Prayer of the Báb on Divine Sovereignty and the True Mirror[1]

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26.11.2025

Introduction and Background:

This sacred prayer, revealed by the Báb, stands as a luminous testament to His exalted proclamation of the omnipotence and sovereignty of God, and the supreme station of Him Whom God shall make manifest.

The prayer opens and closes with invocations, affirming that the All-Powerful and All-Knowing Lord confers sovereignty, might, and knowledge according to His will, elevates whom He will, abases whom He will, and holds within His grasp the kingdom of all created things. Interwoven with these declarations is a striking and enduring metaphor: the True Mirror.

The Báb exhorts the addressee to persevere and confront the worldly multitude, declaring that while all other mirrors may imagine themselves to contain the Sun, it is only in the true mirror that the Sun shineth — a vivid portrayal of the recognition of the Manifestation and the spiritual certitude of those who faithfully reflect His light. The metaphor, while singular, conveys both the unique spiritual station and the model to which all believers are invited.

No information is provided in the prayer regarding the identity of the recipient, nor the precise date or place of its revelation; the only temporal reference within the prayer itself is that it was revealed on a Friday night. The prayer thus encapsulates, with elevated and majestic language, the absolute authority of God, the spiritual station of the Manifestation, and the call to steadfastness, discernment, and faithful reflection among the mirrors of humankind.

What follows is a provisional English rendering of this prayer, revealed in Arabic, based on the manuscript preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), Vol. 58, pp. 144–145.

[1] The prayer does not bear a title in the original manuscript. The present title, *Prayer of the Báb on Divine Sovereignty and the True Mirror*, has been chosen by the author to reflect the central motifs and theological themes of the text, namely the sovereignty of God and the metaphor of the True Mirror as a spiritual exemplar among the believers.

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Thus, Doth the Báb Reveal:

"Say: O God! Thou art the All-Powerful over the heavens, and the earth, and whatsoever lieth between them.

Thou dost confer sovereignty upon whomsoever Thou willest, and Thou dost seize it from whomsoever Thou willest; and Thou dost exalt whomsoever Thou willest, and Thou dost abase whomsoever Thou willest; and Thou dost render victorious whomsoever Thou willest, and Thou dost bring humiliation upon whomsoever Thou willest.[3]

Within Thy grasp Thou dost hold the empire of all things;[4] *Thou dost create whatsoever Thou willest, however Thou willest, by whatsoever Thou willest, and for whatsoever Thou willest. Verily, Thou hast ever been the Omnipotent, the All-Subduing, the Lord of Power.*

By the life of Him Whom God shall make manifest![5] *Wert thou to persevere in this, and to confront all who dwell upon earth, none shall find themselves able to contend with thee; for all mirrors*[6] *imagine that the Sun itself is within them; yet the Sun shineth in thy mirror, while they, in their delusion, only imagine; but they who are in the Bayán tread the mountains of certitude.*[7]

Say: O God! Thou art the Knower of the heavens, and the earth, and whatsoever lieth between them.

Thou dost bestow knowledge upon whomsoever Thou willest, and Thou dost divest whomsoever Thou willest of knowledge; and dost exalt whomsoever Thou willest, and Thou dost abase whomsoever Thou willest; dost honor whomsoever Thou willest, and dost humble whomsoever Thou willest; and Thou dost aid whomsoever Thou willest, and dost abandon whomsoever Thou willest; and dost bestow wealth upon whomsoever Thou willest, and Thou dost reduce to poverty whomsoever Thou willest.

Within Thy grasp Thou dost hold the empire of all things;[8] *Thou dost create whatsoever Thou willest, howsoever Thou willest, by whatsoever Thou willest, for whatsoever Thou willest. Verily, Thou hast ever been All-Powerful over that which Thou willest.*

On the night of Friday."

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[3] The English rendering of the entire paragraph is based on the authorized translation published in Selections from the Writings of the Báb, Chapter Seven: Prayers and Meditations, Bahá'í World Centre, Haifa, Israel.

[4] The English rendering of this passage ("Within Thy grasp Thou dost hold the empire of all things") is based on the authorized translation published in *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, Chapter Seven: Prayers and Meditations, Bahá'í World Centre, Haifa, Israel.

[5] Him Whom God shall make manifest — A title used by the Báb for the Promised One of the Age, whose coming He foretold. In the context of this prayer, this refers to Bahá'u'lláh (1817–1892), the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, who fulfilled the Báb's prophecies.

[6] In the Báb's Writings, the believers are addressed by a variety of spiritual designations, including "Witnesses," "Letters," and "Mirrors" (see *The Báb, Persian Bayán*, gate 14 of the 6th unity). The first eighteen who acknowledged His Mission were named by Him "the Letters of the Living," while He Himself assumed the title *Nuqṭih* (نقطة), "the Point," and *Nuqṭih-yi Úlá* (نقطة اولى), "the Primal Point," among His many exalted appellations. It is noteworthy that Mírzá Yaḥyá Núrí (1831–1912), the younger half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, was designated by the Báb with the title *Azal* ("Eternity"), and is also referred to in some of His Writings as *al-Mir'āt al-Azalīyah* ("the Mirror of Eternity").

[7] The oath "By the life of Him Whom God shall make manifest!" invokes the very existence of the future Manifestation as the highest attestation to the Báb's statement, establishing a theological hierarchy in which the Manifestation is the Sun of the age. The metaphor of the "mirrors," often used by the Báb for believers, signifies those who reflect the Manifestation's light. All may imagine that the Sun is within them, yet only the true believer reflects its radiance without distortion. Thus, the invincibility promised to the addressee derives not from personal station, but from faithful orientation to the Manifestation. Those who are "of the Bayán" are therefore described as treading the "mountains of certitude.

[8] The English rendering of this passage ("Within Thy grasp Thou dost hold the empire of all things") is based on the authorized translation published in *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, Chapter Seven: Prayers and Meditations, Bahá'í World Centre, Haifa, Israel.

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(According to a Typed Copy)

قل اللّهُم انّک انت قوآء السّموات و الارض و ما بینهما
لتؤتینّ القوّة من تشآء و لتنزعنّ القوّة عمن تشآء و لترفعنّ
من تشآء و لتنزلنّ من تشآء و لتنصرنّ من تشآء و لتخذلنّ
من تشآء فی قبضتک ملکوت کلّ شئ تخلق ما تشآء کیف
تشآء بما تشآء لما تشآء انّک کنت قواء امقتویاً قویّا
و لعمر من یظهره اللّه لوتدومّن بذلک و لتقبلنّ علی من علی
الارض یقابلنّک من احد اذ کلّ مرایا یحسبون انّ
فیها شمس و لکنّ الشّمس فی مرآتک و هم فی الوهم یتوّهمون
و لکّن الّذین فی البیان من جبال الیقین یسلکون قل
اللّهم انّک انت علاّم السّموات والارض و ما بینهما لتؤتینّ
العلم من تشآء و لتنزعنّ العلم عمّن تشآء و لترفعّن من تشآء
و لتنزّلنّ من تشآء و لتعزّن من تشاء و لتذلنّ من تشآء
و لتنصرنّ من تشآء و لتخذلنّ من تشآء و لتغنینّ من تشآء
و لتفقرنّ من تشآء فی قبضتک ملکوت کلّ شئ تخلق ما تشآء
کیف تشآء بما تشآء لما تشآء انّک کنت علی ما تشأ قدیرا
فی لیلّة الجمعه