

Tablet of Ridván: Tablet study outline

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Name of Tablet in Arabic or Persian: Lawh-i-Ridván (one of a few with this name)

Translation into English: Tablet of Ridván. This is **not** the same Tablet of Ridván as can be found excerpted in Gleanings XIV, nor is it the same Tablet of Ridván which can be found on the internet in provisional translation. There would seem to be no part of this Tablet translated anywhere.

Significance of Name: It was revealed during Ridván.

Tablet was revealed in: Arabic

Reason for Revelation of the Tablet: This Tablet opens with the words (provisional translation):

"This is a Tablet that was revealed in Ridván so that all may read it in the Festival of Ridván in the voice of God, the Almighty, the All-Wise."

Date of Revelation: The ninth day of Ridván, 1869 (Bahá'u'lláh mentions in the text of this Tablet that "now is the ninth day of the days of Ridván"). Taherzadeh (vol. 3, p. 53) writes that "It was probably revealed during Ridván 1869, the first of the two Ridván Festivals that He celebrated in the prison, for in it He mentions the names of several believers who had tried to enter `Akká and been stopped by the authorities.")

Place of Revelation: Akká, "in the barracks" (ibid, p. 53)

Voice of Tablet: [?] Bahá'u'lláh

Outline Contents of Tablet:

Taherzadeh (vol. 3, 53-54) writes:

In this Tablet Bahá'u'lláh describes how...He was invited by one of the believers in the prison to honour his room with His presence and attend the celebration of that great Festival. His companions on that day were truly intoxicated with the wine of His presence. The believer who had invited Bahá'u'lláh entertained Him with the best food he could provide. Bahá'u'lláh refers to this and states that other believers had invited Him to their rooms during the Ridván period also. Each according to his capacity had provided some food and some had nothing to entertain Him with except a cup of tea.

In this Tablet Bahá'u'lláh showers His bounties upon His companions, and prays that they may remain steadfast in His Cause and united among themselves."

Dr. Iraj Ayman, who has read the Tablet in Arabic, adds:
"It is interesting that at the end of this Tablet Bahá'u'lláh supplicates God to aid and assist the friends so that they can entertain and celebrate this occasion by their behavior and their deeds thus through such behavior and celebration the tablecloth of divine blessing be spread throughout the world!"

Principal themes of the Tablet:

Not stated; presumably the Tablet is suffused with the spirit of proclamation, joy, and hope, for such is the character of other Tablets of Ridván.

Tablet's relationship to other tablets:

This is one of many Tablets revealed on or in commemoration of the Festival of Ridván. John Walbridge discusses some of these Tablets (though not this one) in the book *Sacred Acts, Sacred Space, Sacred Time*, pages 232-241.

Biography or bio note of the recipient of the Tablet:

The following is summarized/paraphrased from Taherzadeh, vol. 3, 53-56:

In this Tablet Bahá'u'lláh refers to two Persian believers living in `Akká itself, some who were trying to come in, and some who were staying at Haifa. The two in `Akká were Muhammad Ja`far-i-Tabrizi, entitled Mansur, and Mírzá Hadi `Abdu'l-Ahad. The latter was the first to arrive in `Akká. He had been sent there by `Abdu'l-Bahá some time before Bahá'u'lláh's exile to that city, and no one suspected him of being a Bahá'í. He opened a shop but did not try to contact Bahá'u'lláh and His companions in the barracks when they arrived. However, the few Bahá'í prisoners who went to the market every day to purchase provisions met him and knew that he was a Bahá'í. Through him, and by other means, the news of Bahá'u'lláh's whereabouts soon reached the believers in Persia and a few of His followers travelled to `Akká. `Abdu'l-Ahad very discreetly helped some of the visitors who had managed to enter the city to approach the barracks. Sometimes he even had to hide the visitors in the back of his shop.

Among those living at Haifa was Mírzá Ibráhím-i-Kashani, a copper-smith by profession, whom Bahá'u'lláh refers to in this Tablet as Khalíl. He was a devoted believer, and had been among the Bahá'í prisoners sent from Baghdad to Mosul. Accompanied by some relatives he had managed to leave Mosul and settle in Haifa. In those days, entering `Akká was very difficult for the believers, but he managed to enter frequently by taking some of his copper implements for sale. He thus became an important channel of communication between the believers and Bahá'u'lláh.

Another believer mentioned in the Ridván Tablet was an old man, Ustad Isma`il. He was a master builder of wide experience who had worked for the government officials in Persia. When he became known as a Bábí, he had to leave his work. He then went to Baghdad where he was given the honour of carrying out construction work on the house of Bahá'u'lláh. And when the believers in that city were exiled to Mosul, he managed to travel to `Akká. In spite of old age he walked all the way until he came and stood in front of the Most Great Prison eagerly waiting to behold the face of his Beloved from across the moat.

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