

The Tablet of the Letters (Ḥurūfāt)¹ Revealed by the Báb

Mohammad Norozi²

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Introduction and Background:

This extraordinary Tablet of the Báb stands as a luminous testimony to the profound interrelation of the Divine Names, the cosmos, and the spiritual hierarchy of creation. In its majestic brevity, the Tablet encapsulates a vision of the universe wherein every element—whether celestial or terrestrial, elemental, or spiritual—bears witness to the manifestations of the Divine. It opens with a declaration of praise: “*Praise be to God Who hath manifested Himself upon the signs by their very selves.*” Here, the Báb asserts a central mystical truth: that the signs of God are not merely external tokens or symbols, but living, self-contained realities, each reflecting the Divine in its own inherent essence. The world itself is thus a mirror of the Names and Attributes of God, and each of its constituents—seen and unseen—serves as a locus of divine manifestation.

The Báb proceeds to enumerate thirty-two letters, selected with deliberate care, each paired with a distinct domain of creation or aspect of spiritual authority. These letters, sometimes repeated, are not intended as a literal recitation of the entire Arabic or Persian alphabet; rather, they constitute a mystical and symbolic lexicon, each bearing a unique spiritual potency. Through the agency of these letters, the Báb conveys how God ordains, sustains, and animates the manifold realities of existence. For example, the *Alif* that stands upright manifests the Gates, the *Bā'* creates the heavens and the earth, the *Tā'* reveals the star, and the *Thā'* ordains the orbs. Such pairings illustrate that the natural and cosmic order is not arbitrary but arises through the intimate action of the Divine Names.

The Tablet moves seamlessly from the material to the spiritual: rivers, winds, mountains, clouds, and meteors are followed by tablets, standards, deeds, Books, and the hierarchies of spiritual authority, culminating in the unseen, the Proofs, the Loved Ones, and the Chosen Ones. In each instance, a letter or Name operates as a channel of divine agency, bringing forth the ordained reality of its object. Repetition of certain letters—such as the *Rā'* for rivers, or the *Khā'* for clouds and paths—underscores the recurring, all-encompassing influence of attributes across multiple realms, revealing the profound interconnections binding creation to the Divine.

This intricate lattice of letters and Names serves a dual purpose. First, it demonstrates the Báb's cosmological vision: that the universe is a living testimony to the Names of God, a realm wherein every created thing, from dust to meteors, participates in the divine order. Second, it provides a contemplative guide for the reader: each line is a meditation upon the manifestation of God, an invitation to recognize the sacred significance of both the visible and invisible worlds. The Tablet thus functions as a reverent theophanic litany, through which the faithful are called to perceive the divine pervasiveness and immanence in all phenomena.

The Tablet concludes with emphatic finality: “*It is ended! It is ended!*” This repetition signals the closure of a complete spiritual and cosmological cycle, affirming the perfection and comprehensiveness of divine governance, both in the realms of nature and in the hierarchy of spiritual authority. The Báb's use of letters, carefully distributed and sometimes repeated, embodies a mystical methodology by which the Names of God interlace the cosmos and the human soul, creating a universe that is at once ordered, luminous, and suffused with divine presence.

¹ The Tablet bears no title in the manuscript; the designation “*The Tablet of the Letters (Ḥurūfāt)*” is a title chosen by the present translator.

² Contact email address; nsm_dist@hotmail.com.

In sum, this Tablet exemplifies the Báb's singular capacity to unite mystical symbolism, cosmological insight, and spiritual hierarchy into a concise and profoundly illuminating composition. Its letters are not mere characters; they are living instruments through which God's attributes are disclosed and through which all creation, from the elemental to the celestial, bears witness to the ever-unfolding manifestation of the Divine. Through this Tablet, the reader is invited into a vision of the universe as a sacred, dynamic mirror, wherein the Names of God resonate in every particle, every station, and every act of creation.

The present paper offers a provisional English rendering of the original Arabic Tablet, based on the manuscript preserved in the *Iran National Bahá'í Archives* (INBA), vol. 67, pp. 204–206. The date, place of revelation, and identity of the recipient remain unknown.

Thus, Doth the Báb Reveal:

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

*Praise be to God Who hath manifested Himself upon the Signs by their very selves.
And upon the Gates, by the **Alif** that stands upright in their Manifestations;
And upon the Heavens and the Earth by the Name of the **Bā’**, their Creator;
And upon the Star of the Heaven, by the Letter **Tā’**, the One Who Maketh it Manifest;
And upon the Ordainer of the Celestial Orbs, by the Name of the **Thā’**, their Mover;
And upon the Fuel of the Mountains, in the Name of the **Jīm**, their Exalter;
And upon the One Who causeth the Rivers to Gush Forth, by the Name of the **Rā’**, their Cause of Flow;
And upon the Winds, by the Name of the **Tā’**, their Scatterer;
And upon the Stations, by the Name of the **Hā’**, their Ordainer;
And upon the Clouds, by the Name of the **Khā’**, their Subduer;
And upon the Rivers, by the Name of the **Rā’**, their Course-Giver;
And upon the Provisions, by the Name of the **Zā’**, their Bestower;
And upon the Ages, by the Name of the **Dāl**, their Revolver;
And upon the Originator of Corporeal Forms, by the Name of the **Dhāl**, their Renewer;
And upon Death, by the Name of the **Sīn**, its Quickener;
And upon the Lightning, by the Name of the **Shīn**, its Illuminer;
And upon the Expanse, by the Name of the **Ṭā’**, its Leveler;
And upon the Meteors, by the Name of the **Zā’**, their Brightener;
And upon the Path, by the Name of the **‘Ayn**, its Conveyer;
And upon the Veils, by the Name of the **Ghayn**, their Concealer;
And upon the Gleams, by the Name of the **Fā’**, their Adorner;
And upon the Minerals, by the Name of the **Qāf**, their Sustainer;
And upon the Realm of Darkness, by the Name of the **Lām**, its Stirrer;
And upon the Tablets, by the Name of the **Kāf**, their Inscriber;
And upon the Standards, by the Name of the **Wāw**, their Resting-Place;
And upon the Deeds, by the Name of the **Nūn**, their Recorder;
And upon the Books, by the Name of the **Bā’**, their Revealer;
And upon the Fire, by the Name of the **Lām-Alif**, its Kindler;
And upon the Water, by the Name of the **Yā’**, its Channeler;
And upon the Air, by the Name of the **Hā’**, its Preserver;
And upon the Dust, by the Name of the **Mīm**, its Source of Resurrection;
And upon the Attributes, by the Name of the Names, their Revolver;
And upon the Stations, by the Name of Separation, their Connector;
And upon the Names, by the Name of the **Kāf**, their Causator;
And upon the Paths, by the Name of the **Khā’**, their Fashioner;
And upon the Trees, by the Name of the Wondrous, their Elicitor;
And upon the Throne, by the Name of the Most Great, the Eight Angels³ its Bearers;
And upon the Footstool, by the Name of the Most Exalted, its Upholder;
And upon the Unseen, by the Name of the All-Knowing, its Instructor;
And unto the Proofs, by the Name of the Beloved, their Revealer;
And upon the Loved Ones, by the Name of the Most Exalted, their Dwelling-Place;
And upon the Chosen Ones, by the Name of the Most High, their Lord and Master.
It is ended! It is ended!”*

³ The “Eight Angels” who bear the Throne allude to Qur’anic references to the angels of the Throne (hamlat al-‘Arsh, cf. Qur’an 40:7; 69:17). Classical Islamic exegesis describes eight angels sustaining the Throne, symbolizing divine authority, cosmic order, and the balance of creation. In the Báb’s mystical framework, they signify the archetypal agents through which God’s commands are manifested, reflecting the letters (hurūf) as instruments of divine power, sustaining both spiritual and material realms. Their number embodies the perfection, order, and completeness of the divine system.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله الذي

تجلى على الايات بانفسها و على الابواب بالالف القائم في مظاهرها
و على السموات و الارض باسم الباء فاطرها و على نجم السماء بالتاء
ظاهرها* و على مدبر الافلاك باسم التاء مسيرها* و على حطب الجبال
باسم الجيم رافعها* و على مفجر الانهار الراء مجريها* و على الرياح
باسم التاء منشورها* و على المنازل باسم الحاء مقدرها* و على السحاب
باسم الخاء مسخرها* و على الانهار باسم الراء مجريها* و على الارزاق
باسم الزاء منزلها* و على الدهور باسم الدال مكورها* و على محدث الاجسام
باسم الذال مجددها* و على الوقات باسم السين محييها* و على البرق
باسم الشين منورها* و على السطح باسم الطاء مسطحها* و على الشهب
باسم الظاء مجليها* و على السبيل باسم العين مبلغها* و على الحجب
باسم الغين مغيبها* و على اللمع باسم الفاء موقرها* و على المعادن
باسم القاف مقومها* و علم الظلم باسم اللام محرکها* و على الصحف
باسم الكاف مكتبها* و على الاعلام باسم الواو مسكنها* و على الاعمال
باسم النون مثبتها* و على الكتب باسم الباء مظهرها* و على النار
باسم اللاء محرقها* و على الماء باسم الياء مجريها* و على الهواء
باسم الهاء حافظها* و على التراب باسم الممات مبعثها* و على الصفات
باسم الاسماء مدورها* و على المواقع باسم الفصل موصلها* و على الاسماء
باسم الكاف معللها* و على النهج باسم الخاء مصورها* و على الاشجار
* باسم البدايع مخرجها* و على العرش باسم الاكبر ملئكة الثمان حاملها
و على الكرسي باسم العلى ممسكها* و على الغيب باسم العليم معلمها* و الى الحجج
باسم الحبيب منزلها* و على الاحباء باسم العلى مستويها* و على الاوصياء باسم
العى مولاها تمت تمت