

Facsimile of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner



The Arabic section of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner
in the hand of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, son of Bahá'u'lláh

Tablet of the Holy Mariner

by

Bahá'u'lláh

[Tablet of the Holy Mariner
on Bahá'í World Centre website](#)

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in English and other languages](#)

Bahá'í Faith

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Introduction

Lawh-i-Malláhu'l-Quds or the ***Tablet of the Holy Mariner*** is a Tablet written by Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith. The Tablet's main theme is the Covenant between man and God, and man being unfaithful to it.

These verses were revealed by Bahá'u'lláh on 27 March 1863 just before He was forced to leave Baghdad for Constantinople (Istanbul), foretell the dark days to come. Bahá'u'lláh and His companions had set up tents outside Baghdad to celebrate Naw-Rúz, the New Year. One of the chroniclers of Bahá'u'lláh's life, Nabil, was there and left this account:

"Oceans of sorrow surged in the hearts of the listeners when the *Tablet of the Holy Mariner* was read aloud to them.... It was evident to every one that the chapter of Baghdad was about to be closed, and a new one opened, in its stead. No sooner had that Tablet been chanted than Bahá'u'lláh ordered that the tents which had been pitched should be folded up, and that all His companions should return to the city. While the tents were being removed He observed: *'These tents may be likened to the trappings of this world, which no sooner are they spread out than the time cometh for them to be rolled up.'* From these words of His they who heard them perceived that these tents would never again be pitched on that spot."

Shortly thereafter, Bahá'u'lláh was summoned by the Ottoman government from Baghdad to Constantinople (present-day Istanbul); before leaving Baghdad, He entered the garden of Ridván, where he publicly stated His claimed prophethood.

The Tablet is written in two parts; one which is in Arabic, and the other in Persian; currently only the Arabic part has been translated into English. The Persian Tablet is for the most part similar in content to the Arabic Tablet. The Tablet is written in allegorical terms and its main theme is the Covenant and man being unfaithful to it. In the Tablet, Bahá'u'lláh refers to Himself as the "Holy Mariner," uses an "Ark" to symbolize the Covenant of God, and symbolized the

believers in the Covenant as the "dwellers" in the "Ark;" He writes that those people who are in the Ark are safe and will acquire salvation. In the Tablet, Bahá'u'lláh also alludes to His perceived station as *He Whom God shall make manifest*, a messianic figure predicted by the Báb, and the fate of Subh-i-Azal, Bahá'u'lláh's half-brother who wanted to cause a split in the Bábí community.

Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

"Study the Tablet of the Holy Mariner that ye may know the truth, and consider that the Blessed Beauty hath fully foretold future events. Let them who perceive, take warning!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá



Tablet of the Holy Mariner

He is the Gracious, the Well-Beloved!

1

O Holy Mariner!

Bid thine ark of eternity appear before the Celestial Concourse,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

2

Launch it upon the ancient sea, in His Name, the Most Wondrous,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

3

And let the angelic spirits enter, in the Name of God, the Most High.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

4

Unmoor it, then, that it may sail upon the ocean of glory,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

5

Haply the dwellers therein may attain the retreats of nearness in the everlasting realm.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

6

Having reached the sacred strand, the shore of the crimson seas,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

7

Bid them issue forth and attain this ethereal invisible station,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

8

A station wherein the Lord hath in the Flame of His Beauty appeared
within the deathless tree;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

9

Wherein the embodiments of His Cause cleansed themselves of self
and passion;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

10

Around which the Glory of Moses doth circle with the everlasting
hosts;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

11

Wherein the Hand of God was drawn forth from His bosom of
Grandeur;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

12

Wherein the ark of the Cause remaineth motionless even though to its dwellers be declared all divine attributes.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

13

O Mariner! Teach them that are within the ark that which we have taught thee behind the mystic veil.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

14

Perchance they may not tarry in the sacred snow-white spot,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

15

But may soar upon the wings of the spirit unto that station which the Lord hath exalted above all mention in the worlds below,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

16

May wing through space even as the favored birds in the realm of eternal reunion;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

17

May know the mysteries hidden in the Seas of light.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

18

They passed the grades of worldly limitations and reached that of the divine unity, the center of heavenly guidance.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

19

They have desired to ascend unto that state which the Lord hath
ordained to be above their stations.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

20

Whereupon the burning meteor cast them out from them that abide
in the Kingdom of His Presence,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

21

And they heard the Voice of Grandeur raised from behind the unseen
pavilion upon the Height of Glory:
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

22

“O guardian angels! Return them to their abode in the world below,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

23

“Inasmuch as they have purposed to rise to that sphere which the
wings of the celestial dove have never attained;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

24

“Whereupon the ship of fancy standeth still which the minds of them
that comprehend cannot grasp.”
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

25

Whereupon the maid of heaven looked out from her exalted
chamber,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

26

And with her brow signed to the Celestial Concourse,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

27

Flooding with the light of her countenance the heaven and the earth,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

28

And as the radiance of her beauty shone upon the people of dust,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

29

All beings were shaken in their mortal graves.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

30

She then raised the call which no ear through all eternity hath ever
heard,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

31

And thus proclaimed: "By the Lord! He whose heart hath not the
fragrance of the love of the exalted and glorious Arabian Youth,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

32

"Can in no wise ascend unto the glory of the highest heaven."
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

33

Thereupon she summoned unto herself one maiden from her
handmaidens,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

34

And commanded her: "Descend into space from the mansions of eternity,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

35

"And turn thou unto that which they have concealed in the inmost of their hearts.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

36

"Shouldst thou inhale the perfume of the robe from the Youth that hath been hidden within the tabernacle of light by reason of that which the hands of the wicked have wrought,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

37

"Raise a cry within thyself, that all the inmates of the chambers of Paradise, that are the embodiments of the eternal wealth, may understand and hearken;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

38

"That they may all come down from their everlasting chambers and tremble,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

39

"And kiss their hands and feet for having soared to the heights of faithfulness;
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

40

“Perchance they may find from their robes the fragrance of the Beloved One.”

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

41

Thereupon the countenance of the favored damsel beamed above the celestial chambers even as the light that shineth from the face of the Youth above His mortal temple;

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

42

She then descended with such an adorning as to illumine the heavens and all that is therein.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

43

She bestirred herself and perfumed all things in the lands of holiness and grandeur.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

44

When she reached that place she rose to her full height in the midmost heart of creation,

Glorified be my Lord, the all-Glorious!

45

And sought to inhale their fragrance at a time that knoweth neither beginning nor end.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

46

She found not in them that which she did desire, and this, verily, is but one of His wondrous tales.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

47

She then cried aloud, wailed and repaired to her own station within
her most lofty mansion,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

48

And then gave utterance to one mystic word, whispered privily by her
honeyed tongue,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

49

And raised the call amidst the Celestial Concourse and the immortal
maids of heaven:
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

50

"By the Lord! I found not from these idle claimants the breeze of
Faithfulness!
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

51

"By the Lord! The Youth hath remained lone and forlorn in the land
of exile in the hands of the ungodly."
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

52

She then uttered within herself such a cry that the Celestial
Concourse did shriek and tremble,
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

53

And she fell upon the dust and gave up the spirit. It seemeth she was
called and hearkened unto Him that summoned her unto the Realm
on High.
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

54

Glorified be He that created her out of the essence of love in the midmost heart of His exalted paradise!
Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

55

Thereupon the maids of heaven hastened forth from their chambers, upon whose countenances the eye of no dweller in the highest paradise had ever gazed.
Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!

56

They all gathered around her, and lo! they found her body fallen upon the dust;
Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!

57

And as they beheld her state and comprehended a word of the tale told by the Youth, they bared their heads, rent their garments asunder, beat upon their faces, forgot their joy, shed tears and smote with their hands upon their cheeks, and this is verily one of the mysterious grievous afflictions—
Glorified be our Lord, the Most High! ¹

Bahá'u'lláh

¹ Bahá'í Prayers: www.bahai.org/r/960231995