieth Our signs—naught shall be accepted from him, and on the Day of Resurrection he shall indeed be among the losers.

On that day, no ransom shall be accepted from any soul, nor shall there be any protector or helper for the wrongdoers against the decree of thy Lord.

Verily, We have sent forth a Book like unto this unto some among the learned; give thou them glad tidings of the Days of God. The term of God shall assuredly come to pass, and God is the All-Sufficing, the All-Praised.

And verily, in that Book are verses revealed from Our presence for a people who hearken.

And verily, in that Book are verses revealed from Us unto a people who hearken. Were all mankind to assemble to bring forth the like of that which We have revealed unto thee in that Book, they would never be able to do so—even were We to assist them with the like of their own selves. God, thy Lord, is indeed the All-Powerful, the All-Glorious.

Naught escapeth the knowledge of thy Lord, whether in the heavens or on the earth. Verily, there is none other God but He, the Almighty, the All-Wise.

Say: O assembly of the learned! There hath come unto you a Remembrance⁶ from the Remnant of God, confirming that which the Prophets and Messengers have revealed from the presence of God. Will ye not then worship none but Him? This is the pure religion of God. Wherefore do ye turn away, and fail to perceive?

Verily, the true believer, in the Book of thy Lord, is he who believeth in God and His signs and followeth the decree of the Remembrance from Us—These are they who shall surely prosper.

This is the Path of thy Lord in the heavens and on the earth. The command is sent down from Our presence upon a manifest balance.

And if thy Lord should decree in that Book that thou follow the ordinance revealed in the former Book⁷, then make thou manifest the land which God hath ordained for thee during the days of the Remembrance of the name of thy Lord. For the promise, if God so willeth, is, in accordance with the decree of the Book, near at hand

Verily, the invocation of the Name hath been forbidden in the Book, and this is a decree from God, fulfilled in truth. Say: I find no change whatsoever in the decree of God—not the least thereof.

And if he⁸ who is to deliver unto thee the Book should seek assistance in aught pertaining to the Cause, then follow thou his command, for he is indeed among the foremost of those who have drawn nigh—inscribed, verily, in the Mother Book.

Glorified be God, thy Lord, the Lord of the Throne, above whatsoever they ascribe unto Him!

Convey the greetings of the Remembrance of the Name of thy Lord unto the believers, and say: Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds.”

⁶ Title of the Báb.

⁷ The “former Book” likely alludes to the Qur’án, the ordinances of which the recipient may have been temporarily enjoined to observe.

⁸ This most likely refers to the Báb’s uncle, Siyyid Muḥammad (Khāl-i-Akbar), who was reportedly entrusted with the delivery of this Tablet to Shaykh Salmán but ultimately refrained from conveying it to him (Afnán, *Aḥd-i-A’lá*, p. 82).

The Tablet of the Báb Revealed in Honour of Shaykh Salmán Āl ‘Aṣṣūr: Based on a Typed Manuscript Copy (Iranian National Bahá’í Archives [INBA], vol. 91, pp. 52–56)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

سبحان الذي نزل الكتاب على من يشاء من عباده و انه لا اله الا هو العزيز
حميد * و انه لكتاب قد فصل فيه حكم البدع تنزيل من لدن على
حكيم تلك آيات القرآن قد نزلت من لدنا على قسطاس مبين * و ان ذلك حكم
من كتاب ربك لا مبدل لحكمه تنزيل من لدنا على صراط قويم * ان اتبع حكم
ما تلقى اليك من كتاب الاذن فان الساعة قد اتت بالحق و الله سميع
عليم * ان الذين يتبعون آيات الله بالحق فأولئك هم المهتدون * و من
اعرض عن حكم ربك لن يقرء في كتابه حرفاً فأولئك هم الظالمون * و ان الله
* يعلم ما في السموات و ما في الارض و ما كان الناس في حكم الكتاب يختلفون
قل لو كان من عند غير بقية الله ينزل لاستطاعوا ان ياتوا بمثله
فسبحان الله عما يشركون * تلك آيات اللوح قد نزل الله في حكم باطن
القرآن لعل الناس بايات الله يوقنون * اقرء كتاب ربك لا اله الا
هو ثم ابلغ حكم ما نزل فيه الى الناس لعلهم بايات الله يتذكرون * و
ان الذين يكفرون بما نزل اليك في ذلك الكتاب بعد ما قد علموا حكم
بالعدل فأولئك هم المشركون * انما المؤمنون الذين اذا سمعوا آيات
الله ليسجدون * ان اشكر ربك في حكم ما نزل اليك ثم بلغ بمثل ما
نزلنا اليك في ذلك الكتاب الى المؤمنين الذين اتبعوا آيات الله بالحق
فأولئك لهم المهتدون * بلغ حكم ربك مما نزل في ذلك الكتاب
فان اجل الله لات بالحق و ان الله ربك لا يضيع اجر المومنين * تلك
الايات حجة من بقية الله لمن شاء ان يكون من المهتدين * و ان ذلك
الكتاب حجة من لدي لمن اراد ان يؤمن بايات ربك و كان من الساجدين
و ما يحل لاحد حكم الا يحكم ما نزلنا في الكتاب من قبل و كان الله بما يعمل
الناس خبيراً و انه لا اله الا هو يحكم يوم القيامة بين الكل بالعدل و ما كان

اللَّهُ رَبُّكَ لِيُظْلَمَ نَفْسًا مِنْ بَعْضِ ذُرَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ * قل يا أيها
المُلا من أهل القرآن ان اتقوا الله ربكم فإنه لا إله إلا هو يعلم
* ما تخفون و ما انتم تعلنون * ان اتقوا الله من يوم كل الى الله تحشرون
و من كفر باياتنا لن يقبل من عمله شئ و انه في يوم القيمة لمن الخاسرين
فيومئذ لن يقبل من احد فدية و ما كان للظالمين من حكم ربك من ولى
و لا نصير * ان ارسل مثل ذلك الكتاب الى بعض من العلماء و ابشرهم
بايام الله فان اجل الله لات و الله غنى حميدا * و ان في ذلك الكتاب
قد نزلت من لدنا لقوم يسمعون * لو اجتمع الناس على ان ياتوا بمثل ما
نزلنا اليك في ذلك الكتاب لن يستطعن و لو كنا نمدهم بمثل انفسهم
و كان الله ربك لقوي عزيز * لا يعزب من علم ربك شئ في السموات
و ما في الارض و انه لا إله الا هو العزيز حكيم * قل يا أهل الملا لقد جائكم
ذكر من بقية الله مصدقا لما جاء النبيون و المرسلون من عند الله
الا تعبدوا الا آياه ذلك دين الله الخالص فما لكم كيف لاتشعرون
انما المؤمن في كتاب ربك من آمن بالله و آياته و اتبع حكم الذكر من لدنا
فاولئك هم المفلحون * و ان هذا صراط ربك في السموات و الارض
و بلغ الامر من لدنا على قسطاس قويم * و ان حكم ربك في ذلك الكتاب ان اتبع
حكم ما نزل في الكتاب من قبل ثم اظهر ارض التي قد كتب الله عليك الايام
* ذكر اسم ربك فان الوعد ان شاء الله من حكم الكتاب لمن قريب
و ان كلمة الاسم قد حرم في الكتاب ذكره و ان ذلك من امر الله قد قضى
بالحق قل و ما اجد لحكم الله في بعض من الشئ تبديلا * و ان اراد من يبلغك
الكتاب ان يستعين بشئ من الامر فاتبع حكمه فإنه لمن المقربين الاولين
* في ام الكتاب لمسطور * و سبحان الله رب العرش عما يصفون
و ابلي سلام ذكر اسم ربك الى المومنين * و قل الحمد لله رب العالمين

The Tablet of the Báb Revealed in Honour of Shaykh Salmán Āl ‘Aṣḥūr: Based on Afnán’s Copy (Ahd-i-A‘lá, pp. 97–98)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

سبحان الذي ينزل الكتاب على من يشاء من عباده و انه لا اله الا هو لعزیز حمید و انه لكتاب قد فصل فيه حكم البدع تنزیل من لدن على حکیم تلك آیات القرآن قد نزلت من لدنا على قسطاس مبین و ان ذلك حكم من كتاب ربك لا مبتل لحكمه تنزیل من لدنا على صراط قويم ان اتبع حكم ما نلقى اليك من كتاب الاذن فان الساعة قد انت بالحق والله سمیع علیم ان الذين يتبعون آیات الله بالحق فاولئك هم

المهتدون و من اعرض من حكم يقرء من كتابه حرفاً و اولئك هم الظالمون و ان الله يعلم ما في السموات وما في الارض و ما كان الناس في حكم الكتاب يختلفون قل لو كان من عند غير بقية الله نزل لاستطاعوا أن يأتيوا بمثله فسبحان الله عما يشركون تلك آیات اللوح قد نزل الله في حكم باطن القرآن لعل الناس بآيات الله يوقنون ، اقر كتاب ربك لا اله الا هو ثم بلغ حكم ما نزل فيه الى الناس لعلهم بآيات الله يتذكرون و ان الذين يكفرون بما نزل اليك في ذلك الكتاب بعد ما قد علموا حكم الله بالعدل فاولئك هم المشركون انما المؤمنون الذين اذا سمعوا آیات الله ليسجدون ان اشكر ربك في حكم ما نزل اليك في ذلك الكتاب ثم بلغ بمثل ما نزلنا اليك في ذلك الكتاب الى المؤمنين الذين اتبعوا آیات الله بالحق فاولئك لهم المهتدون بلغ حكم ربك فيما نزل في ذلك الكتاب فان اجل الله لات بالحق و ان الله ربك لا يضيع أجر المؤمنين تلك الآيات حجة من بقية الله لمن شاء ان يكون من المهتدين و ان ذلك الكتاب حجة من لدى لمن اراد ان يؤمن بآيات ربك و كان من الساجدين و ما يحل لاحد حكم الا يحكم ما نزلنا في الكتاب من قبل وكان الله بما يعمل الناس خبيراً و انه لا اله الا هو يحكم يوم القيمة بين الكل بالعدل ما كان الله ربك ليظلم نفساً من بعض ذرة والله قوى

عزیز

قل يا أيها الملاء من اهل القرآن ان اتقوا الله ربكم فانه لا اله الا هو يعلم ما تخفون و ما انتم تعلنون ان اتقوا الله من يوم كل الى الله يحشرون و من كفر بآياتنا لن يقبل من عمله شينى و انه في يوم القيمة لمن الخاسرين فيومئذ لن يقبل من احد فدية و ما كان للظالمين من حكم ربك من ولى و لا نصير . ان ارسل مثل ذلك الكتاب الى بعض من العلماء و ابشرهم بايام الله فان اجل الله لات والله غنى حمید و ان في ذلك الكتاب آیات قد نزلت من لدنا لقوم يسمعون لو اجتمع الناس على أن يأتيوا بمثل ما نزلنا اليك في ذلك الكتاب لن يستطيعوا ولو كنا نمدهم بمثل انفسهم و كان الله لقوى عزیز لا يعزب من علم ربك شينى في السموات وما في الارض و انه لا اله الا هو لعزیز حکيم قل يا أيها الملاء لقد

جائكم ذكر من بقية الله مصداقاً لما جاء النبويون (النبيون) و المرسلون من عند الله الا تعبدوا الا اياه ذلك دين الله الخالص فما لكم كيف لا تشعرون انما المؤمن في كتاب ربك من آمن بالله و آياته و اتبع حكم الذكر من لدنا فاولئك هم المصلحون و أن هذا صراط ربك في السموات و الارض يلقى الامر من لدنا على قسطاس مبین و ان كلمة الاسم قد حرم في الكتاب ذكره و ان ذلك من امر الله قد قضى بالحق قل ما اجد لحكم الله في بعض من الشينى تبديلاً و سبحان الله ربك رب العرش عما يصفون و بلغ سلام اسم ربك الى المؤمنين و قل الحمد لله رب العالمين

Tablet of the Báb in Honour of Shaykh Salmán Āl-'Aṣfūr, in His Own Hand



(Abú'l-Qásim Afnán, Ādh-i-A'lá, p. 96)