

Lawḥ-i-Maryam (Tablet to Maryam) Revealed by Bahá'u'lláh¹

He is sorrowful in My sorrow

- 1 O Maryam! The wrongs which I suffer have blotted out the wrongs suffered by My First Name (the Báb) from the Tablet of creation² and the showers of affliction rained at all times upon this veiled Beauty from the clouds of God's decree.
- 2 My expulsion from My country was for no other reason except My love for the Beloved, and my removal from My land was for no other motive but My willing submission to the Goal of all desire (*riḍáy-i-maqṣúd*).
- 3 In the summons of God's decree I was even as a kindled and shining lamp and in the time of heavenly trials I was as steadfast (*thábit*)³ as a mountain.
- 4 In the revelations of grace I was even as a raining cloud and in restraining the enemies of the King of Oneness like a blazing fire.
- 5 The tokens of My might have become a cause of the envy of My enemies and the effulgences of My wisdom have turned into instruments of the perfidy of the malicious.
- 6 There was not a night during which I rested in a safe place, not a morning in which I lifted My head from My couch with ease.
- 7 I swear by the Beauty of God! Ḥusayn wept for the wrongs I have suffered and the Friend (Abraham) cast himself into the fire for My grief.
- 8 Were thou to examine carefully the matter, the eyes of might are weeping behind the Tabernacle of sinlessness and the people of glory are moaning in the precincts of loftiness. Unto this beareth witness the Tongue of truth and glory.

¹ Lights of 'Irfán 8 (2007):357-62, with Faezeh Mardabi Mazzoli. *Ishráq-Khávárí, Risáliy-i-Ayyám-i-Tis'ih* 366-71; cf. *Raḥíq-i Makhtúm* 2:430-435.

² From "O Maryam . . ." to ". . . Tablet of creation," translated by Shoghi Effendi, cf. *God Passes By* 7.31:118.

³ *Ishráq-Khávárí, Risáliy-i-Ayyám-i-Tis'ih* 367 gives *nábit* literally "growing, germinating" (Steingass 1366). It should be a typo for *thábit*. Cf. *Ishráq-Khávárí* (ed.), *Má'idíy-i-Ásmání* 4:330.

- 9 O Maryam! From the land of Ṭá (Teheran), after countless afflictions, We reached ‘Iráq at the bidding of the Tyrant of Persia, where, after the fetters of Our foes, We were afflicted with the perfidy of Our friends. God knoweth what befell Me thereafter!⁴
- 10 At length I gave up My home and all therein, and renounced life and all that appertaineth unto it, and alone and friendless, chose to go into retirement.⁵
- 11 I roamed the wilderness of resignation, travelling in such wise that in My exile every eye wept sore over Me, and all created things shed tears of blood because of My anguish. The birds of the air were My companions and the beasts of the field My associates.⁶
- 12 I passed beyond this fleeting world even as the flash of the spirit, and for two years or rather less I shunned all beside God, and closed Mine eyes to all except Him, that haply the fire of hatred may die down and the heat of jealousy abate.⁷
- 13 O Maryam! The celestial mysteries should not be unraveled and it is not pleasing that the heavenly secrets be divulged, that is the mysteries of the inner treasures of My Soul, this I mean, and nothing else.
- 14 By the righteousness of God! I have borne what neither the oceans, nor the waves, nor the fruits, nor any created thing whether of the past or of the future, hath borne or will be capable of bearing.⁸
- 15 In that period of My exile none of My brothers or any other inquired about this Cause, or sought to understand it, although this Cause is greater than the creation of the earth and of the heavens.
- 16 I swear by God! One moment of My journey excelleth a service in both worlds (*‘ibádati ’l-thaqalayn*, cf. “Tablet of Aḥmad,” ¶ 14, in *Bahá’í Prayers* [1991])

⁴ From “O Maryam . . .” to “. . . befell Me thereafter,” translated by Shoghi Effendi, cf. *God Passes By* 7.31:118.

⁵ From “At length . . .” to “. . . into retirement,” translated by Balyuzi, cf. *King of Glory* 117.

⁶ From “I roamed . . .” to “. . . My associates,” translated by Shoghi Effendi, cf. *God Passes By* 7.35:120.

⁷ From “I passed beyond . . .” to “. . . flash of the spirit,” cf. Browne’s translation in *Materials* 5; from “for two years . . .” to “. . . of jealousy abate,” translated by Shoghi Effendi, cf. *God Passes By* 7.31:119.

⁸ Translated by Balyuzi, cf. *King of Glory* 117, cf. *God Passes By* 7.31:118.

- 212), because that retirement was the mightiest testimony and the most perfect and conclusive evidence.⁹
- 17 Yea, a man of insight (*ṣāhib-i-baṣar*) is needed to behold the Most Great Beauty (*manẓar-i-akbar*, cf. “Tablet of Aḥmad,” ¶ 2, in *Bahá’i Prayers* 210) and whosoever has no inner eye (*baṣar*) is deprived of perceiving the grace of his own beauty, how much more of the Sacred and Divine Beauty.
- 18 What does the shadow understand of the One Who casteth it? And what does a handful of clay comprehend of a subtle heart?
- 19 At length God’s decree (*qaḍáy-i-iláhi*) reminded some of His spiritual servants of this Canaanite Youth, and with a handful of writings they began to make enquiry in all places and with all persons until they discovered a trace of that Traceless One in a mountain cave. Verily he guideth all things into a straight path (cf. Qur’an 2:142, 213).¹⁰
- 20 I swear by the Sun of Eternal Truth! This poor and forsaken One was so astonished and amazed by the presence of the newcomers, that this Pen is powerless to describe it, unless another sharp Pen (*qalam-i-ḥadíd*) steps forth from behind the Immortal Realm, and rends asunder the veils, and expounds its secrets with absolute sincerity and with the truth of certitude, and with a suitable language sets to explaining, and takes the celestial pearls out of the shell of silence. Nor is that for God any great matter (cf. Qur’an 14:20).
- 21 In brief, the seal of mystery was broken by the hand of the Unconstrained. Otherwise, none could understand but the men of understanding and the detached.
- 22 Then, the Day-Star of the World returned to ‘Iráq. We found no more than a handful of souls, faint and dispirited, nay utterly lost and dead. The Cause of God had ceased to be on any one’s lips, nor was any heart receptive to its message.¹¹
- 23 Therefore this evanescent Servant arose for the protection and the exaltation of the Cause of God, in such wise that one would say that a new Resurrection

⁹ “the mightiest testimony and the most perfect and conclusive evidence,” translated by Shoghi Effendi, cf. *God Passes By* 7.42:124.

¹⁰ From “At length . . .” to “. . . straight path,” cf. Browne’s translation in *Materials* 5.

¹¹ From “We found no more than . . .” to “. . . receptive to its message,” translated by Shoghi Effendi, cf. *God Passes By* 7.44:125; *Kitáb-i-Qarn-i-Badí’* (God Passes By) 262.

- (*qiyámat mujaddad^{an}*) had come to pass, and the greatness of the Cause was manifested in every city, and witnessed in every land, so that all the authorities showed courtesy and good manners.
- 24 O Maryam! That this Servant has arisen to face enemies of all sects and tribes kindled the envy of the foes, in a manner which no one can describe or imagine. Thus hath it been decreed by One Who is the Glorious, the Almighty.
- 25 O Maryam! The Pen of the Ancient of Days says that purifying the heart from everything but God is among the most important matters. Therefore, sanctify thy heart from all but the Friend, so that thou mayest be worthy of the Realm of eternal reunion (*bisát-i-uns*, cf. *Kitáb-i-Mustaṭáb* 197, *Kitáb-i-Íqán* 255).
- 26 O Maryam! Move from the constraints of imitation towards the immensity of the heavens (*faḍáy-i-khush*, cf. *Gleanings* 327, CLII, 6) of detachment. Cleanse thine heart from the world and all that is therein, so that thou mayest attain unto the King of faith and mayest not be debarred from the Sanctuary of the Merciful. Tear asunder the veil of fancy through the power of sublime renunciation (*inqitá‘*, cf. *Kitáb-i-Íqán* 77) and enter into the holy seat of certitude.
- 27 O Maryam! A tree has a hundred thousand leaves and fruits, but they are all destroyed and wiped out by a breath of the autumnal and winter winds. Therefore do not distract thy gaze from the Root of the Divine Tree and from the Branch of the Tree of divine glory.
- 28 Look how the sea is calm and peaceful in its bed in majestic dignity and composure (*bi-sulṭán-i-vaqár va sukún*). But by reason of the gales of the Will of the Eternal Beloved, unnumbered forms and shapes become visible on its surface and all these billows seem contrary and adverse. And thus all people busy themselves with the waves and are shut out as by a veil from the might of the Sea of Seas, from whose movement the signs of the Unconstrained become manifest.
- 29 O Maryam! Be a companion of the Self of the Merciful (*naḥs-i-raḥmán*) and from the association with and resemblance to Satan enter beneath the shelter of the sanctity of the Bountiful, that perchance the hand of Divine grace may draw thee away from the paths of passion unto the heavens of everlasting might and glory.
- 30 O Maryam! Return from the fleeting shadows unto the Day Star of unfading glory. The existence of all shadows endures or moves away by reason of the

existence of the sun. Should the sun withhold its grace for but a moment, everything would end in the pavilion of nothingness. O the pity and the regret that people should busy themselves with perishing appearances and be deprived of the Dayspring of eternal holiness.

- 31 O Maryam! Appreciate the value of these days, for soon thou wilt not see the celestial Youth in the pavilion of the created world and thou wilt behold the signs of despondency in every thing. Soon ye will bite your fingers' ends (cf. Qur'an 3:115; *Kitáb-i-Íqán* 77) in your regret and will not find the Youth, were ye to search the uttermost corners of the heaven and the earth. This is what hath descended from the Kingdom of supernal glory. Yea, soon thou wilt see the people biting their fingers' ends in their longing for this Youth, and wilt witness see how all of them will search after Him throughout the heavens and the earth and will not attain unto His presence.
- 32 Thus, the matter came to such a pass that this Servant decided to come forth among the people of sedition (*bayn-i-yá'júj*, literally among the people of Gog), separated from all else except a few women that had to stay with Him. And I brought none along with Me, not even the maids of My Consort, dependent on what God may desire.
- 33 This Youth departed in such a state that My succor were the drops of My tears, My confidants the sighs of My heart, and My friend My pen, and My companion My Beauty, and my army My reliance, and my people (*hizb*) My trust.
- 34 This is what I set forth unto you of the secrets of the Cause, so that thou mayest be of them who understand.
- 35 O Maryam! All the seas of the world and the rivers gushing therefrom flow forth from the eyes of this Youth, which have taken the semblance of a cloud and weep for their oppression.
- 36 In short, We offered this head and this soul in the path of the Friend for all eternity and whatever may happen We are pleased and thankful.
- 37 This head at one time was raised on a spear-point, at another was delivered into the hands of Shimr, again I was cast into fire, and again I was suspended. And this is what the infidels have wrought against Us.
- 38 And thus, O Maryam, We have marked this Tablet with a wondrous lamentation and a vernal weeping, and have dispatched it to thee, so that thou mayest moan with ease and share the grief of the Ancient Beauty.

- 39 Besides, inasmuch as his eminence Jináb-i-Bábá was present in the first year and is acquainted with certain facts, may God grant that the Holy Spirit bestow sincerity and certitude to his tongue and thou mayest be informed of a drop of the story of this Youth. We remember H̄usnī Khánum and Şughrá Khánum.

A poem by Maryam

O joy for my rare, bewildered and bleeding heart! Euphrates and Tigris
stream forth from its bosom.

Time was when Majnún's story sounded strange to me; now my heart
houses two hundred Laylís and Majnúns.

The Ravisher of my heart has left the town and pitched His tent in the
desert; now, even as Qays,¹² I always turn my face towards it.

If the doleful Zulaykhá¹³ had a moon in prison, I have two hundred shin-
ing suns in prison.

Should I tell what the Fortune's Wheel brought to my heart, I would
turn the nine heavens into ashes.

For long years I prayerfully sat in the Ka'bih of the Beloved; now a
journey of more than a hundred years divides me from Him.

O Thou Who dwellest beyond the seven seas, see how the vessel of my
heart is filled with Thee.

I am so distressed by the grief of remoteness and separation that I sad-
den Seraphims' and Cherubims' hearts.

The page is finished and the secret of my heart is as yet unrevealed; alas,
what a blazing fire burns in my hearth! (*Dhuká'í Baydá'í* 3:334-40)

¹² Qays Ibn al-Mulawwah is LaylÍ's lover, nicknamed Majnún, that is possessed by a demon or *jinn*, because he was driven mad by his love for LaylÍ.

¹³ Zulaykhá is the name ascribed by Muslim tradition to Potiphar's wife who fell in love with Joseph.