

Annotations for the Kitáb-i-Íqán

The following annotations should in no wise be considered as conclusive or comprehensive. Obviously no one is in a position to compose an authoritative commentary on the revealed Books of God. Rather, these notes, related as they are in one way or another to points and themes in the text of the Íqán, are intended to help stimulate the reader in considering the various truths set forth and encourage the student to seek out from the vast ocean of the Bahá'í writings such verses and passages as will throw further light on the subjects at hand.

Several verses quoted by Bahá'u'lláh in the Íqán are not identified in the text. Most of these are from the reported sayings or *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muḥammad and His legitimate successors, the twelve Imáms. Of those attributed to Muḥammad there are two classifications: those that are said to be from Himself, and those that are the Voice of God. The latter are known as *Ḥadīth-i-Qudsí* (Holy Tradition) and are so indicated in the annotations. As will be seen, some of the material cited is from Bahá'u'lláh Himself and is set off by quotation marks either because it is a quote from elsewhere or it is a passage in Arabic. The identifications provided are, for the most part, on the authority of *Ishráq Khávarí's* four-volume encyclopedic Persian study, the *Qámús-i-Íqán*.

The numbers in the left hand column refer to paragraphs of the Íqán.

Part One

The Book of Certitude is divided into two parts. Each is headed by a brief paragraph which sets out its general theme. Part One centres on the importance of detachment in attaining to true understanding of God and His Prophets; an account of the cruelties suffered by the divine Messengers; the consequences of people blindly following religious leaders and not searching out truth for themselves; the exalted station of the Manifestations of God; the method of God in trying His servants to distinguish the sincere from the false; and the relativity of religious truth, as well as the continuity of divine Revelation.

invocation **the Exalted, the Most High** (Arabic: `Alíyyu'l-A`lá) Names of God often associated with the Báb Himself as in the `battle cry' animating the heroes and heroines of the Ten Year Spiritual Crusade (1953-63): `Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá, Yá Alíyyu'l-A`lá.'[1]

1 **No man shall attain** This opening paragraph, like the one that heads Part Two of the Íqán, was revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in Arabic. Both are followed by extensive elucidations in Persian.

1 **true understanding** Man's attainment of this understanding is one of the essential animating purposes of creation. Such divine knowledge, such comprehension, wisdom and recognition, as emphasized in the Íqán, is not dependent upon acquired human learning. Rather, true understanding is in the nature of light from the sun of divine knowledge which, shining from the Prophets of God, is reflected in the heart of man, endowing it with the recognition of truth and inspiring it with the comprehension of spiritual realities. As it is said: `Knowledge is a light which God casteth into the heart of whomsoever He willeth.'[2] Note the spiritual prerequisites, in this case, detachment and sanctity of soul, which are necessary for a true comprehension of Divine Revelation. The requirement of virtue in connection with the attainment of knowledge and insight is a recurring truth of the Íqán. It is clear that people differ in regard to the degree of true understanding which they have attained. `Abdu'l-Bahá in a Tablet comments on the relative character of this understanding and

establishes that no matter how high the soaring ones fly in the utmost degrees of knowledge and comprehension, no matter how near the worshippers of the one true God ascend towards the summits of certitude, they are but reading letters from the book of their own selves, reaching only to the brilliant unseen signs that are enshrined in the reality of their own beings, and circling round the centre of their own entities. He further emphasizes that the degrees which are beyond their realms of understanding shall never be perceived nor understood by them.[3]

1 **detached from all that is in heaven and on earth** Desire for either earthly rewards or heavenly treasures constitutes an improper motive for seeking God's good-pleasure. ` . . . if thy gaze should be on paradise, and thou shouldst worship Him while cherishing such a hope, thou wouldst make God's creation a partner with Him, notwithstanding the fact that paradise is desired by men.'[4]

1 **Bayán** Literally, `utterance', `explanation'. Term used in reference to the whole of the Báb's Revelation as stated in the Persian Bayán: `The substance of this chapter is this, that all the writings of the Point [i.e. the Báb] are named Beyán.'[5] Bahá'u'lláh Himself confirms this in the following passage addressed to the Báb:

Should any one consider Thy Books which Thou didst name the Bayán, and ponder in his heart what hath been revealed therein, he would discover that each of these Books announceth my Revelation, and declareth my Name, and testifieth to my Self, and proclaimeth my Cause, and my Praise, and my Rising, and the radiance of my Glory.[6]

Also the specific title of two important works of the Báb: the above-mentioned Persian Bayán and the Arabic Bayán. See note on the **Persian Bayán** at 219 below.

2 **they that tread the path of faith** Such wayfarers in the path of faith are defined in Islamic mysticism as those who have freed themselves from vain imaginations, have subdued the animal side of their nature, have set foot on the way of faith, and by the aid of God, after passing the seven valleys or cities, as explained by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Seven Valleys*, attain the object of their quest.

2 **certitude** The human soul's realization of certitude is an important theme found not only in the Íqán but throughout Bahá'u'lláh's writings. For example: `Blessed are they who, on the wings of certitude, have flown in the heavens which the Pen of thy Lord, the All-Merciful, hath spread.'[7] `He it is Who hath unveiled to your eyes the treasures of His knowledge, and caused you to ascend unto the heaven of certitude -- the certitude of His resistless, His irrefutable, and most exalted Faith.'[8] It was He Himself Who chose to identify His principal doctrinal work with the theme of certitude.

2 **a standard** The principle of reference to the revealed Word of God as the balance in determining the truth of things is most powerfully stated by Bahá'u'lláh in His Most Holy Book:

Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring Balance established amongst men. In this most perfect Balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it.[9]

3 **Manifestations of God** Bahá'í term meaning the Messengers of God, such as Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

. . . in the kingdoms of earth and heaven there must needs be manifested a Being, an Essence Who shall act as a Manifestation and Vehicle for the transmission of the grace of the Divinity Itself, the Sovereign Lord of

all. Through the Teachings of this Day Star of Truth every man will advance and develop until he attaineth the station at which he can manifest all the potential forces with which his inmost true self hath been endowed.[10]

The Person of the Manifestation hath ever been the representative and mouthpiece of God. He, in truth, is the Day Spring of God's most excellent Titles, and the Dawning-Place of His exalted Attributes.[11]

3 **the face of God** With regard to His own Revelation Bahá'u'lláh proclaims: 'This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendours of the Light that shineth from the face of Thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful.[12] 'He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come.'[13] 'O ye leaders of religion! Who is the man amongst you that can rival Me in vision or insight? here is he to be found that dareth to claim to be My equal in utterance or wisdom? No, by My Lord, the All-Merciful! All on the earth shall pass away; and this is the face of your Lord, the Almighty, the Well-Beloved.'[14]

4 **'No Messenger . . . laugh Him to scorn.'** Reference is also made to the scorning of Prophets in the Bible: 'And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.'[15] 'A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.'[16]

5 **possessed of true understanding** See note on the same subject at 1 above.

5 **Súrih of Húd** The eleventh chapter of the Qur'án, 123 verses in length, which recounts the successive calls of God's Prophets and Messengers and the dire consequences befalling those peoples who rejected them. See note on **Húd** at 9 below.

5 **negation** Bahá'u'lláh confirms in one of His meditations with reference to humankind that 'the letters of negation, no matter how far they may be removed from the holy fragrances of Thy knowledge, and however forgetful they may become of the wondrous splendours of the dawning light of Thy beauty, which are shed from the heaven of Thy majesty, must needs exist in Thy realm, so that the words which affirm Thee may thereby be exalted'.[17] The words and deeds of the Prophets, as set out in this part of the Íqán, have been the essential factors effecting this distinction between negation and affirmation. Those who conform to the Book of God, as explained by the Báb, 'will abide in Paradise, under the shadow of His affirmation and reckoned among the most sublime Letters in the presence of God; while whoso deviateth, were it even so much as the tip of a grain of barley, will be consigned to the fire and will be assembled neath the shadow of negation'.[18]

With regard to the operation of this principle in His own Day, Bahá'u'lláh affirms:

If all who are in heaven and on earth be invested in this day with the powers and attributes destined for the Letters of the Bayán, whose station is ten thousand times more glorious than that of the Letters of the Qur'anic Dispensation, and if they one and all should, swift as the twinkling of an eye, hesitate to recognize My Revelation, they shall be accounted, in the sight of God, of those that have gone astray, and regarded as 'Letters of Negation'.[19]

5 **bird of the human heart** 'Wings have I bestowed upon thee, that thou mayest fly to the realms of mystic holiness and not the regions of satanic fancy.'[20] The Bahá'í writings are replete with examples likening the soul of man to a bird. If, we are told, a bird is always soaring higher, its progress will be continual, but if it relaxes in its efforts it will necessarily descend to the earth.[21]

5 **bread** Here we have the inner meaning of manna from heaven as found in past scriptures:

That which is preeminent above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, is the gift of Divine Revelation. Every bounty conferred by the Creator upon man, be it material or spiritual,

is subservient unto this. It is, in its essence, and will ever so remain, the Bread which cometh down from Heaven . . . He hath, indeed, partaken of this highest gift of God who hath recognized His Manifestation in this Day.[22]

Thank God that thou wert fed from the table which hath descended from heaven. That food is 'I am the bread which descended from heaven', recorded in the Gospel. That is faith, certainty, love and knowledge.[23]

6 indignities heaped upon the Prophets

Thou hast known how grievously the Prophets of God, His Messengers and Chosen Ones, have been afflicted. Meditate a while on the motive and reason which have been responsible for such a persecution. At no time, in no Dispensation, have the Prophets of God escaped the blasphemy of their enemies, the cruelty of their oppressors, the denunciation of the learned of their age, who appeared in the guise of uprightness and piety. Day and night they passed through such agonies as none can ever measure, except the knowledge of the one true God, exalted be His glory.[24]

Such hath been the perversity of men and their transgressions, so grievous have been the trials that have afflicted the Prophets of God and their chosen ones, that all mankind deserveth to be tormented and to perish. God's hidden and most loving providence, however, hath, through both visible and invisible agencies, protected and will continue to protect it from the penalty of its wickedness.[25]

Note from this paragraph of the Íqán that close observation of the history of the opposition inflicted on the Prophets will strengthen one's faith.

7 **Noah** Bahá'u'lláh here begins brief accounts of the ministries of a number of Prophets starting with Noah. For additional accounts of Noah see Qur'án 4:163, 7:59, 10:71, 11:25, 23:23-30, 26:105-20; also 37:75, 71:1-28, etc. and the biblical story in Genesis 5-9. 'The Ark and the Flood we believe are symbolical.'[26]

7 nine hundred and fifty years

The Guardian advises, that the period of 950 years referred to in the Íqán, as the time Noah exhorted the people -- refers to the period of His Ministry. The term year does not refer to a period of time such as our year -- it was entirely different; and thus does not extend over any such period as our present term year would imply.[27]

Approximately six thousand years have elapsed since the appearance of Adam. The ages of the Prophets specified in the Bible were based on a different calculation than the one used at present. The years mentioned in the Bible were different from ours.[28]

The Bible makes no reference to Noah until He is said to be five hundred years old and when He begets three sons; see Gen. 5:32.

7 **such pain and suffering** According to a tradition attributed to the Imám Şádiq, Noah was several times so badly beaten by the infidels that His ears would gush with blood and He would for a time lose consciousness. Noah's followers would beg Him to ask God to punish the unbelievers but Noah would instead pray for them.

7 **the divine promise was not fulfilled** The non-fulfilment of a prophetic announcement owing to a change in the divine purpose (Arabic, *badá*) is an accepted theological principle in Islam and is confirmed in the Bahá'í writings.

With regard to the specific promise mentioned here and recorded in 'the best-known books', this refers to accounts in renowned Muslim traditions attributed to the sixth Imám, Ja'far-i-Şádiq, which relate how God told Noah to inform His followers that after eating dates they should plant the seeds and that once these grew to fruition, divine punishment would descend on their enemies. When the fresh fruits appeared, Noah was asked about the promised punishment; He said that God now wanted them to plant the seeds of this new fruit, and when they bore dates, then the punishment would come. As stated in the Íqán, this 'caused a few among the small number of His followers to turn away from Him'. The test according to the traditions was later repeated twice again with the same result. Finally God's command came to build the Ark which would protect all those who had persevered through the tests from the flood which would overtake the non-believers.

In the Persian Bayán the Báb explains that the non-fulfilment of a divine promise is another expression of God's power to do whatsoever He wills. No one can oppose this because His decree is just. Non-fulfilment when it concerns creation is related to weakness and limitation on the part of the creatures. But when it is attributed to God, it is evidence of His might and power.

7 **forty or seventy-two of His followers** The point is the fewness of Noah's followers after the trials described. Bahá'u'lláh here cites two different figures from the recorded traditions without giving a judgement as to which is the more accurate.

9 **Húd** First of the five Prophets of God mentioned in the Qur'án as having been sent to the peoples of Arabia, which extended across the whole of the Arabian peninsula to the Sinai; the others are Şáliḥ, Abraham, Shu'ayb and Muḥammad. Húd came to the people of `Ád; see Qur'án 7:65; 11:50-60; 26:123-40. `Ád is known as the grandson of Aram, who was the grandson of Noah. Húd is possibly Eber of the Bible; see Gen. 10:24.

9 **For well-nigh seven hundred years** See note on nine hundred and fifty years at 7 above.

9 **Riḍván** Riḍván means Paradise and is also the name of the custodian of Paradise in Islamic traditions.

10 **Şáliḥ** The second of the five Prophets to the Arabs, in this case to the Thamúd tribe; some commentators identify Him with the Salah of Gen. 10:24. He is mentioned extensively in the Qur'án. According to Muslim traditions, Şáliḥ began His prophetic mission when He was 16, and lived for 120 years. When Şáliḥ was asked for a sign by the people who opposed Him, God sent them a She-Camel.[29] `Abdu'l-Bahá explained that the She-Camel mentioned in relation to Şáliḥ's mission is a symbol of Şáliḥ Himself and the camel's offspring His blessed Faith.[30] In this sense Bahá'u'lláh addresses one of His enemies saying, that because of him 'the She-Camel was hamstrung'[31] and again, 'The heedless ones have hamstrung Thy white She-Camel, and caused Thy Crimson Ark to founder.'[32] In yet another passage He states: 'Consider the she-camel. Though but a beast, yet hath the All-Merciful exalted her to so high a station that the tongues of the earth made mention of her and celebrated her praise.'[33]

The old cemetery in `Akká surrounds Şáliḥ's traditionally-accepted resting-place. It was in the shadow of His modest shrine that both Mírzá Miḥdí, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, and Navváb, Mírzá Miḥdí's mother and Bahá'u'lláh's wife, were originally interred. Their remains have since been transferred to the Monument Gardens on Mount Carmel under the direction of Shoghi Effendi.

10 **City of God** See note at 218 below on a **thousand years**.

10 **Thamúd** The Thamúd tribe, or group of tribes, lived in northern Arabia, principally in al-Ḥijr, up to the southern border of Syria. They inhabited dwellings cut in the sides of mountains (Qur'án 7:74). Thamúdí

inscriptions are found all over Arabia and indicate a unity of language and religion which suggests that once the tribe's authority extended further, especially in northern and central Arabia.

11 **Friend of God** Here a title of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, Founder of the Jewish nation and an ancestor of Bahá'u'lláh, who is of His descent through Abraham's wife, Katurah. See `Abdu'l-Bahá's account of Abraham in *Some Answered Questions*, chapter 4. See also numerous references in the Bible and the Qur'án. See also Íqán, para. 67.

11 **episode of the fire** `Behold how the people, as a result of the verdict pronounced by the divines of His age, have cast Abraham, the Friend of God, into fire . . .'[34] It states in the Qur'án: `They said, Burn him, and avenge your gods; if ye do this it will be well. And when Abraham was cast into the burning pile, we said, O fire, be thou cold, and a preservation unto Abraham.'[35] The traditions relate that `by Nimrod's order, a large space was enclosed at Eritha and filled with a vast quantity of wood, which being set on fire burned so fiercely that none dared venture near it: then they bound Abraham, and put him into an engine, shot him into the midst of the fire; from which he was preserved by the angel Gabriel who was sent to his assistance; the fire burning only the cords with which he was bound.'[36] He was delivered by divine intervention.[37]

11 **expelled from His city** Shoghi Effendi characterizes `the banishment of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees to the Promised Land -- a banishment which, in the multitudinous benefits it conferred upon so many divers peoples, faiths and nations, constitutes the nearest historical approach to the incalculable blessings destined to be vouchsafed, in this day, and in future ages, to the whole human race, in direct consequence of the exile suffered by Him Whose Cause is the flower and fruit of all previous Revelations'.[38] The Old Testament refers to Ur of Chaldees as Abraham's native city[39] located in the region of Sumeria/ Mesopotamia, His banishment from there beginning, according to biblical and historical accounts, circa 1950 bc.

`Abdu'l-Bahá, after enumerating in His `Some Answered Questions' the far-reaching consequences of Abraham's banishment, significantly affirms that `since the exile of Abraham from Ur to Aleppo in Syria produced this result, we must consider what will be the effect of the exile of Bahá'u'lláh in His several removes . . .[40]

12 **Moses** He Who conversed with God, and laid down the Ten Commandments; He Who delivered the Israelites from their exile in Pharaoh's Egypt and led them to the promised land of Israel. See Íqán paras. 57-58; also `Abdu'l-Bahá's account in *Some Answered Questions*, chapter 5. See also numerous references in the Old Testament and the Qur'án.

12 **rod . . . white hand . . . serpent** Terms used figuratively evoking the signs which Moses produced before Pharaoh and his court. `So he threw his rod, then lo! it was a serpent manifest, and he drew forth his hand out of his bosom; and behold, it appeared white unto the spectators.'[41] `White and splendid,' recounts an Islamic tradition, `surpassing the brightness of the sun.' For the biblical version see Exodus 4:1-7. Bahá'u'lláh, with regard to Himself, later revealed: `This is Mine hand which God hath turned white for all the worlds to behold. This is My staff; were We to cast it down, it would, of a truth, swallow up all created things.'[42]

12 **Párán** A wilderness and a mountain between modern-day Israel and the Sinai peninsula, as in Genesis 21:21, Deuteronomy 33:2 and Habakkuk 3:3. `References in the Bible to "Mt. Párán" and "Paraclete" refer to Muḥammad's Revelation.[43]

12 **Sinai** Mount Sinai, the principal site of Divine Revelation in Jewish history where Moses received the Ten Commandments. Usually identified as Jabal Músá, a massive granite pinnacle situated in the centre of the Sinai peninsula.

12 **Pharaoh** Title of the ancient rulers of Egypt, the first dynasties of which are recorded *circa* 3100 bc. The Rameses dynasty encompassed the 14th and 13th centuries bc, the period of Moses. The Pharaohs were persecutors of Moses and His people. See also Íqán 12, 16, 57, 68, 92. Concerning the fierce opposition of Pharaoh see Exodus chapters 5 and 14. `Abdu'l-Bahá affirms that

. . . the kingdom, wealth and power of Pharaoh and his people, which were the causes of the life of the nation, became, through their opposition, denial and pride, the cause of death, destruction, dispersion, degradation and poverty.[44]

12 **that blessed Tree . . . that sacred Tree** Moses Himself, i.e. the Manifestation of God symbolized as a Tree. See note on **hidden and sacred tree** at 22 below, and on **Sadratu'l-Muntahá** at 26 below.

12 **No earthly water . . . nor mortal blasts** Bahá'u'lláh further elaborates this theme in one of His prayers:

I recognize, O Thou Who art my heart's Desire, that were fire to be touched by water it would instantly be extinguished, whereas the Fire which Thou didst kindle can never go out, though all the seas of the earth be poured upon it. Should water at any time touch it, the hands of Thy power would, as decreed in Thy Tablets, transmute that water into a fuel that would feed its flame.

I, likewise, recognize, O my God, that every lamp, when exposed to the fury of the winds, must cease from burning. As to Thy Lamp, however, O Beloved of the worlds, I cannot think what power except Thy power could have kept it safe for so many years from the tempests that have continually been directed upon it by the rebellious among Thy creatures.[45]

As detachment is one of the requirements of the pathway of certitude, this image is also found in one of Bahá'u'lláh's prayers for detachment:

Earth can never cloud its splendour, nor water quench its flame. All the peoples of the world are powerless to resist its force.[46]

12 **a believer of the kindred of Pharaoh** Said by some traditions to have been the son of Pharaoh's uncle. Several Qur'ánic commentators assume that this believer was the same person who warned Moses to flee after the latter had slain an Egyptian. See Qur'án 28:19 and following note.

12 **a shameful death** Accounts in traditions attributed to the Imáms state that Pharaoh's people cut this believer into pieces. The divine protection vouchsafed to him as mentioned in the Qur'án is understood to mean that God kept him firm in the face of martyrdom.

13 **all the Prophets . . . foretold the coming of yet another Prophet** `Abdu'l-Bahá elaborates on this truth:

. . . it is a basic principle of the Law of God that in every Prophetic Mission, He entereth into a Covenant with all believers -- a Covenant that endureth until the end of that Mission, until the promised day when the Personage stipulated at the outset of the Mission is made manifest.[47]

14 **the motive for such deeds** In a similar vein, Bahá'u'lláh writes:

Thou hast known how grievously the Prophets of God, His Messengers and Chosen Ones, have been afflicted. Meditate a while on the motive and reason which have been responsible for such a persecution. At no time, in no Dispensation, have the Prophets of God escaped the blasphemy of their enemies, the cruelty of their oppressors, the denunciation of the learned of their age, who appeared in the guise of uprightness and piety. Day and night they passed through such agonies as none can ever measure, except the knowledge of the one true God, exalted be His glory.[48]

14 **To maintain that the testimony of Providence was incomplete** With regard to man's possibility of recognizing the verses of God which are revealed by every Prophet of God, Bahá'u'lláh explains that God has endowed every soul with 'the capacity' to recognize such signs. 'How could He, otherwise,' He adds, 'have fulfilled His testimony unto men, if ye be of them that ponder His Cause in their hearts. He will never deal unjustly with any one, neither will He task a soul beyond its power. He, verily, is the Compassionate, the All-Merciful.'[49]

14 **bounties . . . have, at all times . . . encompassed the earth** Bahá'u'lláh asks in one of His Tablets:

What outpouring flood can compare with the stream of His all-embracing grace, and what blessing can excel the evidences of so great and pervasive a mercy? There can be no doubt whatever that if for one moment the tide of His mercy and grace were to be withheld from the world, it would completely perish. For this reason, from the beginning that hath no beginning the portals of Divine mercy have been flung open to the face of all created things, and the clouds of Truth will continue to the end that hath no end to rain on the soil of human capacity, reality and personality their favours and bounties. Such hath been God's method continued from everlasting to everlasting.[50]

14 **Sun of Truth** See Íqán, para. 31.

14 **weighed the testimony of God by the standard of their own knowledge** See note on a **standard** at 2 above. See also Íqán, para. 233.

15 **Leaders of religion, in every age, have hindered their people** Bahá'u'lláh expatiates on this theme in numerous Tablets. In one, the Madínatu't-Tawhíd (City of Unity) which, like the Íqán was revealed in Baghdád during the same period, we read:

Consider the former generations. Witness how every time the Day Star of Divine bounty hath shed the light of His Revelation upon the world, the people of His Day have arisen against Him, and repudiated His truth. They who were regarded as the leaders of men have invariably striven to hinder their followers from turning unto Him Who is the Ocean of God's limitless bounty.

Then Bahá'u'lláh recapitulates in brief the afflictions of the past Prophets of God:

Behold how the people, as a result of the verdict pronounced by the divines of His age, have cast Abraham, the Friend of God, into fire; how Moses, He Who held converse with the Almighty, was denounced as liar and slanderer. Reflect how Jesus, the Spirit of God, was, notwithstanding His extreme meekness and perfect tender-heartedness, treated by His enemies. So fierce was the opposition which He, the Essence of Being and Lord of the visible and invisible, had to face, that He had nowhere to lay His head. He wandered continually from place to place, deprived of a permanent abode. Ponder that which befell Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, may the life of all else be a sacrifice unto Him. How severe the afflictions which the leaders of the Jewish people and of the idol-worshippers caused to rain upon Him, Who is the sovereign Lord of all, in consequence of His proclamation of the unity of God and of the truth of His Message![51]

15 **people of the Book** Leaders of previous religions, namely the Jews and the Christians who opposed Muḥammad. The Qur'án condemns them for not accepting its truth and for trying to mislead the Muslims. It further chides them for opposing each other while each possessed a Revelation from God, in the Torah and the Evangel. The leaders reject and vilify one another 'though they both recite the Book'.^[52] Clearly, Muḥammad upheld the oneness and continuity of scripture.

The 'people of the Book' in a broader sense has been used by the Muslims to refer to followers in general of previous Revelations. Muḥammad Himself provided for the rights of Jews and Christians in Islamic society, allowing them places of worship and freedom to practise their faith. See also Íqán, para. 242.

16 **eye of God** The possibility of man seeing with the eye of God is affirmed in a number of passages in Bahá'u'lláh's writings, for example:

Open Thou, O my Lord, mine eyes and the eyes of all them that have sought Thee, that we may recognize Thee with Thine own eyes.^[53]

. . . look, then, upon Me with Mine own eyes, and not with the eyes of any one besides Me.^[54]

Thy sight is My sight, do thou see therewith . . .^[55]

'Abdu'l-Bahá in a Tablet explains this arresting image:

As to your question about the meaning of the Arabic Hidden Words: 'Couldst thou but see with Mine eye', when man reacheth the station of selflessness, and his love of self is entirely wiped out, his existence becometh like unto non-existence, and a ray from God's presence sheddeth its light upon him. Then he can see with the eye of God, and can hear with His ear. This is like iron in the fire. The qualities of the iron, its coldness, darkness and hardness are concealed, and it manifests heat, luminosity and fluidity, which are the qualities of the fire.^[56]

16 **Birds of Eternity** The Manifestations of God. See also Íqán, paras. 161, 190, 233, 283 and note on **Manifestations of God** at 3 above. Note in this passage the clearly stated principle that the Manifestations alone reveal the true meanings of the utterances of God. This reaffirms the biblical truth that scriptures are not open to 'private interpretation'.^[57]

16 **Copt of tyranny** The term 'copt' refers to Pharaoh or the Egyptians, the Copts.

16 **Sept of justice** The term 'sept' is related to Moses or the Israelites; a sept is a division of a nation or a tribe.

16 **hand of the Moses of Truth** See note on **the white hand** at 12 above.

16 **' . . . them that are well-grounded in knowledge'** A passage from the writings of the Báb explains this phrase in the following manner:

Behold the learned who are honoured by virtue of their ability to understand the Holy Writings, and God hath exalted them to such a degree that in referring to them He saith: 'None knoweth the meaning thereof except God and them that are well-grounded in knowledge.'^[58]

See also Íqán, para. 237.

17 **Jesus . . . protest against Him** `Abdu'l-Bahá has summarized the objections of Israel and offers an explanation of the misunderstood prophecies:

When Christ appeared, twenty centuries ago, although the Jews were eagerly awaiting His Coming, and prayed every day, with tears, saying: `O God, hasten the Revelation of the Messiah', yet when the Sun of Truth dawned, they denied Him and rose against Him with the greatest enmity, and eventually crucified that divine Spirit, the Word of God, and named Him Beelzebub, the evil one, as is recorded in the Gospel. The reason for this was that they said: `The Revelation of Christ, according to the clear text of the Torah, will be attested by certain signs, and so long as these signs have not appeared, whoso layeth claim to be a Messiah is an impostor. Among these signs is this, that the Messiah should come from an unknown place, yet we all know this man's house in Nazareth, and can any good thing come out of Nazareth? The second sign is that He shall rule with a rod of iron, that is, He must act with the sword, but this Messiah has not even a wooden staff. Another of the conditions and signs is this: He must sit upon the throne of David and establish David's sovereignty. Now, far from being enthroned, this man has not even a mat to sit on. Another of the conditions is this: the promulgation of all the laws of the Torah; yet this man has abrogated these laws, and has even broken the sabbath day, although it is the clear text of the Torah that whosoever layeth claim to prophethood and revealeth miracles and breaketh the sabbath day, must be put to death. Another of the signs is this, that in His reign justice will be so advanced that righteousness and well-doing will extend from the human even to the animal world -- the snake and the mouse will share one hole, and the eagle and the partridge one nest, the lion and the gazelle shall dwell in one pasture, and the wolf and the kid shall drink from one fountain. Yet now, injustice and tyranny have waxed so great in His time that they have crucified Him! Another of the conditions is this, that in the days of the Messiah the Jews will prosper and triumph over all the peoples of the world, but now they are living in the utmost abasement and servitude in the empire of the Romans. Then how can this be the Messiah promised in the Torah?'

In this wise did they object to that Sun of Truth, although that Spirit of God was indeed the One promised in the Torah. But as they did not understand the meaning of these signs, they crucified the Word of God. Now the Bahá'ís hold that the recorded signs did come to pass in the Manifestation of Christ, although not in the sense which the Jews understood, the description in the Torah being allegorical. For instance, among the signs is that of sovereignty. For Bahá'ís say that the sovereignty of Christ was a heavenly, divine, everlasting sovereignty, not a Napoleonic sovereignty that vanisheth in a short time. For well nigh two thousand years this sovereignty of Christ hath been established, and until now it endureth, and to all eternity that Holy Being will be exalted upon an everlasting throne.

In like manner all the other signs have been made manifest, but the Jews did not understand. Although nearly twenty centuries have elapsed since Christ appeared with divine splendour, yet the Jews are still awaiting the coming of the Messiah and regard themselves as true and Christ as false.[59]

17 **Bible** Here meaning the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament.

17 **spirit of faith** `Abdu'l-Bahá states:

The fourth degree of spirit is the heavenly spirit; it is the spirit of faith and the bounty of God; it comes from the breath of the Holy Spirit, and by the divine power it becomes the cause of eternal life. It is the power which makes the earthly man heavenly, and the imperfect man perfect.[60]

18 **Our former Tablets** Such as the earlier Arabic *Javáhiru'l-Asrár* (Gems of Mystery) which the Universal House of Justice has described thus:

In this mighty epistle, within the space of about one hundred pages, Bahá'u'lláh refers to the grievous tribulation and adversities that He suffered at the hand of the infidels; deplored the perversity of the followers of past religions; elucidates the meaning of the signs and prophecies concerning the advent of the new Manifestation, including the meaning of the passage in the Bible where it says: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away but My word shall not pass away'; affirms the continuity of divine revelation; unfolds the significance of such symbolic terms as 'the Day of Judgement', 'the Balance', 'the Way', 'the resurrection of the dead' and 'the identity of the Promised Qá'im and the place from which He is expected to appear'; asserts the inevitability of heaven-sent trials and describes the inner meaning of such terms as 'life and death', 'attainment to the presence of God', 'the valley of bewilderment', the 'station of self-surrender', and 'the character and qualities of those who have attained His Court'.[61]

Adib Taherzadeh notes:

The importance of this Tablet becomes apparent when we note that its themes are similar to those of the Kitáb-i-Íqán. Although less in compass, its subjects are those which Bahá'u'lláh has more fully elaborated in that book. For example, He enumerates in this Tablet a number of causes which have prevented the followers of all religions from recognizing the next Manifestation of God; stipulates some of the qualities which the seeker must possess in order to find the truth; affirms that God is unknowable in His Essence; asserts the unity of all His Messengers; explains the meaning of such terms as the Day of Judgement, resurrection, life, death and similar terminologies mentioned in the Holy Books of the past; interprets certain prophecies from the Old and New Testaments, and elucidates passages from the Qur'án and traditions of Islám which anticipate the coming of the Qá'im and the advent of the Day of God, identified by Bahá'u'lláh with the appearance of 'Him Whom God shall make manifest'.[62]

18 **language of Hijáz . . . accents of Iráq** By the language of Hijáz is understood Arabic; 'the accents of Iráq' refers here to Persian as indicated by the shift in language at this point in the text. The Mesopotamian region of Iráq was at the time populated by a majority of Persian Shí'ís because of the highly significant Shí'í holy places located there. See note on **Hijáz** at 71 below.

20 **Dispensation of the Qur'án** This dispensation began with the Ministry of the Qur'án's Author, Muḥammad (circa 612 ad), and ended with the Declaration of the Báb in 1844.

The Sun of Truth, after the advent of Muḥammad, no longer shone from the Christian horizon. Islám was, from then until the Báb's advent, the Path of Truth.[63]

The Muslim calendar dates from 622 ad, ten years after Muḥammad's advent at the time of the Hijra. See comment on **Hijra** under **Baṭḥá unto Yathrib** at 54 below.

20 **Muḥammad** Prophet of God, revealer of the Qur'án, founder of Islám. Born August 570 ad, declared His mission 613 ad, died 632 ad. Bahá'u'lláh refers to Him as God's 'Well-Beloved One'.[64]

20 **mysteries of distinction and unity** The explanation of these mysteries is a major theme of the Íqán; concerning 'distinction' see especially paras. 191-2, and for 'unity' paras. 161-2.

20 **answer to thy question** This question is not among the ones in the original letter of the uncle of the Báb. Bahá'u'lláh evidently addresses Himself to points raised in the conversations held before Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad composed his letter.

22 **hidden and sacred Tree** 'Verily He is the Tree of Life that bringeth forth the fruits of God . . . [65]

See also notes on **Sadratu'l-Muntahá** at 26 below and on **tree that belongeth neither to the East nor to the West** at 57 below.

22 **Baghdád, the `Abode of Peace'** (Dár al-Salám) Of Baghdád Shoghi Effendi writes:

. . . described in Islamic traditions as `Zahru'l-Kúfih', designated for centuries as the `Abode of Peace', and immortalized by Bahá'u'lláh as the `City of God' . . . To that city the Qur'án had alluded as the `Abode of Peace' to which God Himself `callesh'. To it, in that same Book, further allusion had been made in the verse `For them is a Dwelling of Peace with their Lord . . . on the Day whereon God shall gather them all together'. From it radiated, wave after wave, a power, a radiance and a glory which insensibly reanimated a languishing Faith, sorely-stricken, sinking into obscurity, threatened with oblivion. From it were diffused, day and night, and with ever-increasing energy, the first emanations of a Revelation which, in its scope, its copiousness, its driving force and the volume and variety of its literature, was destined to excel that of the Báb Himself. Above its horizon burst forth the rays of the Sun of Truth, Whose rising glory had for ten long years been overshadowed by the inky clouds of a consuming hatred, an ineradicable jealousy, an unrelenting malice. In it the Tabernacle of the promised `Lord of Hosts' was first erected, and the foundations of the long-awaited Kingdom of the `Father' unassailably established. Out of it went forth the earliest tidings of the Message of Salvation which, as prophesied by Daniel, was to mark, after the lapse of `a thousand two hundred and ninety days' (1290 ah), the end of `the abomination that maketh desolate'. Within its walls the `Most Great House of God', His `Footstool' and the `Throne of His Glory', `the Cynosure of an adoring world', the `Lamp of Salvation between earth and heaven', the `Sign of His remembrance to all who are in heaven and on earth', enshrining the `Jewel whose glory hath irradiated all creation', the `Standard' of His Kingdom, the `Shrine round which will circle the concourse of the faithful' was irrevocably founded and permanently consecrated.[66]

`The Abode of Peace' was first adopted as a name for Baghdád by the Caliph al-Manşúr when he rebuilt the ancient city in 762 ad. See also Íqán, para. 188.

22 **bread from heaven** See note on **bread** at 5 above. Rodwell, in his translation of the Qur'án, translated this metaphor as `table' rather than `bread', which tends to distance it from its religious tradition.

23 **Nightingale of Paradise will have winged its flight** The nightingale is often used to symbolize the Manifestation of God in the Bahá'í writings. Those few days when the divine Messenger is present on earth among men and revealing the divine verses are very precious and incomparable. Thus Bahá'u'lláh asserts:

O Son of Spirit! The time cometh, when the nightingale of holiness will no longer unfold the inner mysteries and ye will all be bereft of the celestial melody and of the voice from on high.[67]

As to Paradise: It is a reality and there can be no doubt about it, and now in this world it is realized through love of Me and My good-pleasure. Whosoever attaineth unto it God will aid him in this world below, and after death He will enable him to gain admittance into Paradise whose vastness is as that of heaven and earth.[68]

23 **Whosoever wisheth, let him turn thereunto** This recalls the passage from Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of Aḥmad: `Whosoever desireth, let him turn aside from this counsel and whosoever desireth let him choose the path to his Lord.'[69] Man is always at liberty to exercise his free will or choice in such matters.

24 **Mary** See note on **Mary** at 59 below.

24 **signs that must . . . herald the advent**

Now as regards the signs that would herald the advent of the new Manifestation. The Guardian wishes you to read over very carefully Bahá'u'lláh's explanation as recorded in the *Íqán*'. There it is made clear that what is meant by the appearance of the Son of God after the calamitous events preceding His coming is the revelation of His full glory and its recognition and acceptance by the peoples of the world, and not his physical appearance. For Bahá'u'lláh, Whose advent marks the return of the Son in the Glory of the Father, has already appeared, and fulfilment, however, would mark the beginning of the recognition of His full station by the peoples of the world. Then and only then will His appearance be made completely manifest.[70]

24 **in the three other Gospels** See Luke 21:25-8, Mark 13:24-7 and John 16:20.

24 **Our Tablets revealed in the Arabic tongue** See note on **Our former Tablets** at 18 above.

25 **Christian divines**

It seems both strange and pitiful that the Church and clergy should always, in every age, be the most bitter opponents of the very Truth they are continually admonishing their followers to be prepared to receive! They have become so violently attached to the form that the substance itself eludes them!

However, such denunciations as those your minister made publicly against you and the b Faith can do no harm to the Cause at all; on the contrary they only serve to spread its name abroad and mark it as an independent religion.[71]

25 **following the example of the leaders of their faith**

It is recorded in a tradition that of the entire concourse of the Christians no more than seventy people embraced the Faith of the Apostle of God. The blame falleth upon their doctors, for if these had believed, they would have been followed by the mass of their countrymen. Behold, then, that which hath come to pass! The learned men of Christendom are held to be learned by virtue of their safeguarding the teaching of Christ, and yet consider how they themselves have been the cause of men's failure to accept the Faith and attain unto salvation![72]

25 **Muhammadan Dispensation** See note on **Dispensation of the Qur'án** at 20 above.

25 **Kawthar** Literally, 'abundance'; traditionally, a river in Paradise whence all other rivers derive their source. Often in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh this term has been translated as a 'heavenly river' or a 'living fountain' and similar phrases. For example, in the Long Obligatory Prayer, 'Make my prayer, O my Lord, a fountain [Kawthar] of living waters whereby I may live as long as Thy sovereignty endureth'.[73]

According to a tradition of the prophet's, this river, wherein his Lord promised him abundant good, is sweeter than honey, whiter than milk, cooler than snow, and smoother than cream; its banks are of chrysolites, and the vessels to drink thereout of silver; and those who drink of it shall never thirst.[74]

See also *Íqán*, paras. 65, 81, 118, 129, 161, 239, 249.

26 **Sadratu'l-Muntahá** The Divine Lote Tree; the 'tree beyond which there is no passing', a title of Bahá'u'lláh cited by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By*, p. 94. Bahá'u'lláh states in a Tablet, 'The Holy Tree [Sadrat] is, in a sense, the Manifestation of the one True God, exalted be He.' See the explanation in context in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 137.

28 **essential and highest purpose in creation** The motive behind creation is said to centre on man's attainment to the bounties of divine unity and understanding. The true principle of divine unity as defined by Bahá'u'lláh corrects the erroneous beliefs of some of the Muslim mystics of the past who viewed themselves at times as an embodiment of the divine Essence itself. 'He is a true believer in Divine unity', Bahá'u'lláh asserts, who, far from confusing duality with oneness, refuseth to allow any notion of multiplicity to becloud his conception of the singleness of God, who will regard the Divine Being as One Who, by His very nature, transcendeth the limitations of numbers.[75]

And again, revealing another aspect of such divine unity, He states:

The essence of belief in Divine unity consisteth in regarding Him Who is the Manifestation of God and Him Who is the invisible, the inaccessible, the unknowable Essence as one and the same. By this is meant that whatever pertaineth to the former, all His acts and doings, whatever He ordaineth or forbiddeth, should be considered, in all their aspects, and under all circumstances, and without any reservation, as identical with the Will of God Himself. This is the loftiest station to which a true believer in the unity of God can ever hope to attain.[76]

This point is further reinforced in one of the meditations of Bahá'u'lláh:

Thy unity is inscrutable, O my God, to all except them that have recognized Him Who is the Manifestation of Thy singleness and the Day-Spring of Thy oneness.[77]

With regard to divine understanding, see note on **true understanding** at 1 above.

28 **an empty name . . . a dead letter** Muḥammad Himself has prophesied such a condition:

A day shall be witnessed by My people whereon there will have remained of Islá naught but a name, and of the Qur'án naught but a mere appearance. The doctors of that age shall be the most evil the world hath ever seen. Mischief hath proceeded from them, and on them it will recoil.[78]

28 **Urvatu'l-Vuḥqá** Translated as the 'Sure Handle', the 'Firm Cord', it is in its broadest sense an allusion to the Cause of God. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states:

Know thou that the 'Sure Handle' mentioned from the foundation of the world in the Books, the Tablets and the Scriptures of old is naught else but the Covenant and the Testament.[79]

See Qur'án 2:257, in which Muḥammad states, 'Whoever shall deny Ṭághút [the Idol] and believe in God - he will have taken hold on a strong handle that shall not be broken . . .' In one of His prayers Bahá'u'lláh invokes God to 'write us down with such of Thy servants as have repudiated the Idol (Mírzá Yaḥyá), and firmly believed in Thee'. [80] See also Qur'án 31:21 and Íqán, paras. 37, 226.

30 **want of capacity** How well this description of the lack of capacity to acquire spiritual knowledge fits, for the most part, the condition of humankind during the century since the Call of Bahá'u'lláh was first raised.

31 **These Suns of Truth** This key passage and the subsequent paragraph eloquently set forth the fundamental role and exalted station of the universal Manifestations of God.

31 **Through Him all things live, move**

. . . all else besides these Manifestations, live by the operation of their Will, and move and have their being through the outpourings of their grace.[81]

See also Íqán, para. 226.

32 confined at times to specific designations

These attributes of God are not and have never been vouchsafed specially unto certain Prophets, and withheld from others.[82]

32 Prophets of God Used here to refer to those 'endowed with constancy'. See note at 240 below.

33 immaculate Souls Reference to the twelve Imáms of Shí'í Islám, the 'lawful Successors' of Muḥammad.[83] The Bahá'í teachings uphold the validity of the Imamate, 'that divinely-appointed institution of whose most distinguished member the Báb Himself was a lineal descendant, and which continued for a period of no less than two hundred and sixty years to be the chosen recipient of the guidance of the Almighty and the repository of one of the two most precious legacies of Islám.'[84] Concerning the Imáms, Bahá'u'lláh Himself affirms, 'They, verily, are the manifestations of the power of God, and the sources of His authority, and the repositories of His knowledge, and the daysprings of His commandments.'[85]

Regarding the two legacies see Íqán, para. 222.

33 Prayer of Nudbih Famous prayer in Shí'í books which gives an account of the lives of all the Imáms and extols particularly the qualities of the Hidden Imám. Sometimes mistakenly attributed to the Imám `Alí whose death, however, is described in it. Nudbih means 'lamentation'; in Arabic, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem is called the Wall of Nudbih. See also Íqán, para. 269.

33 'Whither are gone the resplendent Suns?' Words of the Imám Mihdí, in the Prayer of Nudbih.

34 Whosoever among the divines While in the Íqán Bahá'u'lláh condemns the blindness and perversity of the divines, yet He extols the rank of those who are truly learned and who recognize the truth and light of succeeding Manifestations:

Great is the blessedness of that divine that hath not allowed knowledge to become a veil between him and the One Who is the Object of all knowledge, and who, when the Self-Subsisting appeared, hath turned with a beaming face towards Him. He, in truth, is numbered with the learned. The inmates of Paradise seek the blessing of his breath, and his lamp sheddeth its radiance over all who are in heaven and on earth. He, verily, is numbered with the inheritors of the Prophets. He that beholdeth him hath, verily, beheld the True One, and he that turneth towards him hath, verily, turned towards God, the Almighty, the All-Wise.[86]

36 no doubt familiar with the interpretation The interpretation of this verse current among the Shí'í is and based on Islamic tradition, namely from the Imám Riḍá, identifies the 'sun' and the 'moon' as referring to the first two Caliphs, Abú Bakr and `Umar.

37 'Urvatu'l-Vuthqá See note at 28 above.

38 laws of prayer and fasting The term translated as 'prayer' in this and the following passages refers to that category of prayer which is obligatory in character rather than supplications in general. With reference to these two laws, Shoghi Effendi states:

As regards fasting, it constitutes, together with the obligatory prayers, the two pillars that sustain the revealed Law of God. They act as stimulants to the soul, strengthen, revive and purify it, and thus insure its steady development.[87]

38 **lights that have emanated from the Day-Star of Truth** Reference to the Imáms; see note on **immaculate Souls** at 33 above.

39 **the law of prayer** `Abdu'l-Bahá elucidates the importance of the station appointed for this law when with regard to the Bahá'í obligatory prayers He comments:

Through such prayer man holdeth communion with God, seeketh to draw near unto Him, converseth with the true Beloved of one's heart, and attaineth spiritual stations.[88]

Shoghi Effendi states that `the obligatory prayers are by their very nature of greater effectiveness and are endowed with a greater power than the non-obligatory ones, and as such are essential.[89]

40 **`Fasting is illumination, prayer is light.'** A Sunní tradition attributed to Muḥammad.

40 **One day, a well known divine came** This passage gives a first-hand account by Bahá'u'lláh Himself of His method of teaching and of the use of wisdom in conveying God's Word. See also Íqán, para. 186.

40 **Seal of the Prophets** A title of Muḥammad.[90] In one sense it refers to His being the `Seal' or the last of the Prophets (Nabiyyín) to announce the coming of the Day of God -- the Day of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. As Bahá'u'lláh explains:

This Day, however, is unique, and is to be distinguished from those that have preceded it. The designation `Seal of the Prophets' fully revealeth its high station. The Prophetic Cycle hath, verily, ended. The Eternal Truth is now come.[91]

With the appearance of the Báb, the Prophetic Cycle which began with Adam drew to a close. See additional references, Íqán, paras. 172, 181, 196, 237.

40 **`Islám is heaven; fasting is its sun, prayer, its moon.'** Muḥammad

41 **camphor fountain** `If the interpretation of "camphor" become known, the true intention will be evident.[92] No further elucidation has been found in available Bahá'í writings. In the East, camphor is traditionally recognized as a powerful medicinal substance and mainly employed to subdue excessive carnal passion.

42 **would surely have comprehended the purpose of these terms** Bahá'u'lláh clarifies that their purpose is `to test and prove the peoples of the world'.[93]

44 **the step of the spirit** Compare with this similar passage:

O Son of Love! Thou art but one step away from the glorious heights above and from the celestial tree of love. Take thou one pace and with the next advance into the immortal realm and enter the pavilion of eternity. Give ear then to that which hath been revealed by the pen of glory.[94]

44 **swift as the twinkling of an eye** `Be swift in the path of holiness, and enter the heaven of communion with Me.[95] Also,

This most great, this fathomless and surging Ocean is near, astonishingly near, unto you. Behold it is closer to you than your life-vein! Swift as the twinkling of an eye ye can, if ye but wish it, reach and partake of this imperishable favour, this God-given grace, this incorruptible gift, this most potent and unspeakably glorious bounty.[96]

44 **in one breath**

These journeys have no visible ending in the world of time, but the severed wayfarer -- if invisible confirmation descend upon him and the Guardian of the Cause assist him -- may cross these seven stages in seven steps, nay rather in seven breaths, nay rather in a single breath, if God will and desire it.[97]

46 **'cleaving of the heaven'** Cf. Isaiah 64:1, 'Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens . . .'

48 **infinite knowledge . . . limited knowledge** This reference to two kinds of knowledge is further developed in a subsequent passage in which the two are described as divine and satanic. See *Íqán*, paras. 76, 201.

48 **'Knowledge is a light . . .'** Muḥammad. Consider in reference to the seeker in the *Four Valleys*:

This station conferreth the true standard of knowledge, and freeth man from tests. In this realm, to search after knowledge is irrelevant, for He hath said concerning the guidance of travellers on this plane, 'Fear God, and God will instruct thee.' And again: 'Knowledge is a light which God casteth into the heart of whomsoever He willeth.'

Wherefore, a man should make ready his heart that it be worthy of the descent of heavenly grace, and that the bounteous Cup-Bearer may give him to drink of the wine of bestowal from the merciful vessel.[98]

This tradition is also cited in *Íqán*, para. 201.

50 **physical earth to be changed** Consider in this connection Bahá'u'lláh's declaration:

Were ye to be fair in your judgement, ye would readily recognize how the realities of all created things are inebriated with the joy of this new and wondrous Revelation, how all the atoms of the earth have been illuminated through the brightness of its glory.[99]

54 **Qiblih** 'Point of Adoration'; direction towards which the faithful turn in prayer. In Islám the Qiblih was changed from Jerusalem to Mecca. The original Qiblih mentioned in this paragraph was the house of worship, the Holy of Holies, built by the Israelites in Jerusalem and which became the centre of Jewish worship. The faithful used to turn towards it when offering their prayers. It remained the direction of prayer from the days after Moses and during the time of Christ, until it was altered by Muḥammad at the command of God. The Báb again changed the Qiblih by appointing 'Him Whom God shall make manifest' as the point of adoration. This point of prayer was to move with Him, in other words, with Bahá'u'lláh, until His passing, and then be fixed at His resting-place, His holy Shrine. Bahá'u'lláh confirmed this law in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, the Most Holy Book, and after His Ascension, the Qiblih of the Bahá'í world became fixed at Bahjí.

54 **Baṭḥá unto Yathrib** A reference to Muḥammad's Hijra (Emigration) from Mecca to Medina in ad 622, in the fifty-third year of His life. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that: 'The departure of Muḥammad, the Beloved of God, from the city of His birth was the cause of the exaltation of God's Holy Word . . .'[100]

The meaning of hijra is less geographical transference than separation and severance from family and kin. Baṭḥá is the central quarter and lowest part of Mecca which lies in a hollow close around the Ka`bih -- Islám's most sacred shrine. It was inhabited by the ten main clans of the Quraysh, the aristocracy of the oldest families. Shortly after Muḥammad reached Yathrib, its name was changed to the `City of the Prophet', al-Madínah an-Nabí. This was later abbreviated to al-Madínah or Medina in English usage. See note on **Mecca and Medina** at 93 below.

54 **Rik'at** Prostration; more generally, it refers to one complete Muslim devotional unit, which includes standing upright, bowing, prostrating and sitting. The whole forms a basic element of Muslim obligatory prayer.

54 **Gabriel** Archangel; considered in Islám as the mediator of revelation to Muḥammad and the personification of the Divine Spirit to Him. It was while in the Cave of Hira, outside the holy city of Mecca that Muḥammad first heard the voice of Gabriel, which bade Him `Cry in the name of Thy Lord.[101] See also Íqán, paras. 92, 123, 174. According to the Bahá'í teachings, Gabriel, the `Dove' and the `Maid of Heaven' are symbols of the divine Reality of the Manifestation Himself. `Abdu'l-Bahá states clearly that the independent Prophets receive the bounty of divinity without any `intermediary'.[102]

54 **Ka`bih** Literally, `cube'. The cube-like building in the centre of the sacred Mosque at Mecca, which contains the Black Stone. It was founded by Abraham and remains the most holy shrine of Islám.

55 **David** Messenger of God, son of Jesse and second King of Israel; revealer of the Psalms. He rather than Saul was founder of the Jewish monarchy.[103]

55 **a particular purpose** As stated here, all the face of the earth is the same in the sight of God with the exception of those places singled out by the Manifestations of God. Physically, these sites, these temples and holy houses, both during and after their relationship to God's Messengers, are the same. Shoghi Effendi, in a letter written on his behalf, has stated in a similar connection with regard to the physical remains of the manifestations:

The atoms of the Prophets are just atoms, like all others, but the association of this great spiritual power with them leaves in the place they are laid to rest a spiritual atmosphere, if one can use this expression. They are, no doubt, endowed with a tremendous spiritual influence and far-reaching power. But the physical character of their atoms are not different from other people's, any more than their bodies and physical functions are different.[104]

56 **prison-cage of self and desire** See *Hidden Words*, Persian, no. 38.

57 **thus consume every intervening veil with the fire** See Íqán, paras. 19, 31, 205, 226.

57 **`Imrán** (Amran) His descendants include Moses and Aaron and they constitute a subdivision of the priestly Levites; not literally the father of Moses.

57 **To this testifieth the record of the sacred Book** See Exodus 2:12.

57 **Midian** A district on the eastern side of the Gulf of Aqaba extending north to the mountains east of the Dead Sea and west into the Sinai peninsula, occupied by the descendants of Midian, son of Abraham and Keturah. See Qur'án 7:83 and Genesis 25:2.

57 **Shoeb** (Shu`ayb) The Messenger of God sent to the Arab people of Midian. See Qur'án 7:85-93; 11:84-95. For His relationship to Moses, who became His son-in-law, see Qur'án 28:22-28. Identified in the Old Testament with Jethro, the priest of Midian (Exodus 3:1) or with Reuel (Exodus 2:18).

57 **holy vale** Of Towa, the place of Moses' revelation. Referred to frequently by Bahá'u'lláh,[105] most dramatically in the description of the activity taking place in this Day in that spot to be found in Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Czar Alexander III:

He Who is the Father is come, and the Son (Jesus Christ), in the holy vale, crieth out: `Here am I, here am I, O Lord, my God!', whilst Sinai circleth round the House, and the Burning Bush calleth aloud: `The All-Bounteous is come mounted upon the clouds! Blessed is he that draweth nigh unto Him, and woe betide them that are far away.'[106]

57 **King of glory** Eventually, one of the titles of Bahá'u'lláh Himself.[107]

57 **Tree that belongeth neither to the East nor to the West** The image of the Tree of Divine Revelation is derived from the Qur'anic passage:

God is the light of heaven and earth: the similitude of His light is a niche in a wall, wherein a lamp is placed, and the lamp enclosed in a case of glass; the glass appears as if it were a shining star. It is lighted with the oil of a Blessed Tree, an olive neither of the East, nor of the West; it wanteth little but that the oil thereof would give light, although no fire touched it. This is the light added unto light. God will direct unto His light whom He pleaseth.[108]

Shoghi Effendi elaborates on this theme, stating:

Then, and only then, will the vast, the majestic process, set in motion at the dawn of the Adamic cycle, attain its consummation -- a process which commenced six thousand years ago, with the planting, in the soil of the divine will, of the tree of divine revelation, and which has already passed through certain stages and must needs pass through still others ere it attains its final consummation. The first part of this process was the slow and steady growth of this tree of divine revelation, successively putting forth its branches, shoots and offshoots, and revealing its leaves, buds and blossoms, as a direct consequence of the light and warmth imparted to it by a series of progressive dispensations associated with Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muḥammad and other Prophets, and of the vernal showers of blood shed by countless martyrs in their path. The second part of this process was the fruition of this tree, `that belongeth neither to the East nor to the West', when the Báb appeared as the perfect fruit and declared His mission in the Year Sixty in the city of Shíráz. [109]

57 **from the valleys of self and desire . . . attain . . . heavenly delight** Consider in light of the opening comments of the *Seven Valleys*:

The stages that mark the wayfarer's journey from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland are said to be seven . . . And they say that until the wayfarer taketh leave of self, and traverseth these stages, he shall never reach to the ocean of nearness and union, nor drink of the peerless wine.[110]

57 **Salsabíl** The name of `a heavenly river' or `wellspring' in Paradise; it implies easy, sweet, soft-flowing waters. See Qur'án 76:18.

57 **the peaceful city** `Daru'l-Salám' See note on **Baghdad, the Abode of Peace** at 22 above.

59 **Mary** The Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ. The characterization of the Mother of Jesus throughout this passage has been singled out as one of the major themes of the *Íqán* by Shoghi Effendi when, in summarizing the text, he states that the *Íqán* 'upholds the purity and innocence of the Virgin Mary'.^[111] Refer to section 3 above. Compare *Promised Day is Come*, where Mary is described as 'that veiled and immortal, that most beautiful, countenance'.^[112] See *Íqán*, paras. 24, 88, 141, 144, 191. See also note on **Fáṭimih** at 178 below.

59 **a Babe Whose father was unknown**

With regard to your question concerning the Virgin Birth of Jesus; on this point, as on several others, the Bahá'í teachings are in full agreement with the doctrines of the Catholic Church. In the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* (Book of Certitude) page 56, and in a few other Tablets still unpublished, Bahá'u'lláh confirms, however indirectly, the Catholic conception of the Virgin Birth. Also 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Some Answered Questions', Chap. 12, page 73, explicitly states that Christ found existence through the spirit of God which statement necessarily implies, when reviewed in the light of the text, that Jesus was not the son of Joseph.^[113]

First regarding the birth of Jesus Christ. In the light of what Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá have stated concerning this subject it is evident that Jesus came into this world through the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit, and that consequently His birth was quite miraculous. This is an established fact, and the friends need not feel at all surprised, as the belief in the possibility of miracles has never been rejected in the Teachings. Their importance, however, has been minimized.^[114]

What science calls a virgin birth we do not associate with that of Jesus Christ, which we believe to have been a miracle and a sign of His Prophethood. In this matter we are in entire agreement with the most orthodox church views.^[115]

It would be sacrilege for a Bahá'í to believe that the parents of Jesus were illegally married and that the latter was consequently of an illegal union. Such a possibility cannot be even conceived by a believer who recognizes the high station of Mary and the Divine Prophethood of Jesus Christ. It is this same false accusation which the people of His Day attributed to Mary that Bahá'u'lláh indirectly repudiated in the *Íqán*. The only alternative therefore is to admit that the birth of Jesus has been miraculous. The operation of miracles is not necessarily irrational or illogical. It does by no means constitute a limitation of the Omnipotence of God. The belief in the possibilities of miracles, on the contrary, implies that God's power is beyond any limitation whatsoever. For it is only logical to believe that the Creator, Who is the sole Author of all the laws operating in the universe, is above them and can, therefore, if He deems it necessary, alter them at His Own Will. We, as humans, cannot possibly attempt to read His Mind, and to fully grasp His Wisdom. Mystery is therefore an inseparable part of true religion, and as such, should be recognized by the believers.^[116]

Again with regard to your question relative to the birth of Jesus; he wishes me to inform you that there is nothing further he can add to the explanation he gave you in his previous communication regarding this point. One thing, however, he wishes again to bring to your attention, namely that miracles are always possible, even though they do not constitute a regular channel whereby God reveals His power to mankind. To reject miracles on the ground that they imply a breach of the laws of nature is a very shallow, well-nigh a stupid argument, inasmuch as God Who is the Author of the universe can, in His Wisdom and Omnipotence, bring any change, no matter how temporary, in the operation of the laws which He Himself has created.

The Teachings do not tell us of any miraculous birth besides that of Jesus.^[117]

The Master clearly writes in a Tablet that Christ was *not* begotten in the ordinary way, but by the Holy Spirit. So we must accept this. Every Faith has some miracles, and this is the great miracle of the Christian Faith. But we must not let it be a test to us. Our human minds are so small, and as yet so immature compared to the men of the future, that we should have no difficulty in acknowledging the Power of God when He chooses to show it in some manner `illogical' to us![118]

59 **return unto her home** In other words, to Nazareth.

59 **O sister of Aaron** Reference to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Aaron, the brother of Moses and his senior by three years, was a Levite descended from `Imrán (Amran). The priestly class of Judaism are his descendants. Mary was of this class, hence she is addressed in the Qur`án 19:28, `O sister of Aaron'. She is said to have been devoted to Temple service between the ages of three and twelve years. The term `sister' is used here in a broad sense to denote Mary's lineal relationship to Aaron.

63 **How grievous the charges** Bahá'u'lláh Himself elaborates on these charges:

No sooner did He reveal Himself, than all the people rose up against Him. By some He was denounced as one that hath uttered slanders against God, the Almighty, the Ancient of Days. Others regarded Him as a man smitten with madness, an allegation which I, Myself, have heard from the lips of one of the divines. Still others disputed His claim to be the Mouthpiece of God, and stigmatized Him as one who had stolen and used as his the words of the Almighty, who had perverted their meaning, and mingled them with his own. The Eye of Grandeur weepeth sore for the things which their mouths have uttered, while they continue to rejoice upon their seats.[119]

63 **How severe the persecutions** Shoghi Effendi summarizes the calamities meted out to the Báb:

Sudden arrest and confinement in the very first year of His short and spectacular career; public affront deliberately inflicted in the presence of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of Shíráz; strict and prolonged incarceration in the bleak fastnesses of the mountains of Ádhirbáyján; a contemptuous disregard and a cowardly jealousy evinced respectively by the Chief Magistrate of the realm and the foremost minister of his government; the carefully staged and farcical interrogatory sustained in the presence of the heir to the Throne and the distinguished divines of Tabríz; the shameful infliction of the bastinado in the prayer house, and at the hands of the Shaykhu'l-Islám of that city; and finally suspension in the barrack-square of Tabríz and the discharge of a volley of above seven hundred bullets at His youthful breast under the eyes of a callous multitude of about ten thousand people, culminating in the ignominious exposure of His mangled remains on the edge of the moat without the city gate -- these were the progressive stages in the tumultuous and tragic ministry of One Whose age inaugurated the consummation of all ages, and Whose Revelation fulfilled the promise of all Revelations.[120]

64 **the sweet savours of God were being wafted** This and the following paragraph clearly foreshadow the impending Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh's Own prophetic mission. His soul laden with the divine riches accumulating since the intimation of that mission, first communicated to Him in 1852 in the darkness of the underground dungeon of the Síyáh- Chál of Tīhrán, here pours forth some of the mysteries of its hidden experience. The reader is permitted a glimpse of the inner workings of the latent splendours of His mighty revelation, a revelation, which as characterized by Shoghi Effendi, is `hailed as the promise and crowning glory of past ages and centuries, as the consummation of all the Dispensations within the Adamic Cycle, inaugurating an era of at least a thousand years' duration, and a cycle destined to last no less than five thousand centuries, signaling the end of the Prophetic Era and the beginning of the Era of Fulfilment,

unsurpassed alike in the duration of its Author's ministry and the fecundity and splendour of His mission . . .[121]

64 **Sheba of the Eternal** This allusion -- coming as it does in the middle of a passage very suggestive of Bahá'u'lláh's inherent but not yet fully disclosed divinity -- would seem to correspond to that inner dimension of the Manifestation of God, that Divine effulgence from God's Essence, which constitutes His eternal nature.

64 **the holy Spirit itself is envious!** In a similar mode Bahá'u'lláh elsewhere proclaims: `The Holy Spirit Itself hath been generated through the agency of a single letter revealed by this Most Great Spirit, if ye be of them that comprehend.'[122] In the light of other explanations this may be understood as a reference to the greater magnitude of the one same Light which shines from Bahá'u'lláh and which He was commissioned by God to reveal. The term `Holy Spirit' is often identified with Christ's Revelation and the `Most Great Spirit' with that of Bahá'u'lláh. The distinction drawn here conforms to the principle of progressive revelation.

65 **Kawthar** A river in paradise. See note at 25 above.

65 **Leviathan** An aquatic animal (real or imaginary) of enormous size. Figuratively, one of vast and formidable power.

65 **Phoenix** The Phoenix of the realms above crieth out from the immortal Branch: `The glory of all greatness belongeth to God, the Incomparable, the All-Compelling!'[123] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the phoenix as `A mythical bird, of gorgeous plumage, fabled to be the only one of its kind, and to live five or six hundred years in the Arabia desert, after which it burnt itself to ashes on a funeral pile of aromatic twigs ignited by the sun and fanned by its own wings, but only to emerge from its ashes with renewed youth, to live through another cycle of years.' Used figuratively for a person of unique excellence and beauty.

65 **guard it with the globe of understanding** Compare with Shoghi Effendi's statement that `the greatest of all protections is knowledge'[124] and his note that `it is better to have one Bahá'í who understands the Teachings and is wholeheartedly convinced of their truth, than a number of Bahá'ís, who are not well aware of the Cause, and deep-rooted in the Covenant.'[125]

66 **a star will appear** ` . . . the Teachings bear no reference to the names of the stars which are supposed to have preceded Moses, Christ and other Divine Prophets.'[126]

66 **true and exalted Morn** Bahá'u'lláh states:

O My servants! There shineth nothing else in Mine heart except the unfading light of the Morn of Divine guidance, and out of My mouth proceedeth naught but the essence of truth, which the Lord your God hath revealed.[127]

Further consider the following Hidden Word and its interpretation by `Abdu'l-Bahá:

O My Friends! Have ye forgotten that true and radiant morn, when in those hallowed and blessed surroundings ye were all gathered in My presence beneath the shade of the tree of life, which is planted in the all-glorious paradise? Awe-struck ye listened as I gave utterance to these three most holy words: O friends! Prefer not your will to Mine, never desire that which I have not desired for you, and approach Me not with lifeless hearts, defiled with worldly desires and cravings. Would ye but sanctify your souls, ye would at this present hour recall that place and those surroundings, and the truth of My utterance should be made evident unto all of you.[128]

There are a few passages in *The Hidden Words* which refer implicitly to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh . . . `Abdu'l-Bahá . . . has explained the meanings of some of these passages . . .

The `true and radiant morn' . . . refers to the Revelation of the Báb, the `tree of life' to Bahá'u'lláh, and the `hallowed and blessed surroundings' to the heart of the individual. He further explained that the gathering referred to in this verse was not a physical but a spiritual one. The call of God was raised within the sanctuary of their hearts; but they did not respond and were bewildered and awestruck.[129]

67 **Nimrod dreamed a dream** Ancient king of Babylon; identified as the persecutor of Abraham in Islamic traditions. See Qur'án 2:260; 21:70. See note on **episode of the fire** at 11 above. In Bible dictionaries Nimrod (Powerful) son of Cush, son of Ham, son of Noah (Genesis 10:8-9), is described as a brave man, a hunter, a champion, governor of the world and the builder of Babylon. Babylon for some time was called the land of Nimrod. Islamic traditions state that because he was nourished by a tigress at the order of God, he became known as Nimrod, as Nimrod means tigress in Arabic. The account of Nimrod and Abraham, and the throwing of the latter into the fire, have all been related by Majlisí in the fifth volume of the *Biháru'l-Anvár*. See note at 272 below.

Accounts of Nimrod's dream have been related in various books, including *Qisasu'l-Anbíyá* of Abú-Isháq Níshábúrí which states:

Nimrod was told by the priests that in the coming two or three years a child will be separated from his mother and your sovereignty will be demolished by him. Nimrod ordered to kill every child who became separated from his mother. This order was carried out for three years.

It has been related that Nimrod had a terrible dream. He asked the wise men its interpretation. In interpreting it, one of them announced to him the advent of Abraham. Some of the ancient accounts are contradictory in reporting this dream; one of them says that Nimrod's personal astrologer, Azar, dreamed the dream of his coming destruction. Majlisí relates in volume 14 of the *Bihár* from Káfí, that the Imám Şádiq has stated that this Azar was Abraham's father, and was the private astrologer of Nimrod. One night Azar understood from the arrangement of the stars that a boy would appear in that land who would destroy Nimrod and his followers. In the morning he informed Nimrod about this matter and said to him that very soon the seed of this boy will be fixed in the womb of his mother. Nimrod was astonished and asked whether the boy was already in the womb of the mother. Azar answered that it was not yet, and that Nimrod could order that men not cohabit with their women. And so it was that no woman was allowed to be with husband. But Azar himself slept with his wife and they themselves conceived Abraham. Azar, from the position of the stars, knew that they would burn his son but he did not know that God would save him.

68 **He Who held converse with God**

Bahá'u'lláh is not the intermediary between other Manifestations and God. Each has His own relation to the Primal Source. But in the sense that Bahá'u'lláh is the greatest Manifestation to yet appear, the One who consummates the Revelation of Moses, He was the One Moses conversed with in the Burning Bush. In other words, Bahá'u'lláh identifies the glory of the God-Head on that occasion with Himself. No distinction can be made amongst the Prophets in the sense that They all proceed from one Source, and are of one essence. But Their stations and functions in this world are different.[130]

69 **Magi** Members of the ancient Persian priestly caste of the Zoroastrian Faith; the `wise men' who brought offerings to the infant Jesus.

69 **Herod** King of Judaea, known as Herod I, the Great; ordered the slaughter of infant boys around the time of the birth of Christ.

Consider and call thou to mind the days whereon the Spirit of God (Jesus Christ) appeared, and Herod gave judgement against Him. God, however, aided Him with the hosts of the unseen, and protected Him with truth, and sent Him down unto another land, according to His promise. He, verily, ordaineth what He pleaseth.[131]

Not to be confused with his son, Herod Antipas, who was responsible for beheading John the Baptist.

69 **the city which was the seat of the Kingdom of Herod** Jerusalem

70 **Yahyá** Yahyá is Arabic for John and here refers to John the Baptist, son of Zachariah.

70 **Zachariah** Father of John the Baptist; of priestly descent from Aaron.

70 **John the Baptist** Divinely-appointed forerunner of Jesus Christ. Of priestly descent, his mother was cousin of the Virgin Mary. He baptized Jesus and was beheaded by Herod Antipas.[132]

They that have turned aside from Me have spoken even as the followers of John (the Baptist) spoke. For they, too, protested against Him Who was the Spirit (Jesus) saying: `The dispensation of John hath not yet ended; wherefore hast thou come?'[133]

John appeared before Jesus, proclaiming his [John's] prophethood, and all sects of Islám recognize him as a prophet; and he came with laws and commandments . . .[134]

This Manifestation and that of the Point of the Bayán [the Báb] are exactly similar to that of the son of Zachariah [John] and Jesus, the Son of Mary.[135]

71 **Rúz-bih** A Persian of Zoroastrian parents who embraced Christianity and who, after being told of the Prophet's coming by the four heralds of Muḥammad, journeyed to Arabia, attained His presence, and recognized Him. After his conversion he became known as Salmán, the Persian.

71 **Hijáz** A region in southwestern Arabia considered the holy land of the Muslims. The sacred cities of Mecca and Medina and many other places connected with the history of Muḥammad are found there. The `language of Hijáz', mentioned in the writings, is Arabic.

72 **appearance of its star** In 1843, just prior to the Declaration of the Báb, a great comet suddenly appeared in the heavens:

The *Comet of 1843* is regarded as perhaps the most marvellous of the present age, having been observed in the daytime even before it was visible at night -- passing very near the sun, exhibiting an enormous length of tail; and arousing interest in the public mind as universal and deep as it was unprecedented.[136]

72 **twin resplendent lights** Bahá'u'lláh later in His Ministry assigned this same designation `Núrayn-i-Nayyiraya' to two famous brothers, Mírzá Muḥammad Ḥasan and Mírzá Muḥammad Ḥusayn, respectively surnamed the King of Martyrs and the Beloved of Martyrs, who in 1879 were killed in Işfáhán.

72 **Aḥmad** (Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í) The first of the 'twin resplendent lights' who heralded the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh; founder of the Shaykhí movement; author of numerous religious writings. Died in 1826; buried in Medina.

The followers of Shaykh-i-Aḥsá'í (Shaykh Aḥmad) have, by the aid of God, apprehended that which was veiled from the comprehension of others, and of which they remained deprived.[137]

72 **Kázim** (Siyid Kázim-i-Rashtí) The second of the 'twin resplendent lights' who heralded the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. He was the chief disciple of Shaykh Aḥmad and his successor. He died at Karbilá on 31 December 1843.

74 **descended from the heaven of the will of God**

The Prophets, unlike us, are pre-existent. The soul of Christ existed in the spiritual world before His birth in this world. We cannot imagine what that world is like, so words are inadequate to picture His state of being.[138]

74 **true habitations**

They imagine that Christ was excluded from His heaven in the days when He walked the earth, that He fell from the heights of His sublimity, and afterwards mounted to those upper reaches of the sky, to the heaven which doth not exist at all, for it is but space.[139]

74 **'Nothing whatsoever keepeth Him . . .'** An Arabic verse of Bahá'u'lláh Himself.

75 **heaven** Bahá'u'lláh cites here the names of distinct heavens, indicating that each has a special meaning. While not revealing the intention of these heavens, each is related to terms that to some extent are defined by other passages in the Bahá'í writings. An examination of these terms helps to understand something of their meaning in the context of this passage.

75 **'heaven' hath been applied to many and diverse things** For one of these diverse applications consider the use of the term 'heaven' in the following passage from Bahá'u'lláh:

If the whole earth were to be converted into silver and gold, no man who can be said to have truly ascended into the heaven of faith and certitude would deign to regard it, much less to seize and keep it.[140]

And again,

He it is Who hath unveiled to your eyes the treasures of His knowledge, and caused you to ascend unto the heaven of certitude -- the certitude of His resistless, His irrefutable, and most exalted Faith.[141]

75 **'The names come down from heaven'** A Persian proverb.

76 **Knowledge** This passage clearly extols that knowledge which is divine in origin and condemns that which arises from the self of man. Human learning can act as a terrible veil blinding the soul to its purpose in life and its ultimate destiny. Useful knowledge acquired in conformity with the bidding of the Prophets of God is, however, most praiseworthy. As Bahá'u'lláh indicates:

Arts, crafts and sciences uplift the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation. Knowledge is as wings to man's life, and a ladder for his ascent. Its acquisition is incumbent upon everyone . . . In truth, knowledge is

a veritable treasure for man, and a source of glory, of bounty, of joy, of exaltation, of cheer and gladness unto him. Happy the man that cleaveth unto it, and woe betide the heedless.[142]

While Bahá'u'lláh extols the study of sciences and arts, He directs man to 'such sciences as are useful and would redound to the progress and advancement of the people'.[143] The point to bear in mind with regard to the acquisition of knowledge and education is that it must not be allowed to become a barrier between one's self and God. `Abdu'l-Bahá emphasizes this truth as follows:

Although to acquire the sciences and arts is the greatest glory of mankind, this is so only on condition that man's river flow into the mighty sea, and draw from God's ancient source His inspiration. When this cometh to pass, then every teacher is as a shoreless ocean, every pupil a prodigal fountain of knowledge. If, then, the pursuit of knowledge lead to the beauty of Him Who is the Object of all Knowledge, how excellent that goal; but if not, a mere drop will perhaps shut a man off from flooding grace, for with learning cometh arrogance and pride, and it bringeth on error and indifference to God.

The sciences of today are bridges to reality; if then they lead not to reality, naught remains but fruitless illusion. By the one true God! If learning be not a means of access to Him, the Most Manifest, it is nothing but evident loss.

It is incumbent upon thee to acquire the various branches of knowledge, and to turn thy face toward the beauty of the Manifest Beauty, that thou mayest be a sign of saving guidance amongst the peoples of the world, and a focal centre of understanding in this sphere from which the wise and their wisdom are shut out, except for those who set foot in the Kingdom of lights and become informed of the veiled and hidden mystery, the well-guarded secret.[144]

76 **Satanic** This term is used occasionally in the Bahá'í writings, most frequently in the *Íqán*. Satan refers not to an ultimate evil being but to the animal nature in the human being that is to be overcome. See *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 235-6 for `Abdu'l-Bahá's description of the conflict between the 'divine power in man' and 'satanic power'.

76 **'Fear ye God; God will teach you.'** Qur'án 2:282.

76 **'Knowledge is the most grievous veil . . .'** A traditional Şúfí saying.

76 **'Cling unto the robe . . .'** From a poem of Ibn Fáriz of Egypt (1198 ad).

77 **'He that treadeth the snow-white Path . . .'** Abu'l-Ghádír Muhiy-i-Dín Gílání, in the *Bisharitu'l-Khayrát*.

78 **the garb of pilgrimage** The seeker on his quest for the inner meaning of the Word of God must 'don the garb of pilgrimage'. In Islám, the believers are called upon once in their lifetime to make a pilgrimage to Mecca and circle round the Ka`bih in the centre of the Holy Mosque, the Qiblih of the Muslim world. It is prescribed that the pilgrims replace their traditional dress with a very simple set of two pieces of unsewn white cloth. Thus the symbols of social, political and familial distinction are transcended and all approach their goal concentrating on those inner qualities of submission and humility which should characterize the pilgrimage. Similarly, in approaching the inner meaning of the divine verses, we are called upon to discard the trappings of worldly position, of acquired learning and the like.

78 **Ka`bih** The most holy shrine at Mecca. See note at 54 above.

80 **subject to poverty and afflictions**

. . . we must remember that the Prophets of God Themselves were not immune from these things which men suffer. They knew sorrow, illness and pain too. They rose above these things through Their spirits, and that is what we must try and do too, when afflicted. The troubles of this world pass, and what we have left is what we have made of our souls; so it is to this we must look -- to becoming more spiritual, drawing nearer to God, no matter what our human minds and bodies go through.[145]

80 **`But for Thee . . .'** Ḥadīth-i-Qudsī of Muḥammad.

81 **Salsabīl** The name of a fountain or river in Paradise. See note at 57 above.

81 **Kawthar** A river in paradise. See note at 25 above.

81 **Consider how men for generations have been blindly imitating their fathers** `Abdu'l-Bahá describes blind imitation as the cause of prejudice:

. . . the root cause of prejudice is blind imitation of the past -- imitation in religion, racial attitudes, in national bias, in politics. So long as this aping of the past persisteth, just so long will the foundations order be blown to the four winds, just so long will humanity be continually exposed to direst peril.[146]

82 **recognize Him only by His own Self**

The first and foremost testimony establishing His truth is His own Self. Next to this testimony is His Revelation. For whoso faileth to recognize either the one or the other He hath established the words He hath revealed as proof of His reality and truth.[147]

He Who is everlastingly hidden from the eyes of men can never be known except through His Manifestation, and His Manifestation can adduce no greater proof of the truth of His Mission than the proof of His own Person.[148]

85 **sovereignty manifest in every land**

How vast is the tabernacle of the Cause of God! It hath overshadowed all the peoples and kindreds of the earth, and will, ere long, gather together the whole of mankind beneath its shelter.[149]

86 **angels**

The meaning of `angels' is the confirmations of God and His celestial powers. Likewise angels are blessed beings who have severed all ties with this nether world, have been released from the chains of self and the desires of the flesh, and anchored their hearts to the heavenly realms of the Lord. These are of the Kingdom, heavenly; these are of God, spiritual; these are revealers of God's abounding grace; these are dawning-points of His spiritual bestowals.[150]

We do not know the nature of these angelic beings. Sometimes it refers to individual departed souls, sometimes it means the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh, sometimes it is used as a figure of speech.[151]

In another Tablet `Abdu'l-Bahá addresses Mírzá Mihdí Akhavan-i-Safá with an explanation of the Qur'anic verse referring to angels with two, three or four wings. The Master explains that by wings is meant the power of divine confirmation and assistance through which man is able to ascend to the zenith of true understanding and soar to the very heart of Paradise with a rapidity that no one can conceive. By angels is meant those holy

realities which are aware of the grace of their Lord, sanctified from all deficiencies and evil tendencies, purified from defect, and have attained all goodly gifts. These are they who speak not till He hath spoken, and who act in accordance with the command of God.[152]

86 **Cherubim** Angelic beings, held traditionally by Christians to be of the second order of a ninefold celestial hierarchy and gifted with knowledge and wisdom. See also **Seraph of God** at 123 below.

86 **Şádiq** The sixth of the holy Imáms of Islám. Known also as Abú-Abdi'lláh.[153]

86 **philosopher's stone** The supreme object of alchemy; a substance supposed to have the power to transmute baser metals into gold or silver. Symbolically used to refer to anything extremely rare.

89 **Letters of Unity** Traditional reference to the twelve Shi'í Imáms. See note on **immaculate Souls** at 33 above.

89 **'Verily Our Word is abstruse . . .'** Muḥammad.

89 **'Our Cause is sorely trying . . .'** Muḥammad.

90 **Qá'im** The Promised One of Shi'í Islám whose coming is fulfilled in the appearance of the Báb. Literally, 'He Who Ariseth' from the family of Muḥammad. 'The Báb is the return of the 12th Imám only in a spiritual sense, just as Bahá'u'lláh is the return of the Spirit of Christ.'[154]

91 **Books . . . corrupted** The explanation which Bahá'u'lláh gives of the meaning of the corruption or modification (taḥríf) of the text has particular significance for those of Islamic background. For as a result of the misinterpretation of certain Qur'ánic verses, the Muslims have gradually come to the belief that the existing texts of the Old and New Testaments are without value and have been corrupted beyond recognition. This point of view is forcefully countered by Bahá'u'lláh, who sets down the true meaning of a few instances where modification of the verses has been mentioned. In the story of Ibn-i-Şúriyá He explains the historical context for the Qur'ánic verse 4:45, 'They pervert the text of the Word of God.' By 'by corruption of the text', He then states, 'is meant . . . the interpretation of God's holy Book in accordance with their idle imaginings and vain desires.' It does not mean the actual words of Revelation have been effaced. This is not to deny, however, questions related to attribution and authenticity of various biblical books and passages in modern scholarship. A further point made is that the divines and followers of these previous holy books would never have wittingly mutilated their own time-honoured scriptures.

Bahá'u'lláh has similarly warned the people of this day against corrupting the scriptures:

Whoso interpreteth what hath been sent down from the heaven of Revelation, and altereth its evident meaning, he, verily, is of them that have perverted the Sublime Word of God, and is of the lost ones in the Lucid Book.[155]

92 **'Modification by the exalted beings' and 'alteration by the disdainful'** Words attributed to the Imáms.

92 **Ibn-i-Şúriyá** The rabbi chosen by the people of Khaybar at Muḥammad's request to cite a point of Jewish law.

92 **Khaybar** Name of a famous oasis and of its principal settlement almost a hundred miles north of Medina. It was heavily populated with wealthy Jewish farmers and merchants. See note on **Battle of Khaybar** at 179 below.

92 **by God Who clove the sea for you**

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.[156]

92 **caused manna to descend upon you**

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was, And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.[157]

See also notes at 5 and 22 regarding **bread**.

92 **the cloud to overshadow you**

And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord . . . And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.[158]

And he reared up the court round the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day. and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.[159]

92 **Who delivered you from Pharaoh**

And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God.[160]

See Exodus for the entire account of the deliverance of the Israelites.

92 **exalted you above all human beings** Reference to the Jews as the chosen people of God as in Exodus:

And the Lord said . . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.[161]

92 **Nebuchadnezzar** King of Babylon who in 599 bc captured Jerusalem. In 588 he destroyed the holy city and removed most of the inhabitants to Chaldaea.

92 **Amalekites** Expelled in early times from Babylonia, they spread through Arabia to Palestine, Syria and Egypt. They were bitter opponents of Israel and suffered a crushing defeat from Saul.

92 **Pentateuch** The Greek name given to the first five books of the Old Testament which are commonly ascribed to Moses and known also as the Torah.

93 **Mecca and Medina** Two sacred cities in the Arabian province of Hijáz, the Holy Land of the Muslims. Mecca was the birthplace of Muḥammad and is the site of Islám's most sacred shrine, the Ka`bih. Medina is the settlement that gave refuge to the Prophet and became His burial-place; to a Muslim it is second in sanctity only to Mecca. See also **Baṭḥá** and **Yathrib** at 54 above.

93 **verses of the Pentateuch, that referred to His Manifestation** Note, for example, the following passage on the coming of the Manifestations:

And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.[162]

94 ` . . . and then, after they had understood it, distorted it, and knew that they did so.' Compare this with `Abdu'l-Bahá's comment about Covenant-breakers:

These do not doubt the validity of the Covenant but selfish motives have dragged them to this condition. It is not that they do not know what they do -- they are perfectly aware and still they exhibit opposition.[163]

97 **untutored holy Men** Consider Bahá'u'lláh's description of this lack of education:

We ask thee to reflect upon that which hath been revealed, and to be fair and just in thy speech, that perchance the splendours of the day-star or truthfulness and sincerity may shine forth . . . This Wronged One hath frequented no school, neither hath He attended the controversies of the learned. By My life! Not of Mine own volition have I revealed Myself, but God, of His own choosing, hath manifested Me.[164]

We have not entered any school, nor read any of your dissertations. Incline your ears to the words of this unlettered One, wherewith He summoneth youth unto God, the Ever-Abiding.[165]

98 **Jesus had disappeared . . . and ascended**

Verily the heaven into which the Messiah rose up was not this unending sky, rather was His heaven the Kingdom of His beneficent Lord. Even as He Himself hath said, 'I came down from heaven', and again, 'The Son of Man is in heaven.' Hence it is clear that His heaven is beyond all directional points; it encircleth all existence, and is raised up for those who worship God. Beg and implore thy Lord to lift thee up into that heaven, and give thee to eat of its food, in this age of majesty and might.[166]

98 **fourth heaven**

As to the ascent of Christ to the `fourth heaven' as revealed in the glorious Book of Íqán, he [the Guardian] stated that the `fourth heaven' is a term used and a belief held by the early astronomers. The followers of the Shí`ih sect likewise held this belief. As the Kitáb-i-Íqán was revealed for the guidance of that sect, this term

was used in conformity with the concepts of its followers.[167]

In the ancient scheme of the seven heavens or spheres, the sun was located in the fourth heaven. See also Íqán, para. 144.

99 **Morn is breaking** Allusion to Bahá'u'lláh's own Revelation.

99 `Verily, we are God's . . . and unto Him we do return.' Qur'án 2:156. See also Íqán, para. 279.

99 **eye of the heart** Throughout the Bahá'í writings reference is made to two ways of seeing, to the `inner and outer eyes'. This inner vision, or inspired insight, associated with `the eye of thine heart' must be cleansed of earthly things and directed towards that true knowledge shining from the Word of God, the light of the True One. Consider the following well-known admonition:

O Man of Two Visions! Close one eye and open the other. Close one to the world and all that is therein, and open the other to the hallowed beauty of the Beloved.[168]

100 **O affectionate seeker!** This paragraph sets out three distinct degrees of divine recognition characterized as `the holy realm of the spirit' in which the soul, beholding naught but God, is free from need for lesser testimonies; `the sacred domain of truth' where the knowledge of all things depends on His recognition; and finally `the land of testimony' where the seeker contents himself with the proof of the Book. In a sense, these three perspectives may be said to parallel the three stages of certitude alluded to by Bahá'u'lláh. See note on the **stations of absolute certitude** at 216 below.

100 **God was alone . . .** Tradition attributed to the Imám `Alí and others.

100 **This proof is His Word . . .** Tradition attributed to the Imám `Alí.

101 **people of the Bayán** The followers of the Báb, known also as Bábís. Bahá'u'lláh later exhorted and admonished the followers of the Báb in numerous passages. To cite but one instance:

O people of the Bayán! We have chosen you out of the world to know and recognize Our Self. We have caused you to draw nigh unto the right side of Paradise -- the Spot out of which the undying Fire crieth in manifold accents: `There is none other God besides Me, the All-Powerful, the Most High!' Take heed lest ye allow yourselves to be shut out as by a veil from this Day Star that shineth above the dayspring of the Will of your Lord, the All-Merciful, and whose light hath encompassed both the small and the great. Purge your sight, that ye may perceive its glory with your own eyes, and depend not on the sight of any one except your self, for God hath never burdened any soul beyond its power. Thus hath it been sent down unto the Prophets and Messengers of old, and been recorded in all the Scriptures.[169]

Eventually the majority of the Bábís recognized Bahá'u'lláh as the Promised One announced by the Báb. For **Bayán** see notes at 1 above and 219 below.

101 **the King of divine might** Shoghi Effendi cites this sentence in his exposition of the inconceivable greatness of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation in *God Passes By*, pp. 98-9 and states clearly that Bahá'u'lláh is alluding here to Himself. In the light of this clarification re-read the titles in the preceding lines: `He, Who is the Quintessence of truth, the inmost Reality of all things, the Source of all light'.

Part Two

The second part of the text centres on the sovereignty of the Manifestations of God and their mysterious two-fold nature. It also unravels the inner meaning of numerous abstruse scriptural terms and, finally, demonstrates the validity of the Mission of the Báb and His Revelation.

103 **sent down from their invisible habitations** `The Prophets, unlike us, are pre-existent. The soul of Christ existed in the spiritual world before His birth in this world. We cannot imagine what that world is like, so words are inadequate to picture His state of being.[170]

103 **this world** This realm of creation is one of three worlds of existence described in the Bahá'í writings: the World of God which is infinite, limitless and perfect; the world of the Kingdom of Command, which is the Holy Reality of the Manifestations of God, the Primal Will; and the world of existence or servitude, which includes the many worlds of creation both visible and invisible. See *Some Answered Questions*, p. 295. These three conditions of existence are represented in the Bahá'í ringstone symbol by the three parallel lines.

103 **educate the souls of men and endue with grace** Bahá'u'lláh, likewise, states:

God's purpose in sending His Prophets unto men is twofold. The first is to liberate the children of men from the darkness of ignorance, and guide them to the light of true understanding. The second is to ensure the peace and tranquillity of mankind, and provide all the means by which they can be established.[171]

103 **Verily God doeth . . .** See also *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 206, 209, 284, 295; Íqán paras. 155, 182, 184; *Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 13; *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, paras. 7, 47, 157. The phrase itself is a composite of two Qur'anic verses, 14:27 and 5:2.

104 **Far be it from his glory that human tongue . . . recount His praise**

Every praise which any tongue or pen can recount, every imagination which any heart can devise, is debarred from the station which Thy most exalted Pen hath ordained, how much more must it fall short of the heights which Thou hast Thyself immensely exalted above the conception and the description of any creature. For the attempt of the evanescent to conceive the signs of the Uncreated is as the stirring of the drop before the tumult of Thy billowing oceans.[172]

I render Thee thanks, O Thou Who hast lighted Thy fire within my soul, and cast the beams of Thy light into my heart, that Thou hast taught Thy servants how to make mention of Thee, and revealed unto them the ways whereby they can supplicate Thee, through Thy most holy and exalted tongue, and Thy most august and precious speech. But for Thy leave, who is there that could venture to express Thy might and Thy grandeur; and were it not for Thine instruction, who is the man that could discover the ways of Thy pleasure in the kingdom of Thy creation?[173]

104 **everlastingly hidden** `From time immemorial He hath been veiled in the ineffable sanctity of His exalted Self, and will everlastingly continue to be wrapt in the impenetrable mystery of His unknowable Essence.[174]

104 **No tie of direct intercourse**

He is, and hath from everlasting been, one and alone, without peer or equal, eternal in the past, eternal in the future, detached from all things, ever-abiding, unchangeable, and self-subsisting. He hath assigned no associate unto Himself in His Kingdom, no counsellor to counsel Him, none to compare unto Him, none to rival

His glory.[175]

104 **Primal Will** This theme is found in numerous passages of the Bahá'í writings. One instance is the following extract from *The Seven Proofs of the Báb*:

. . . know thou that the First Remembrance, which is the Primal Will of God, may be likened unto the sun. God hath created Him through the potency of His might, and He hath, from the beginning that hath no beginning, caused Him to be manifested in every Dispensation through the compelling power of His behest, and God will, to the end that knoweth no end, continue to manifest Him according to the good-pleasure of His invincible Purpose . . . It is this Primal Will which appeareth resplendent in every Prophet and speaketh forth in every revealed Book . . .

In the time of the First Manifestation the Primal Will appeared in Adam; in the day of Noah It became known in Noah; in the day of Abraham in Him; and so in the day of Moses; the day of Jesus; the day of Muḥammad, the Apostle of God; the day of the 'Point of the Bayán'; the day of Him Whom God shall make manifest; and the day of the One Who will appear after Him Whom God shall make manifest. Hence the inner meaning of the words uttered by the Apostle of God, 'I am all the Prophets', inasmuch as what shineth resplendent in each one of Them hath been and will ever remain the one and the same sun.[176]

105 **God would have you beware of Himself** Beyond the obvious meaning of this verse, the term 'Himself' has been understood by some scholars to refer to the Manifestation of God. This seems to conform to Bahá'u'lláh's use of the expression 'Self of God' at times to refer to Himself and the other Prophets. This, however, should be viewed in the light of the explanation given in the following paragraph of the text itself, especially the closing lines.

105 **'God was alone . . .'** A tradition attributed to Imám 'Alí and others. In the face of God, all else is obliterated and as nothing.

105 **their inability**

All the Embodiments of His Names wander in the wilderness of search, athirst and eager to discover His Essence, and all the Manifestations of His Attributes implore Him, from the Sinai of Holiness, to unravel His mystery . . . Ten thousand Prophets, each a Moses, are thunderstruck upon the Sinai of their search at His forbidding voice, 'Thou shalt never behold Me!'; whilst a myriad Messengers, each as great as Jesus, stand dismayed upon their heavenly thrones by the interdiction, 'Mine Essence thou shalt never apprehend!' [177]

106 **'His grace hath transcended all things . . .'** The first half of this verse is by Bahá'u'lláh; the second half is Qur'ánic in origin.

106 **Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe**

We find God only through the Intermediary of His Prophet. We see the Perfection of God in His Prophets. Time and space are physical things; God, the Creator, is not a 'place' as we conceive of place in physical terms. God is the Infinite Essence, the Creator. We cannot picture Him or His state, but if we did, we would be His equals, not His creatures. God is never flesh, but mirrored in the attributes of His Prophets we see His Divine characteristics and perfections.[178]

106 **'There is no distinction . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám Mihdí, the twelfth Imám.

106 **`I am He, Himself . . .'** Ḥadīth-i-Qudsí of Muḥammad. Compare with the following alternative rendering: 'Manifold are Our relationships with God. At one time, We are He Himself, and He is we Ourselves. At another He is that He is, and We are that We are.' [179]

107 **`Man is My Mystery . . .'** Ḥadīth-i-Qudsí of Muḥammad.

107 **the eternal King** Reference to the Imám `Alí, who is the author of the tradition which immediately follows.

107 **`He hath known God who hath known himself'** Bahá'u'lláh has elaborated on the meaning of this tradition, attributed to the Imám `Alí, in a Tablet addressed to Mírzá Hádíy-i-Qazvíní, one of the Letters of the Living. In this Tablet He reveals that this saying has unique and wondrous meanings in all of the worlds of God in accordance with the exigencies of each world. No one who has failed to attain these worlds can grasp such meanings. If all the oceans were converted to ink and all the pens on earth set to writing it would not suffice to mention all these meanings. He then offers a dewdrop from this infinite ocean for the guidance of seekers. A significant portion of the explanation which follows constitutes section lxxxiii, pp. 164-6 of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, which begins: 'Consider the rational faculty . . .' See also *ibid.* p. 326.

109 **`Hath aught else save Thee a power . . .'** Imám Ḥusayn, in the Prayer of the Day of `Arafah.

109 **eternal King** Reference to the Imám `Alí.

109 **`No thing have I perceived . . .'** Words of Imám `Alí

109 **tradition of Kumayl** By this tradition is meant one of the traditions which Kumayl Ibn Ziyád Nakha'í has related on the authority of the Imám `Alí; quoted in the *Bihár* (see note under 272 below). Kumayl was a devoted apostle of `Alí who attained the crown of martyrdom through his love for him.

113 **Qá'im** The Promised One of the *Shi`ís*. See note at 90 above.

113 **Sovereignty of the Qá'im**

Bahá'u'lláh, Who Himself was an active figure in those days and was regarded one of the leading exponents of the Faith of the Báb, states clearly His views in the *Íqán* that His conception of the sovereignty of the Promised Qá'im was purely a spiritual one, and not a material or political one . . . [180]

114 **`Abdu'lláh-i-Ubayy** Opponent of Muḥammad; a pagan divine who was chief of the hypocrites. The Muslim commentators relate that he was a tall man of a very graceful presence and of a ready and eloquent tongue. He used to frequent the Prophet's assembly, attended by several like himself. These men were greatly admired by Muḥammad, who was taken with their handsome appearance and listened to their discourse with pleasure. `Abdu'lláh-i-Ubayy was said to have kept six slave girls for prostitution; one of them complained to Muḥammad and in response Qur'án 24:33 was revealed: 'Force not your female slaves into sin, in order that ye may gain the casual fruitions of this world, if they wish to preserve their modesty.' He promised help to the Jewish Baní Naḍír if they stayed in Medina and fought the Prophet following their violation of the covenant they made with Him. He drew off 300 men from battle by predicting their certain death in the expedition of Tabúr. In his last sickness (he died in the ninth year of the Hijra), his son came and asked Muḥammad to beg pardon of God for his father, which the Prophet did. `Abdu'lláh-i-Ubayy then asked to see Muḥammad and to be buried in His shirt. Verses of the Qur'án indicate, however, that in general the hypocrites will not be forgiven. See *Súrih* 63.

114 **Abú-`Ámir, the hermit** Known as ar-Ráhib, the Hermit, because of earlier ascetic practices. A Medinian renegade who strongly opposed Muḥammad. After being put to flight in the battle of Ḥunayn, he fled to Syria in hopes of raising an army with help from the Byzantine emperor but died there, in Kinnisrín. He was to have dedicated a hypocrites' mosque at Qubá', in the immediate vicinity of Medina, the construction of which he is said to have inspired. See Qur'án 9:107.

114 **Ka`b-Ibn-i-Ashraf** Medinian half-Jewish priest, poet and inveterate enemy of Muḥammad. After the Prophet suffered a temporary defeat, he broke agreements with Him and went to Mecca with 40 horsemen. There he conspired with Muḥammad's arch-enemy Abú Sufyán in an alliance to bring about the Prophet's death. As a consequence he was slain and the Prophet ordered his followers, the Baní Naḍír, to leave Medina. See Qur'án 59:2.

114 **Naḍr-Ibn-i-Ḥáarith** One of `nine persons who made mischief in the land'. [181] Also referred to at 33:6; because, it is said, he brought from Persia the romance of Rustam and Isfandiyar and recited it in the assemblies of the Quraysh. Reported to have challenged God thus: `O God, if what Muḥammad preaches be the truth from Thee, rain down upon us a shower of stones, or send some dreadful judgement to punish us.' See Qur'án 70:1.

115 **`No Prophet of God hath suffered . . .'** Ḥadíth of Muḥammad

116 **Gabriel** The angel-mediator of revelation to Muḥammad. See note at 54 above.

118 **one single verse** The identification of the well-known verse referred to is not clearly given. Consider, nevertheless, how a Qur'anic verse such as `Verily, I am the Messenger of God unto you all' (7:18) uttered by Muḥammad would produce the results mentioned. Acceptance or denial of the truth of this one verse would suffice.

118 **the Satan of self** `Abdu'l-Bahá when asked, `What is Satan?' replied, `The insistent self.' [182] In the Bahá'í teachings Satan is not viewed as an independent force but rather as the natural inclinations of man's lower nature, his animal nature. This lower nature, symbolized as Satan, is the ego inclined to evil which is a part of each human soul. It is not an outside personality:

God has never created an evil spirit; all such ideas and nomenclature are symbols expressing the mere human or earthly nature of man. It is an essential condition of the soil of earth that thorns, weeds and fruitless trees may grow from it. Relatively speaking, this is evil; it is simply the lower state and baser product of nature. [183]

118 **Kawthar** A river in paradise. See note at 25 above.

120 **`Swift is He in reckoning . . .'** Qur'án 2:202; 3:19, 199; 5:4; 13:41; 14:51; 24:39; 40:17.

123 **Seraph of God** Here, literally, Isráfíl, the angel of the Judgement Day who, according to Islám, calls the dead to rise to new life.

As by the will of God the power of composition exists, so, also by will of God the power of decomposition exists.

These two are expressed in scripture by `Isráfíl' the angel who gives life to men, and the Angel of Death who takes it away. The first is the power of composition or attraction, the other the power of decomposition. They are not angels. [184]

123 by `resurrection' is meant

. . . Concerning the meaning of `Resurrection': although this term is often used by Bahá'u'lláh in His Writings, as in the passage quoted in your letter, its meaning is figurative. The tomb mentioned is also allegorical, i.e. the tomb of unbelief. The Day of Resurrection, according to Bahá'í interpretation, is the Judgement Day, the Day when unbelievers will be called upon to give account of their actions, and whether the world has prevented them from acknowledging the new Revelation.[185]

123 **`paradise' and `hell'** The symbolic meaning of these terms revolves around the acceptance and denial of the Manifestation of God. Bahá'u'lláh reveals:

They say: `Where is Paradise, and where is Hell?' Say: `The one is reunion with Me; the other thine own self, O thou who dost associate a partner with God and doubtst.'[186]

In this regard the Báb wrote:

There is no paradise, in the estimation of the believers in the Divine Unity, more exalted than to obey God's commandments, and there is no fire in the eyes of those who have known God and His signs, fiercer than to transgress His laws and to oppress another soul, even to the extent of a mustard seed.[187]

Relative to the Paradise explained by Muḥammad in the Qur'án, such utterances are spiritual and are cast into the mould of words and figures of speech; for at that time people did not possess the capacity of comprehending spiritual significances.[188]

125 born of the Spirit

I render Thee thanks, therefore, and extol Thee, in the name of all them that are dear to Thee, for that Thou hast caused them to be born again, by reason of the living waters which have flowed down out of the mouth of Thy will.[189]

127 **Kúfih** An erstwhile city on the west bank of the Euphrates, south of Karbilá, where the Imám `Alí established the seat of his Imamate. Most of its early inhabitants were unfaithful to the Imáms. It was an important Muslim seat of learning which later disappeared entirely.

127 **`Alí, the Commander of the Faithful** The illustrious first Imám and rightful successor of Muḥammad. He was a cousin of the Prophet and husband of His daughter Fáṭimih. He was killed at Kúfih by Ibn-i-Muljam in 661 ad. See note on **immaculate Souls** at 33 above.

127 **Şíráṭ** `The Bridge' which Muslim tradition holds will be extended over Hell on the Last Days over which men will have to cross to attain Paradise.

Take thou good heed that ye may all, under the leadership of Him Who is the Source of Divine Guidance, be enabled to direct thy steps aright upon the Bridge, which is sharper than the sword and finer than a hair, so that perchance the things which from the beginning of thy life till the end thou hast performed for the love of God, may not, all at once and unrealized by thyself, be turned to acts not acceptable in the sight of God.[190]

128 **true believer liveth** Bahá'u'lláh has revealed the meaning of this saying of Muḥammad in a Tablet revealed after the Íqán, affirming that its truth is manifest as the sun. After stating that the existence and life of the true believer are to be regarded as `the originating purpose of all creation', He explains that `the true

believer' will `eternally live and endure. His spirit will everlastingly circle round the Will of God. He will last as long as God, Himself, will last.'[191]

129 **Ḥamzih** `Abdu'l-Muṭṭalib, `Prince of Martyrs', Muḥammad's uncle. Slain at the battle of Uḥud by Waḥshí; the infidels abused his dead body by removing the bowels and cutting off his nose and ears. When Muḥammad saw it, he swore to retaliate but God revealed verses to Him to abstain and voided thus His oath. See Súrih 16. Muḥammad later forgave Waḥshí.

129 **Abú-Jahl** Muslim epithet meaning `Father of Ignorance'; refers to `Amr Ibn Hishám, entitled Abú'l-Ḥakím, `Father of Wisdom'. One of the prominent Meccans who opposed Muḥammad; slain in the battle of Badr; condemned to `eternal damnation'. He once threatened that if he caught Muḥammad in the act of adoration, he would set his foot on His neck; but when he came upon Him in that posture, he suddenly turned back as in a fright, and, being asked what was the matter, said there was a ditch of fire between himself and Muḥammad and he had seen a vision of terrible troops come to defend Him.[192]

129 **Kawthar** A river in paradise. See note at 25 above.

131 **the potency of one word** Bahá'u'lláh, in a prayer, elaborates on the power of a single word:

I testify that if Thy servants were to turn towards Thee with the eyes Thou didst create in them and with the ears wherewith Thou didst endow them, they would all be carried away by a single word sent down from the right hand of the throne of Thy majesty. That word alone would suffice to brighten their faces, and to assure their hearts, and to cause their souls to soar up to the atmosphere of Thy great glory, and to ascend into the heaven of Thy sovereignty.[193]

Those souls who have the capacity and ability to receive the outpourings of the Kingdom and the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, they become attracted through one word . . . No sooner is the oil touched by fire than it is ignited . . .[194]

See also Íqán, para. 101.

134 **`He is the Dominant, above all things.'** Bahá'u'lláh's own words.

135 **Ḥusayn** The third Imám; son of `Alí and Fáṭimih; the `Prince of Martyrs', tragically slain at Karbilá. See note at 138 below for details. Ḥusayn's exalted position and Bahá'u'lláh's identifying Himself with his return are explained:

Imám Ḥusayn has, as attested by the Íqán, been endowed with special grace and power among the Imáms, hence the mystical reference to Bahá'u'lláh as the return of Imám Ḥusayn, meaning the Revelation in Bahá'u'lláh of those attributes with which Imám Ḥusayn had been specifically endowed.[195]

In the prayer[196] . . . Bahá'u'lláh identifies Himself with Imám Ḥusayn. This does not make him a Prophet, but his position was very unique, and we know Bahá'u'lláh claims to be the `return' of the Imám Ḥusayn. He, in other words, identifies His Spirit with these Holy Souls gone before, that does not, of course, make Him in anyway their reincarnation. Nor does it mean all of them were Prophets.[197]

See also Íqán, paras. 138, 139, 179, 251.

135 **`There was none to equal or to match him . . .'** Bahá'u'lláh's own words.

136 **Karbilá** Site of the martyrdom and shrine of the Imám Ḥusayn and consequently a holy city for the Sh`ís; located some 88 kilometres (55 miles) southwest of Baghdád on the Euphrates River.

136 **land of Ṭaff** Another name for Karbilá and its surrounding plain.

138 **circumstances that have attended the martyrdom of Ḥusayn** Ḥusayn, the third Imám, died in an historic episode of which has had tremendous repercussions on the Sh`ís through the centuries. He and a band of his family and supporters, numbering 72 according to the accounts, were surrounded by an immense force representing the Umayyad Caliph, Yazíd. This host of thousands of men intercepted Ḥusayn near Karbilá as he travelled north on his way to asylum in Kúfa in 680 ad. The Umayyads were demanding his pledge of allegiance in denial of his right of succession as the head of Islám:

The fighting appears to have been of a sporadic nature consisting of single combat and brief forays. The steady fire maintained by the Umayyad archers on Husayn's camp took its own toll. One by one Husayn's supporters fell and then the members of his family until only he and his half-brother `Abbás, the standard-bearer on that day, were left of the fighting men. `Abbás was killed trying to obtain water for the thirsty women and children and the army converged on the lone figure of Husayn.

Carrying his infant son in his arms, Husayn pleaded for water for the babe but an arrow lodged in the baby's throat killing him. As the troops closed around him, Husayn fought valiantly until at last he was struck a severe blow that caused him to fall face down on the ground. Even then the soldiers hesitated to deal the final blow to the grandson of the Prophet until Shimr ordered them on, and according to some accounts himself came forward and struck the blow that ended Husayn's life.

The Umayyad army looted the tents, decapitated the bodies of all Husayn's companions and raised these on spears to lead their procession back to Kúfa. The women and children who had been taken prisoner included `Alí, the only surviving son of Husayn, who had been too ill to participate in the fighting.

At Kúfa `Ubaydu'lláh convened a great assembly and ordered the head of Husayn to be brought to him on a tray and also the captives. When the head was placed before him, `Ubaydu'lláh struck the lips with his cane and taunted the captives. Some of those witnessing this scene were intensely moved and one of them spoke up saying: `Remove your cane from those lips, for, by God, many a time have I seen the lips of the Prophet of God on those lips.'[198]

140 **the mysteries of Ḥusayn's martyrdom** At a later stage in His ministry Bahá'u'lláh revealed a lengthy and detailed Tablet of Visitation for the Imám Ḥusayn in which He refers to His martyrdom as the most great calamity and as a grievous affliction. Through Ḥusayn's martyrdom the soul of the Chaste One (Fátimih) was melted and the Apostle (Muḥammad) lamented, the inmates of the supreme paradise cried out and the realities of existence were consumed. Bahá'u'lláh refers to Ḥusayn as the Prince and King of Martyrs, the Pride and Beloved of Martyrs. Through him the light of detachment shone forth in the world and the near ones were adorned with the ornament of piety. If it were not for Ḥusayn the injunction of the `B' and the `E' would not have been manifested, the choice Wine would not have been unsealed, the Bird of divine testimony would not have sung forth, and the Tongue of Grandeur would not have spoken amongst the followers of divers beliefs. By him, Bahá'u'lláh states, the mystery of true knowledge became manifest in every land and the light of certitude shone forth from the heaven of testimony. Through him the doors of divine grace were unlocked to the world. For nine pages Bahá'u'lláh continues to extol the wonders and effects of Ḥusayn and his great sacrifice.[199]

144 **Pilate** A pagan Roman procurator of Judaea at the time of Christ's crucifixion, 26-36 ad, who issued His death-sentence.[200] `Surviving record of Pilate's governorship, and especially those from Jewish sources, picture him as greedy and bloodthirsty. Josephus, for example, implies that his career in Judaea was splashed with gore from beginning to end.'[201] ` . . . in the year 36, after quieting an outburst in Samaria with unnecessary ruthlessness, he was sent by the legate of Syria, the ranking official in the near East, to Rome to defend his misdeeds. Of his end nothing is known.'[202] A fourth century tradition states that in 39 ad, at the

order of the Emperor Caligula, Pilate killed himself.

144 **Caiaphas** Joseph Caiaphas, the 'leading divine of that age', having been appointed to the Jewish high priesthood not earlier than 18 ad by Roman authority. Powerful and unscrupulous, he was suspected by most Jews of collusion with his Roman masters. He presided at the court which condemned Jesus Christ. As Bahá'u'lláh later revealed:

. . . call thou to mind the one who sentenced Jesus to death. He was the most learned of his age in his own country, whilst he who was only a fisherman believed in Him. Take good heed and be of them that observe the warning.[203]

See John 18:14.

144 **'Didst thou not claim to be the Divine Messiah?'** See Matthew 26:62-5.

144 **fourth heaven** See note at 98 above.

146 **Point of the Bayán** Reference to the Báb, the Revealer of the Bayán. Bahá'u'lláh subsequently affirmed with regard to Himself: 'He around Whom the Point of the Bayán (Báb) hath revolved is come.'[204] For **Bayán** see note at 1 above and 219 below.

148 **contention, that all Revelation is ended** Bahá'u'lláh states in the Súriy-i-Şabr:

God hath sent down His Messengers to succeed to Moses and Jesus, and He will continue to do so till 'the end that hath no end'; so that His grace may, from the heaven of Divine bounty, be continually vouchsafed to mankind.[205]

The Bahá'í teachings thus clearly affirm the coming of future Manifestations of God and repudiate any claim to finality for the Messages of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

Indeed, the categorical rejection by the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh of the claim to finality which any religious system inaugurated by the Prophets of the past may advance is as clear and emphatic as their own refusal to claim that same finality for the Revelation with which they stand identified. 'To believe that all revelation is ended, that the portals of Divine mercy are closed, that from the daysprings of eternal holiness no sun shall rise again, that the ocean of everlasting bounty is forever stilled, and that out of the tabernacle of ancient glory the Messengers of God have ceased to be made manifest' must constitute in the eyes of every follower of the Faith a grave, an inexcusable departure from one of its most cherished and fundamental principles.[206]

Note how Shoghi Effendi has reinforced his argument in this passage by citing the very words of the Íqán being commented on here.

148 **Presence of God**

In all the Divine Books the promise of the Divine Presence hath been explicitly recorded. By this Presence is meant the Presence of Him Who is the Dayspring of the signs, and the Dawning-Place of the clear tokens, and the Manifestation of the Excellent Names, and the Source of the attributes, of the true God, exalted be His glory. God in His Essence and in His own Self hath ever been unseen, inaccessible, and unknowable. By Presence, therefore, is meant the Presence of the One Who is His Viceregent amongst men. He, moreover, hath never had, nor hath He, any peer or likeness. For were He to have any peer or likeness, how could it

then be demonstrated that His being is exalted above, and His essence sanctified from, all comparison and likeness? Briefly, there hath been revealed in the Kitáb-i-Íqán (Book of Certitude) concerning the Presence and Revelation of God that which will suffice the fair-minded.[207]

149 **Universal Revelation** For notes on this and the other two stages of Divine Revelation, see section 7, 'The Three Stages of Divine Revelation as Adumbrated in the Íqán'. Consider also the following explanation of Bahá'u'lláh with regard to the general or universal Revelation which exists in all things:

Know thou that every created thing is a sign of the revelation of God. Each, according to its capacity, is, and will ever remain, a token of the Almighty. Inasmuch as He, the sovereign Lord of all, hath willed to reveal His sovereignty in the kingdom of names and attributes, each and every created thing hath, through the act of the Divine Will, been made a sign of His glory. So pervasive and general is this revelation that nothing whatsoever in the whole universe can be discovered that doth not reflect His splendour. Under such conditions every consideration of proximity and remoteness is obliterated . . . Were the Hand of Divine power to divest of this high endowment all created things, the entire universe would become desolate and void.[208]

150 **Most Holy Outpouring . . . Holy Outpouring** These terms are mentioned in the works of a number of Muslim Šúfí writers such as Ibn'u'l-`Arabí, Rúmí and Jámí. The 'Most Holy Outpouring' is said to refer to the manifestation of God unto Himself. In this state every attribute of God is the same as God Himself. He is the essence of love, of knowledge, etc. He is Himself love. The 'Holy Outpouring' refers here to the effulgences of God witnessed in the Manifestations of God.

150 **'The way is barred . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám `Alí.

151 **'Presence of God'** See Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of Visitation: '. . . he who hath attained unto Thy presence hath attained unto the presence of God.'[209]

152 **'When the Qá'im riseth . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám Šádiq.

155 **'The abased amongst you, He shall exalt . . .'** Tradition of the Imám `Alí, in the Nahju'l-Baláhghí. Bahá'u'lláh, in one of His Tablets, cites an example of this spiritual phenomenon from the history of Islám. He states that when Muḥammad appeared,

. . . the learned men of Mecca and Medina arose, in the early days of His Revelation, against Him and rejected His Message, while they who were destitute of all learning recognized and embraced His Faith. Ponder a while. Consider how Balál, the Ethiopian, unlettered though he was, ascended into the heaven of faith and certitude, whilst `Abdu'lláh Ubayy, a leader among the learned, maliciously strove to oppose Him. Behold, how a mere shepherd was so carried away by the ecstasy of the words of God that he was able to gain admittance into the habitation of his Best-Beloved, and was united to Him Who is the Lord of Mankind, whilst they who prided themselves on their knowledge and wisdom strayed far from His path and remained deprived of His grace. For this reason He hath written: 'He that is exalted among you shall be abased, and he that is abased shall be exalted.' References to this theme are to be found in most of the heavenly Books, as well as in the sayings of the Prophets and Messengers of God.[210]

Bahá'u'lláh refers to Balál, mentioned above, with regard to his mispronunciation of the Arabic letter `shín', asserting, 'The acts of his honour, Balál, the Ethiopian, were so acceptable in the sight of God that the `sín' of his stuttering tongue excelled the `shín' pronounced by all the world.[211]

155 **'To seek evidence . . .'** Saying of the `Ulamá.

155 **Behold this flamelike-Youth . . . in the land** Clear reference to Bahá'u'lláh and His prophetic mission.

155 **`Iráq** Part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire in 1862 when the Íqán was revealed. Now an independent Arab nation with its capital at Baghdád.

157 **a sacrifice which fire out of heaven shall devour** This was considered by the Jews to be one of the signs which all of the Prophets were to produce. Through prayer these Messengers could call down fire from on high to consume the sacrifice. The same then was demanded of Muḥammad. `Abdu'l-Bahá is said to have unfolded the spiritual significance of such burnt offerings, interpreting the altar, as the heart, the ewes and lambs as man's lower passions and desires, and the fire from heaven, as the fire of the love of God which consumes the offering and thus cleanses the heart.

157 **Abel and Cain** The occasion of Abel and Cain making the sacrificial offering is related according to Muslim tradition thus: Each of them was born with a twin sister. When they were grown up, Adam, following God's direction, ordered Cain to marry Abel's twin sister and Abel to marry Cain's. This Cain refused to do because his own sister was the more comely. Adam then commanded them to make their offerings to God, thereby referring the dispute to His determination. Cain's offering was a sheaf of the very worst of his corn; Abel's a fat lamb, of the best of his flock. God declared His acceptance of Abel's sacrifice in a visible manner, by causing fire to descend from heaven and consume it, leaving Cain's offering untouched. Abel was the stronger of the two and could easily have prevailed against his brother, but he let Cain slay him for he would not stretch forth his hand against him.[212]

159 **`He of Whom they had knowledge'**

Various Traditions cited in Aṭ-Ṭabarí's `Jámi`u'l-Bayán' support this understanding, as, for instance, the following from Mujáhid: `[The Jews] would implore the assistance of [the expected] Muḥammad, saying that He would appear; "yet when there came unto them that of which they had knowledge", and he was not of them [the Jews], "they disbelieved in Him"; or the following, from Sa`íd Ibn Jubayr: "Yet when there came to them that of which they had knowledge, they disbelieved in Him"; those intended are the Jews: they recognized Muḥammad as a Prophet, yet disbelieved in Him.'[213]

160 **return** For a further explanation by Bahá'u'lláh of the meanings of `return' see Súriy-i-Vafá, in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, pp. 183-7.

161 **regarded as one soul and the same person**

The Prophets `regarded as One and the same person' include the Lesser Prophets as well, and not merely Those Who bring a `Book'. The station is different, but they are Prophets and Their nature thus different from that of ours.[214]

See also Íqán, paras. 19, 192-3.

161 **Kawthar** A river in Paradise. See note at 25 above.

161 **`I am all the Prophets.'** Consider the following passage from a Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh in a similar light:

O Jews! If ye be intent on crucifying once again Jesus, the Spirit of God, put Me to death, for He hath once more, in My person, been made manifest unto you. Deal with Me as ye wish, for I have vowed to lay down My life in the path of God. I will fear no one, though the powers of earth and heaven be leagued against Me.

Followers of the Gospel! If ye cherish the desire to slay Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, seize Me and put an end to My life, for I am He, and My Self is His Self. Do unto Me as ye like, for the deepest longing of Mine heart is to attain the presence of My Best-Beloved in His Kingdom of Glory. Such is the Divine decree, if ye know it. Followers of Muḥammad! If it be your wish to riddle with your shafts the breast of Him Who hath caused His Book the Bayán to be sent down unto you, lay hands on Me and persecute Me, for I am His Well-Beloved, the revelation of His own Self, though My name be not His name.[215]

Consider also the passage from the Báb quoted in the note on **Primal Will** at 104 above, which cites this same tradition in its explanation.

161 **statements . . . made by `Alí** These are recorded in the books of Muslim traditions and closely parallel the statement of Muḥammad, 'I am the first Adam . . .' See also Íqán, para. 178-9 for related sayings of `Alí.

161 **`Muḥammad is our first . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám `Alí in the Bihár (see note 272 below).

164 **Divine Elixir**

I beg of Thee, O my God, by Thy most exalted Word which Thou hast ordained as the Divine Elixir unto all who are in Thy realm, the Elixir through whose potency the crude metal of human life hath been transmuted into purest gold . . .[216]

The Book of God is wide open, and His Word is summoning mankind unto Him. No more than a mere handful, however, hath been found willing to cleave to His Cause, or to become the instruments for its promotion. These few have been endued with the Divine Elixir that can, alone, transmute into purest gold the dross of the world, and have been empowered to administer the infallible remedy for all the ills that afflict the children of men.[217]

165 **copper . . . to the state of gold** Bahá'u'lláh further elaborates this point in a later Tablet:

Consider the doubts which they who have joined partners with God have instilled into the hearts of the people of this land. 'Is it ever possible', they ask, 'for copper to be transmuted into gold?' Say, Yes, by my Lord, it is possible. Its secret, however, lieth hidden in Our Knowledge. We will reveal it unto whom We will. Whoso doubteth Our power, let him ask the Lord his God, that He may disclose unto him the secret, and assure him of its truth. That copper can be turned into gold is in itself sufficient proof that gold can, in like manner, be transmuted into copper, if they be of them that can apprehend this truth. Every mineral can be made to acquire the density, form, and substance of each and every other mineral. The knowledge thereof is with Us in the Hidden Book.[218]

Shoghi Effendi also explains:

Considering that a century ago, nobody knew the nature of matter, and couldn't split any kind of atom, it should not surprise the scientist that `Abdu'l-Bahá states that copper can be transmuted into gold.

There may come a time, for all we know, when the mass of many atoms can be changed by scientists. We have no way of proving, or disproving at present the statement of `Abdu'l-Bahá. Just because we cannot demonstrate a contention in the Bahá'í Teachings, does not mean the contention is not true.

The same holds true of the statement of Bahá'u'lláh in the Íqán, regarding transmutation of copper into gold after seventy years, under certain conditions.

We as Bahá'ís must assume that, as He had access to all knowledge, He was referring to a definite physical condition which theoretically might exist. Because we don't know what this condition is in scientific terms, does not refute Bahá'u'lláh's statement at all.[219]

171 **Point of the Bayán . . . likened the Manifestations** In the Persian Bayán the Báb elaborates on the present theme:

It is clear and evident that the object of all preceding Dispensations hath been to pave the way for the advent of Muḥammad, the Apostle of God. These, including the Muḥammadan Dispensation, have had, in their turn, as their objective the Revelation proclaimed by the Qá'im. The purpose underlying this Revelation, as well as those that preceded it, has, in like manner, been to announce the advent of the Faith of Him Whom God will make manifest. And this Faith -- the Faith of Him Whom God will make manifest -- in its turn, together with all the Revelations gone before it, have as their object the Manifestation destined to succeed it. And the latter, no less than all the Revelations preceding it, prepare the way for the Revelation which is yet to follow. The process of the rise and setting of the Sun of Truth will thus indefinitely continue -- a process that hath had no beginning and will have no end.[220]

174 **'God was alone . . .'** Tradition attributed to Imám `Alí and others.

175 **veils of glory** The term 'veils of glory' (Arabic, *subuḥát Jalál*) attributed here to the Imám `Alí, is from the tradition of Kumayl (see note at 109 above). In the course of the Imam's answer to the question 'What is Truth?' he makes this reference to the 'veils of glory'. In general this term refers to those obstacles or veils which prevent people from recognizing the truth of the Manifestations of God. In the Íqán Bahá'u'lláh mentions several types of veils such as the 'Seal of the Prophets'. Such veils have occurred in previous Dispensations as well. The Jewish people expected the promised Messiah to be seated upon the throne of David and their literal interpretation of this reference prevented them from recognizing Jesus Christ.

178 **that bird of Heaven** The Imám `Alí.

178 **Fáṭimih** Daughter of Muḥammad and entitled 'the Chaste One'. She was consort of `Alí and the mother of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, the second and third Imáms. She is comparable in rank to such immortal heroines as Sarah, Ásíyih, the Virgin Mary, Ṭáhirih and Bahíyyih Khánum.[221]

178 **'A thousand Fáṭimihs I have espoused . . .'** Ḥadíth of Imám `Ali

178 **`Abdu'lláh** Father of Muḥammad, born circa 545 ad. He belonged to the Baní Háshim, the noblest clan of the Quraysh tribe, direct descendants of Abraham. He died when he was but 25 years old while on an expedition to Syria, shortly before the Prophet's birth. Muḥammad is reported to have said: 'I am the son of two who were offered in sacrifice' meaning his great ancestor Ishmael and His own father `Abdu'lláh. For `Abdu'l-Muttalib had made a vow that if God would permit him to find and open the well of Zemzem and should give him ten sons, he would sacrifice one of them. Accordingly, when he had obtained his desire in both respects, he cast lots on his sons. When the lot fell on Abdu'lláh, `Abdu'l-Muttalib redeemed him by offering a hundred camels.[222]

179 **Battle of Khaybar** In the latter part of His ministry, following His truce with the Meccans, Muḥammad still faced implacable hostility from the northern settlement of Khaybar. Despite the superior advantage of the Jewish leaders, some 20,000 strong, Muḥammad overcame the several fortified areas of the oasis with a force numbering only 1,400. Many of the Jews surrendered on the Prophet's conditions which allowed them to continue to work the lands if they would pay Him a yearly rent of half of their produce. See also note on

Khaybar at 92 above.

179 **my father** In other words Alí, whose prowess and courage during the battle of **Khaybar** are greatly extolled in the traditional accounts.

182 **attainment unto the presence of His Beauty**

Regarding your question -- This reference in the *Íqán* refers to the Meeting with Bahá'u'lláh. It will not be applicable again until another Manifestation of God appears, in at least 1,000 years from Bahá'u'lláh.[223]

The question posed concerned the above reference and asked whether such an 'attainment' finished with Bahá'u'lláh's Ascension, thereby depriving men of such a bounty forevermore. See also *Íqán*, paras. 148-51.

182 **But apart from all these things . . .** The powerful passage which begins with these words may be said to foreshadow Bahá'u'lláh's later enunciation in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* of the 'doctrine of the "Most Great Infallibility" of the Manifestation of God' which asserts that such infallibility is 'the inherent and exclusive right of the Prophet'.[224]

182 **'God doeth whatsoever He willeth . . .'** Cf. Qur'án 3:39; 22:14, 18.

182 **'All things lie imprisoned . . .'** This *ḥadīth* has been cited in a number of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets. In one of the them He identifies the source as the Commander of the Faith, the Imám `Alí.

182 **'Whoso sayeth "why" or "wherefore"'** Cf. Persian Bayán II:16.

182 **He shall not be asked of His doings** Compare with:

Blessed is the man that hath acknowledged his belief in God and in His signs, and recognized that 'He shall not be asked of His doings'. Such a recognition hath been made by God the ornament of every belief and its very foundation. Upon it must depend the acceptance of every goodly deed. Fasten your eyes upon it, that haply the whisperings of the rebellious may not cause you to slip.[225]

184 **'He will, however, respite them . . .'** Cf. Qur'án 56:50.

187 **judged by their countenance** Compare with:

All faces are dark except the face which is a mirror of the light of the love of divinity. This light is not accidental -- it is eternal. It is not temporal but real. When the heart hath become clear and pure then the face will become illuminated, because the face is the mirror of the heart.[226]

It is very strange that when a face is not illumined with the light of the love of God it is dark. When you look into it the traces of the divine glad-tidings are not manifest, but when the lights of God shine upon it, it becomes bright and enlightened, as it is said, 'In their faces you shall see the verdancy of paradise, and in their countenances is the sign of worship'.[227]

188 **Abode of Peace** See note on *Baghdád* at 22 above.

189 **'That all sorts of men . . .'** Cf Qur'án 2:60, 7:160.

194 **`I am the servant of God.['] [']I am but a man like you.** Qur'án 19:31, 18:110.

196 **I am God!** Compare with:

Divinity, whenever I mention it, indicateth My complete and absolute self-effacement. This is the station in which I have no control over mine own weal or woe nor over my life nor over my resurrection.[228]

When I contemplate, O my God, the relationship that bindeth me to Thee, I am moved to proclaim to all created things `verily I am God!'; and when I consider my own self, lo, I find it coarser than clay![229]

That Bahá'u'lláh should, notwithstanding the overwhelming intensity of His Revelation, be regarded as essentially one of these Manifestations of God, never to be identified with that invisible Reality, the Essence of Divinity itself, is one of the major beliefs of our Faith -- a belief which should never be obscured and the integrity of which no one of its followers should allow to be compromised.[230]

197 **breeze of God** Consider how Bahá'u'lláh repeatedly punctuates the Íqán with these powerful expressions of the greatness of His own dawning Revelation. Concerning the divine breezes, He later revealed:

No breeze can compare with the breezes of Divine Revelation, whilst the Word which is uttered by God shineth and flasheth as the sun amidst the books of men. Happy the man that hath discovered it, and recognized it, and said: `Praised be Thou, Who art the Desire of the world, and thanks be to Thee, O Well-Beloved of the hearts of such as are devoted to Thee!'[231]

198 **Guardianship** The question was asked, Is there any reference to `Abdu'l-Bahá or to the institution of the Guardianship in the following quotation? ` . . . Thus it is that whatsoever be their utterance, whether it pertain to the realm of Divinity, Lordship, Prophethood, Messengership, Guardianship, Apostleship or Servitude, all is true, beyond a shadow of a doubt'. . . Also, are there any Manifestations to whom the titles of Servitude have been particularly applied? The response of the Guardian was:

The passage you have quoted from the `Íqán' refers to the Prophets only, and not to the Guardianship. All Divine Manifestations have a station of servitude; and the latter does not apply to one or some of them to the exclusion of the rest.[232]

199 **Trustees of the depositories of Knowledge** `We cannot be sure to whom Bahá'u'lláh refers as the "trustees" of knowledge.'[233]

201 **`Knowledge is one point . . .'** Maxim attributed to Imám `Alí.

201 **`Knowledge is a light . . .'** Muḥammad.

203 **a certain man** Hájí Mírzá Karím Khán, one of the self-proclaimed Shaykhí leaders after Siyyid Kázim; author of numerous works including a vicious attack on the Bábí Faith written at the request of Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh (see *God Passes By*, p. 91). Also see note under **a one-eyed man** at 276 below.

203 **`Knowledge is all that is knowable . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám Şádiq.

203 **Mi`ráj** `Ascent'; used with reference to Muḥammad's celestial vision or `night-journey' through the seven heavens. See Qur'án 17:1.

203 **‘But for Thee, I would not have created the spheres.’** Tradition said to have been revealed through the Imám `Alí.

204 **‘Flingest thou thy calumnies . . .’** Cited from the *Mathnaví* of Rúmí.

204 **‘All human attainment . . .’** Cited from the *Mathnaví* of Rúmí.

205 **‘The most grievous of all veils . . .’** Traditional Şúfí saying. Although translated differently here, this is the same verse found in 76.

205 **veils of glory** See note at 175 above.

208 **alchemy** While condemning alchemy in its popularized form, Bahá'u'lláh Himself, in a number of Tablets on the subject, later undertook to explain its inner meanings. Note His own reference to such a possibility five lines below the reference to alchemy.

208 **We still bear the scar of chains** Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in the Sáyáh-*Chál* of Tíhrán for four months in 1852. During this period while His neck was `weighed down by a mighty chain', He received the intimation of His prophetic Mission. Scars from the `galling' weight of the two chains, called Qará Guhar and Salásil, remained with Him the rest of His days. See *God Passes By*, p. 101.

209 **Karím** Honourable; here an ironic reference to Hájí Mírzá Karím *Khan*.

210 **Sámirí** A magician who tempted the Israelites to the worship of the Golden Calf (Qur'án 20:90). After this violation he became an outcast wanderer.

213 **no remnant of either love or hate**

We must never take one sentence in the Teachings and isolate it from the rest: it does not mean we must not love, but we must reach a spiritual plane where God comes first and great human passions are unable to turn us away from Him. All the time we see people who either through the force of hate or the passionate attachment they have to another person, sacrifice principle or bar themselves from the Path of God . . . We must love God, and in this state a general love for all men becomes possible. We cannot love each human being for himself, but our feeling towards humanity should be motivated by our love for the Father who created all men.[234]

213 **detach himself from the world of dust** `Abdu'l-Bahá explains the prerequisites of a detached soul, saying, `that he should not seek out anything whatever for his own self in this swiftly-passing life, but that he should cut the self away, that is, he should yield up the self and all its concerns on the field of martyrdom, at the time of the coming of the Lord'.[235]

214 **treasure the companionship** Compare with:

O Friend! In the garden of the heart plant naught but the rose of love, and from the nightingale of affection and desire loosen not thy hold. Treasure the companionship of the righteous and eschew all fellowship with the ungodly.[236]

214 **avoid fellowship with evil doers** This admonition also appears in the *Hidden Words*. As to the meaning of this subject, Shoghi Effendi advised in a letter written on his behalf: `In the passage "eschew all

fellowship with the ungodly", Bahá'u'lláh means that we should shun the company of those who disbelieve in God and are wayward. The word `ungodly' is a reference to such perverse people.[237]

216 **confer such new life** As exalted as this new life may be, such a station should be viewed in relation to the limitations imposed upon the human spirit and its essential dependence on the Manifestations of God. The following extract defines an important difference in this regard:

As regards to the passage No. 13 of the Arabic Hidden Words: that which Bahá'u'lláh declares we can find abiding within us is the power of the Divine Spirit, however, can in no way be compared to the Revelation which God discloses to His Prophets and Messengers. The similarity in the terminology should not confuse this distinction which is most fundamental.[238]

216 **stations of absolute certitude** These stations or degrees of certitude are known traditionally in Islám as three: the certitude of knowing (e.g. to know or hear about fire), the certitude of seeing (to see fire) and the light of certitude (to experience burning).

218 **Hyacinth . . . Rose . . .Nightingale** Probably allusions to the Manifestation of God.

218 **a thousand years** ` . . . as to the meaning of the passage in the "Íqán" in which Bahá'u'lláh refers to the renewal of the "City of God" once in about a thousand years: this, as the world about implies, is simply an approximate date, and should not therefore be taken literally.'[239]

Concerning your question relative to the duration of the Bahá'í Dispensation. There is no contradiction between Bahá'u'lláh's statement in the Íqán about the renewal of the City of God once every thousand years, and that of the Guardian in the Dispensation to the effect that the Bahá'í cycle will extend over a period of at least 500,000 years. The apparent contradiction is due to the confusion of the terms cycle and dispensation. For while the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh will last for at least one thousand years, His Cycle will extend still farther, to at least 500,000 years.

The Bahá'í cycle is, indeed, incomparable in its greatness. It includes not only the Prophets that will appear after Bahá'u'lláh, but all those who have preceded Him ever since Adam. These should, indeed, be viewed as constituting but preliminary stages leading gradually to the appearance of this supreme Manifestation of God.[240]

219 **Pentateuch** The Greek name given to the first five books of the Old Testament which are commonly ascribed to Moses and known also as the Torah.

219 **Gospel** Jesus Christ's ministry and teachings as recorded in the first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

219 **Bayán** The Persian Bayán:

. . . that monumental repository of the laws and precepts of the new Dispensation and the treasury enshrining most of the Báb's references and tributes to, as well as His warning regarding, `Him Whom God will make manifest' . . . Peerless among the doctrinal works of the Founder of the Bábí Dispensation . . . this Book, of about eight thousand verses, occupying a pivotal position in Bábí literature, should be regarded primarily as a eulogy of the Promised One rather than a code of laws and ordinances designed to be a permanent guide to future generations.[241]

219 **Him Whom God will make manifest** The principal title used by the Báb to formally designate Bahá'u'lláh. The Báb also alluded to Bahá'u'lláh as the 'Abhá Horizon' and specifically recorded His title 'Bahá'u'lláh' in a passage of the Persian Bayán wherein He eulogizes His 'Order'. See *God Passes By*, pp. 97-8.

219 **His own Book** The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Bahá'u'lláh's Most Holy Book, 'that priceless treasury enshrining for all time the brightest emanations of the mind of Bahá'u'lláh, the Charter of His World Order, the chief repository of His laws, the Harbinger of His Covenant, the Pivotal Work containing some of His noblest exhortations, weightiest pronouncements, and portentous prophecies'.[242] The Kitáb-i-Aqdas was revealed about 1873, a decade after the Íqán. This present allusion to the Aqdas is mentioned by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By*, pp. 215-16.

219 **bread of heaven** See note on **bread** at 5 and 22 above.

222 **My Family** Shoghi Effendi defines the institution of the Imamate, the twelve lawful Successors of Muḥammad, as 'the repository of one of the two most precious legacies of Islám'.[243]

224 **Alif, Lám. Mím.** These and other disconnected letters appear at the head of 29 Súrihs of the Qur'án. Bahá'u'lláh revealed a commentary on their meanings. See Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, pp. 125-6.

226 **divinely-revealed verses** With regard to His own verses, Bahá'u'lláh further states in the Lawḥ-i-Dunyá (Tablet of the World),

Through each and every one of the verses which the Pen of the Most High hath revealed, the doors of love and unity have been unlocked and flung open to the face of men . . . Every verse which this Pen hath revealed is a bright and shining portal that discloseth the glories of a saintly and pious life, of pure and stainless deeds.[244]

Consider how amply these affirmations are demonstrated by the contents of the Íqán itself.

226 **Urvatu'l-Vuṭḥá** See note at 28 above.

230 **Marvel not if in the Qur'án . . .** From a Persian poem of Sana'i.

236 **Joseph** An inspired Messenger of God in the Qur'án; son of Jacob. See also Íqán p. 254. In a passage of the Súriy-i-Damm, Bahá'u'lláh identifies Himself spiritually with Joseph. See Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 89.

239 **Kawṭhar** See note at 25 above.

240 **Prophets 'endowed with constancy'** The term 'endowed with constancy' in regard to the Manifestations of God signifies that a Book was revealed to Them. This is explained in para. 245 of the text. See also Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, pp. 111 and 124.

242 **people of the Book** See note at 15 above.

248 **Mullá Ḥusayn**

. . . the first Letter of the Living, surnamed the Bábu'l-Báb (the Gate of the Gate); designated as the 'Primal Mirror'; on whom eulogies, prayers and visiting Tablets of a number equivalent to thrice the volume of the Qur'án had been lavished by the pen of the Báb; referred to in these eulogies as 'beloved of My Heart'; the dust of whose grave, that same Pen had declared, was so potent as to cheer the sorrowful and heal the sick; whom 'the creatures, raised in the beginning and in the end' of the Bábí Dispensation, envy, and will continue to envy till the 'Day of Judgement' . . . [245]

See also numerous references in *The Dawn-Breakers*.

248 **Siyyid Yahyá** (Siyyid Yahyáy-i-Dárábí) Surnamed Vaḥíd, a distinguished Muslim divine who after three successive interviews with the Báb recognized Him and arose to champion His Cause. He was eventually martyred at Nayríz on 29 June 1850, just ten days before the execution of the Báb. See *Dawn-Breakers*, p. 173, and 'The commotion [in Shíráz after the return of the Báb from His pilgrimage] had assumed such proportions . . . Nayríz upheaval.' [246]

248 **Mullá Muḥammad `Alíy-i-Zanjání**

Another famous advocate of the Cause of the Báb, even fiercer in zeal than Vaḥíd, and almost as eminent in rank, was Mullá Muḥammad-`Alíy-i-Zanjání, surnamed Hujjat. An Akhbarí, a vehement controversialist, of a bold and independent temper of mind, impatient of restraint, a man who had dared condemn the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy . . . he had more than once, through his superior talents and fervid eloquence, publicly confounded his orthodox Shí`ah adversaries. Such a person could not remain indifferent to a Cause that was producing so grave a cleavage among his countrymen. The disciple he sent to Shíráz to investigate the matter fell immediately under the spell of the Báb. The perusal of but a page of the Qayyúmu'l-Asmá', brought by that messenger to Hujjat, sufficed to effect such a transformation within him that he declared, before the assembled `ulamás of his native city, that should the Author of that work pronounce day to be night and the sun to be a shadow he would unhesitatingly uphold his verdict. [247]

Martyred together with 1,800 fellow-disciples in the upheaval at Zanján in 1850. See *The Dawn-Breakers*, chapter 24.

248 **Mullá `Alíy-i-Bastámí**

. . . energetic and audacious . . . one of the Letters of the Living, 'the first to leave the House of God (Shíráz) and the first to suffer for His sake'. . . excommunicated, chained, disgraced, imprisoned, and, in all probability, done to death. [248]

See also *Dawn-Breakers*, p. 89.

248 **Mullá Sa`íd-i-Bárfurúshí** According to *Nabíl's Narrative* he was one of those who fought at Shaykh Tabarsí.

248 **Mullá Yúsuf-i-Ardibílí** One of the 18 Letters of the Living. See *Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 187, 367, 399.

*248 **Mullá Mihdíy-i-Khu`í** One of the 18 Letters of the Living; martyred at Shaykh Tabarsí.

248 **Siyyid Ḥusayn-i-Turshízí** One of the Seven Martyrs of Ṭíhrán, a former mujtahid. See *Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 455-6.

*248 **Mullá Mihdíy-i-Kandí** Martyred at Shaykh Tabarsí.

248 **Mullá Báqir** Another of the Letters of the Living. He was from Tabríz. See *Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 368, 505.

248 **Mullá `Abdu'l-Kháliq-i-Yazdí** A Shaykhí divine and author of numerous works, mentioned in *Nabíl's Narrative*.

248 **Mullá `Alíy-i-Baraqání** A paternal uncle of Táhiriḥ; a prominent Shaykhí divine renowned for his zealous devotions.

248 **`Guarded Tablet'** Understood to be a reference to God's knowledge.

249 **Kawthar** See note at 25 above.

254 **`O Son of Man! Many a day . . .'** Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Arabic no. 62.

254 **the light of beauty** Compare this passage with the following words of Bahá'u'lláh: 'the revelations of Thy matchless Beauty have at all times been imprinted upon the realities of all beings, visible and invisible'.[249]

256 **Mustagháth** 'He Who is invoked'; the numerical value of which has been assigned by the Báb as the limit of the time fixed for the advent of the promised Manifestation, i.e., Bahá'u'lláh.

During the Báb's confinement in the fortress of Chihriq . . . the Lawḥ-i-Ḥurúfat (Tablet of the Letters) was revealed, in honour of Dayyán -- a Tablet which, however misconstrued at first as an exposition of the science of divination, was later recognized to have unravelled, on the one hand, the mystery of the Mustagháth, and to have abstrusely alluded, on the other, to the nineteen years which must needs elapse between the Declaration of the Báb and that of Bahá'u'lláh.[250]

See also Nabíl's statement concerning Bahá'u'lláh's explanation of the mystery of the Mustagháth, which was revealed in answer to a request made of Him while He was in `Akká:

Bahá'u'lláh adduced from the statements of the Báb irrefutable evidence proving that the appearance of the Man-Yuzhiruhu'lláh [He Whom God will make manifest] must needs occur no less than nineteen years after the Declaration of the Báb. The mystery of the Mustagháth had long baffled the most searching minds among the people of the Bayán and had proved an unsurmountable obstacle to their recognition of the promised One. The Báb had Himself in that Tablet unravelled that mystery; no one, however, was able to understand the explanation which He had given. It was left to Bahá'u'lláh to unveil it to the eyes of all men.[251]

256 **`Such is the bounty of God . . .'** Qur'án 57:21.

258 **Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'** The Báb's Commentary on the Súrih of Joseph from the Qur'án. See *God Passes By*, p. 23, for an outline of this Book's contents. Shoghi Effendi states that its 'fundamental purpose was to forecast what the true Joseph (Bahá'u'lláh) would, in a succeeding Dispensation, endure at the hands of one who was at once His arch-enemy and blood brother'. The work comprises 'above nine thousand three hundred verses' and is 'divided into one hundred and eleven chapters, each chapter a commentary on one verse of the above-mentioned súrih'.[252]

258 **His own martyrdom** The Báb was publicly martyred in Tabríz on 9 July 1850 (28 Sha`bán 1266 ah) `during the thirty-first year of His age and the seventh of His ministry'.[253] In the *Kitáb-i-Panj-Sha`n*, one of His last works, He had alluded to the fact that the sixth Naw-Rúz after the declaration of His mission would be the last He was destined to celebrate on earth.[254]

258 **Remnant of God** Baqíyyatu'lláh; Title applied both to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh; here an allusion to Bahá'u'lláh. This quotation is from chapter 58 of the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*; for context see *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 59.

260 **`God is powerless . . .'** Cf. Qur`án 5:64.

261 **Two verses have made Me old** Traditional saying of Muḥammad with reference to two Qur`anic verses: `Be thou steadfast as thou hast been bidden' (11:112) and `For this cause summon thou them, and be steadfast as thou hast been bidden' (42:15).

262 **Sadrih of the Riḍván of God** A reference to the youthful Báb, characterized as the `Sadrih' or `Tree', s symbol often used in relation to the Manifestation of God.

262 **Finally, He surrendered His soul** `The more He exhorted them, the fiercer grew their enmity, till, at the last, they put Him to death with shameful cruelty. The curse of God be upon the oppressors!'[255] The Báb, the Prophet-Herald of the Bahá'í Faith, was executed by military firing squad at the barracks square of Tabríz in the northwest province of present-day Iran on 9 July 1850. For an account of the mysterious circumstances of that tragic event see Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 52-4.

263 **that eternal Beauty revealed Himself** Shoghi Effendi has elaborated on the Bahá'í belief concerning the station of the Báb and its twofold reality as follows:

That the Báb, the inaugurator of the Bábí Dispensation, is fully entitled to rank as one of the self-sufficient Manifestations of God, that He has been invested with sovereign power and authority, and exercises all the rights and prerogatives of independent Prophethood, is yet another fundamental verity which the Message of Bahá'u'lláh insistently proclaims and which its followers must uncompromisingly uphold. That He is not to be regarded merely as an inspired Precursor of the Bahá'í Revelation, that in His person, as He Himself bears witness in the Persian Bayán, the object of all the Prophets gone before Him has been fulfilled, is a truth which I feel it my duty to demonstrate and emphasize . . . There can be no doubt that the claim to the twofold station ordained for the Báb by the Almighty, a claim which He Himself has so boldly advanced, which Bahá'u'lláh has repeatedly affirmed, and to which the Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahá has finally given the sanction of its testimony, constitutes the most distinctive feature of the Bahá'í Dispensation.[256]

267 **`and when the Standard of Truth . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám Şádiq, cited in the *Bihár* (see note 272 below).

267 **`One hour's reflection . . .'** Muḥammad.

267 **Prayer of Nudbih** See note at 33 above.

269 **`Where is He Who is preserved . . .'** Imám Mihdí, the twelfth Imám, in the Prayer of Nudbih.

269 **Abú-`Abdi'lláh** Designation of the sixth Imám, Ja`far-i-Şádiq (the Veridical); great-grandson of the Imám Ḥusayn. Died 765 ad, poisoned and martyred by the Abbásid Caliph, Manşúr.

- 269 **Mihdí** The Guided One, i.e. the 'Hidden Imám', the promised Deliverer of Shí`í Islám. See further explanation concerning the Mihdí (or Mahdí) in 'Regarding Shí`í Islám' in chapter 2 of this study guide.
- 269 **'He will perform . . .'** A tradition from Abú-'Abdi'lláh, that is, Imám Şádiq.
- 270 **'Aválim** Short for *'Aválim'ul-Ulúm va'l-Ma'árif*, a compilation of Shí`í traditions, consisting of 100 volumes, collected by Shaykh 'Abdu'lláh Ibn Núru'lláh Baḥraynî, one of the distinguished students of Majlisí (see note on **Biháru'l-Anvâr** at 272 below); also known as *Jám'í al-Ulúm va'l-Ma'árif*.
- 270 **Baní-Háshim** The clan of the Quraysh tribe from which Muḥammad appeared and the Báb was a descendant.
- 270 **a new Book** Shoghi Effendi identifies this as the Persian Bayán, stating that it fulfils 'the Muḥammadan prophecy that "a Youth from Baní- Háshim . . . will reveal a new Book and promulgate a new Law".[257]
- 270 **Háshimite Light** Allusion to the Báb's descent from Muḥammad and the Baní-Háshim clan.
- 271 **Arba`ín** Another collection of traditions.
- 271 **'Out of Baní-Háshim . . .'** Tradition of the Imám Şádiq.
- 272 **Biháru'l-Anvâr** Literally, 'Seas of Lights'; an important collection of Shí`í traditions compiled in some 14 volumes by Muḥammad Báqiru'l-Majlisí at the close of the 16th century ad.
- 272 **'Aválim** See note at 270 above.
- 272 **Yanbú`** Collection of sacred traditions related to the Imáms, compiled by Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Junayd Abú-'Alí al-Khátib, known as Iskáfí (died 381 ah/991 ad). Iskáf was once a village in Mesopotamia. Iskáfí was buried in Rayy.
- 272 **'Knowledge is twenty and seven letters'** Ḥadíth of the Imám Şádiq.
- Regarding the passage beginning with the words: 'Knowledge consists of twenty-seven letters': this should not be interpreted literally. It only indicates the relative greatness and superiority of the new Revelation.[258]
- As to your question whether another letter will be added to our alphabet in order to have 27 letters, this tradition, in which reference to 27 letters is made, has no relation to the western alphabet.[259]
- 273 **Káfí** Short for the *Uşul al-Káfí*, the most celebrated and reliable Shí`í collection of ḥadíth. It consists of three parts and includes 16,199 traditions related to the Imáms. Compiled by Muḥammad Ibn Ya'qúb Kulaynî (died 328 ah/939 ad).
- 273 **Jábir** Jábir Ibn-i-Ḥayyán, pupil of the Imám Şádiq who compiled a book of the Imám's sayings. The importance of his tradition cited here is again emphasized in *God Passes By*, p. 80.
- 273 **Job** Prophet who dwelt in the land of Uz. See accounts of His life and sufferings in the Book of Job in the Old Testament, and in the Qur'án 21:83-4; 38:41-4.

- 273 **Daylamites** Here a reference to a group of Persian slaves serving as soldiers under their leader Daylam (hence Daylamites). The Persians, including the Daylamites, suffered heavy losses in an early battle with the Muslims at Al-Qádisíya, 15 ah/636 ad.
- 274 **Rawḍiy-i-Káfi** Title of the third part of the *Uṣul al-Káfi* (see 273 above).
- 274 **Mu`ávíyih** Son of Vahháb; cited in the line of transmission of this traditional saying of the sixth Imám.
- 274 **Abú-`Abdi'lláh** The Imám Ṣádiq. See note at 269 above.
- 274 **`Knowest thou Zawrá?'** Ḥadíth of Imám Ṣádiq.
- 276 **Bayán** See notes at 1 and 201 above.
- 276 **Mustagháth** See note at 256 above.
- 276 **a one-eyed man** Not authoritatively identified, but some students presume this to be a reference to `the inordinately ambitious and hypocritical Ḥájí Mírzá Karím Khán, who at the special request of the Sháh had in a treatise viciously attacked the new Faith and its doctrines'. [260] Siyyid Kázim, when the former was one of his disciples, confidentially prophesied his future enmity to the Báb, stigmatizing him as `the antichrist of the promised Revelation'. He was both one-eyed and sparsely bearded. After the Declaration of the Báb, he claimed the leadership of the Shaykhís. See Íqán, para. 203 and *Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 39-40.
- 276 **one who is repented** Matches the position and subsequent actions of Mírzá Yaḥyá
- 277 **In these days . . . in the future** Shoghi Effendi refers to this passage as describing `the virulence of the jealousy which, at that time, was beginning to bare its venomous fangs'. [261]
- 278 **We betook ourselves to the wilderness** See description of Bahá'u'lláh's withdrawal to the mountains of Sulaymáníyyih in *God Passes By*, pp. 112, 120-6 and Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh, King of Glory*, pp. 113-22.
- 279 **`Amidst them all . . . unto Us.'** This passage was added in Bahá'u'lláh's own hand to the original manuscript written out by `Abdu'l-Bahá. (See section 2 of this study.
- 279 **Primal Point** One of the principal titles of the Báb. He Himself proclaims: `I am the Primal Point from which have been generated all created things.' [262]
- 279 **`Sufficient Witness is God unto Us.'** Qur'án 4:79, 166; 10:29; 13:43.
- 279 **`There is no power nor strength but in God alone.'** Source undetermined.
- 279 **`We are God's, and to Him shall we return.'** Qur'án 2:156. See Íqán. para. 99.
- 281 **Mufaḍḍal** A contemporary of the Imám Ṣádiq who transmitted traditions.
- 281 **`In the year sixty . . .'** Tradition of Imám Ṣádiq.
- 282 **Bihár** Short for *Biháru'l-Anvár*. See note at 272 above.
- 282 **`In our Qá'im . . .'** Tradition attributed to several Imáms in the Bihár.

- 282 **`God indeed shall make whom He will to hearken . . .'** Cf. Qur'án 35:22.
- 283 **`God verily will test them and sift them.'** Tradition from Imám Şádiq.
- 283 **`Every knowledge hath seventy meanings . . .'** Hadíth.
- 283 **`We speak one word . . .'** Tradition attributed to the Imám Ma`şúm, in the Bihár.
- 285 **none . . . yearning for the truth** Bahá'u'lláh, in a later work, confirms:

The generality of mankind is still immature. Had it acquired sufficient capacity We would have bestowed upon it so great a measure of Our knowledge that all who dwell on earth and in heaven would have found themselves, by virtue of the grace streaming from Our pen, completely independent of all knowledge save the knowledge of God, and would have been securely established upon the throne of abiding tranquillity.[263]

288 **the `Bá" and the `Há"** Meaning Bahá'u'lláh by use of the first two letters of His Name. See Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, p. 83, for a discussion.

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 153. See also *Íqán*, para 256.

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *Íqán*, para. 48.

[3] Is there a reference for this from `Abdu'l-Bahá? See *Íqán*, paras. 28, 48, 233, etc.

[4] The Báb, *Selections*, pp. 77-8.

[5] Cited in E. G. Browne's notes to the first English edition of *The Episode of the Báb*, p. 344.

[6] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, pp. 285-6.

[7] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 242.

[8] *ibid.* p. 105.

[9] Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, para. 99.

[10] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 67-8.

[11] *ibid.* p. 70. See also *Íqán* paras. 31, 74, 109.

[12] *ibid.* p. 29.

[13] *ibid.* p. 31.

[14] *ibid.* pp. 198-9.

[15] Luke 4:24.

[16] Matt. 13:57.

[17] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 325.

[18] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 102.

[19] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 98.

[20] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 79.

[21] See also *Íqán*, paras. 156, 178.

[22] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 195.

[23] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets*, vol. 3, p. 677. See also *Íqán*, paras. 22, 92, 219, 230.

[24] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 57-8.

[25] *ibid.* p. 76.

[26] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 28 October 1949, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 508. See also *Íqán*, paras. 161-2.

[27] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 3 March 1957.

[28] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual, 26 January 1939.

[29] Qur'án 7:73, 17:59.

- [30] See Tablet cited in *Qámús-i-Íqán* II, p. 1804, under Şáliḥ.
- [31] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 83.
- [32] *ibid.* p. 130.
- [33] *ibid.* p. 103.
- [34] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 56-7.
- [35] 21:68-69 Sale's version; see also 29:24, 37:97-98.
- [36] Al-Beidawī, etc. cited by Sale, p. 321.
- [37] See Qur'án 21:68-70; 29:24; 37:97-98.
- [38] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 107.
- [39] Gen. 11:28, 15:7.
- [40] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 107.
- [41] Qur'án 7:107-8; see also 27:12.
- [42] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 169.
- [43] Shoghi Effendi, *Letters to Australia and New Zealand*, p. 41.
- [44] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 50.
- [45] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 150.
- [46] *ibid.* p. 76.
- [47] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 207.
- [48] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 57-8.
- [49] *ibid.* pp. 105-6.
- [50] *ibid.* pp. 68-9.
- [51] *ibid.* pp. 56-7.
- [52] Qur'án 2:113.
- [53] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 80.
- [54] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 272.
- [55] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Arabic no. 44.
- [56] `Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablet in the International Bahá'í Archives, Bahá'í World Centre.
- [57] II Peter 1:20.
- [58] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 118.
- [59] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, pp. 44-6.
- [60] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 144.
- [61] From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, 18 March 1974.
- [62] Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, p. 152. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 141 and Íqán, para. 24.
- [63] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 23 June 1948, in Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, p. 451.
- [64] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 221. See `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, chapter 7.
- [65] Bahá'u'lláh, in *Bahá'í Prayers* (US), p. 211.
- [66] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 109-10. See also Qur'án 6:127, 10:26.
- [67] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 15.
- [68] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets*, p. 189.
- [69] Bahá'u'lláh, in *Bahá'í Prayers* (US), p. 212.
- [70] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 29 November 1937, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 492.
- [71] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 7 February 1945, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 419.
- [72] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 123.
- [73] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 318.
- [74] Footnote from Sale's translation of *The Koran*, p. 502.
- [75] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 166-7.
- [76] *ibid.* p. 167.
- [77] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 57.
- [78] Quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day is Come*, p. 99.
- [79] `Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 238.
- [80] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 132.
- [81] Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, para. 109.
- [82] *ibid.* para. 110.
- [83] Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day is Come*, p. 108.
- [84] Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 102.
- [85] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 90.
- [86] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day is Come*, p. 111.
- [87] Shoghi Effendi, *Directives of the Guardian*, p. 27.

- [88] `Abdu'l-Bahá, in *Compilation*, vol. 2, p. 232.
- [89] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 4 January 1936, in *Compilation*, vol. 2, p. 238.
- [90] Qur'án 33:40.
- [91] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 60.
- [92] Bahá'u'lláh, *Seven Valleys*, p. 37.
- [93] Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, para. 53.
- [94] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 7.
- [95] *ibid.* Persian no. 8.
- [96] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 326.
- [97] Bahá'u'lláh, *Seven Valleys*, pp. 40-1.
- [98] Bahá'u'lláh, *Four Valleys*, in *Seven Valleys*, pp. 53-4.
- [99] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 324.
- [100] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 281.
- [101] Qur'án 96:1. Cf. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 93, 101.
- [102] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 164.
- [103] For references to an earlier David, see Shoghi Effendi, *Dawn of a New Day*, pp. 86-7, 93-4.
- [104] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 28 October 1949, in *Directives of the Guardian*, p. 43.
- [105] See, for example, Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle*, p. 117.
- [106] *ibid.* p. 57.
- [107] See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 95.
- [108] Quoted in `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, p. 62.
- [109] Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, pp. 153-4. See the full passage for a description of another eight parts of the process.
- [110] Bahá'u'lláh, *Seven Valleys*, p. 4.
- [111] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 139.
- [112] Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day is Come*, p. 109.
- [113] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 14 October 1935, in Shoghi Effendi, *Directives of the Guardian*, p. 40.
- [114] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 31 December 1937, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 489.
- [115] Shoghi Effendi, *High Endeavors*, p. 70.
- [116] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 1 October 1936, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 490.
- [117] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 27 February 1938, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 489.
- [118] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 23 December 1948, in the International Bahá'í Archives.
- [119] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 145-6.
- [120] Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day is Come*, p. 8.
- [121] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 100.
- [122] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 109.
- [123] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 35-6.
- [124] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, in Shoghi Effendi, *Light of Divine Guidance*, vol.1, pp. 134-5.
- [125] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 22 January 1955, in *Compilation*, vol. 2, p. 319.
- [126] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 26 January 1939.
- [127] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 328.
- [128] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 19.
- [129] Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, pp. 80-1.
- [130] Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, p. 448.
- [131] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 58.
- [132] See further references in *World Order* magazine, vol. 9, nos. 2 and 4; vol. 10, nos. 1 and 2, 'Interchange'.
- [133] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 157.
- [134] *Kitáb-i-Badí'*, p. 159, quoted in *World Order*, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 4.
- [135] Bahá'u'lláh, *Asráru'l-Athár*, vol. 4, p. 233, quoted in *World Order*, vol. 10, no. 2, p. 11.
- [136] *Our First Century*, cited in Sears, *Thief in the Night*, p. 194. See further details on stars and comets of the period on pp. 195-9; also Sears, *Release the Sun*, pp. 217-19.
- [137] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 120. See also Nabil, *Dawn-Breakers*, chapter 1.
- [138] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 9 October 1947, in Shoghi Effendi, *High Endeavors*, p. 71.
- [139] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 168.
- [140] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 298.
- [141] *ibid.* p. 105.
- [142] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 26-7.
- [143] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets*, pp. 26.

- [144] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 110.
- [145] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 5 August 1949, in *Living the Life*, p. 20.
- [146] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 247.
- [147] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 105.
- [148] *ibid.* p. 49.
- [149] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets*, p. 84.
- [150] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 81.
- [151] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 21 February 1942.
- [152] `Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in *Má'idíy-i-Ásamáni*.
- [153] For other references see Íqán paras. 142, 270, 272, 275, 281, 283.
- [154] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual, 26 January 1939.
- [155] Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, para. 105.
- [156] Exodus 14:21.
- [157] Exodus 16:11-15.
- [158] Exodus 19: 9, 16.
- [159] Exodus 40: 33-8.
- [160] Exodus 29:45-6.
- [161] Exodus 3:7, 10.
- [162] Deuteronomy 33:2.
- [163] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, pp. 215-16.
- [164] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 11.
- [165] *ibid.* p. 129.
- [166] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, pp. 167-8.
- [167] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 23 February 1945, translated from the Persian.
- [168] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 12.
- [169] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 106-7.
- [170] Shoghi Effendi, *High Endeavors*, p. 71.
- [171] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 79-80.
- [172] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 194.
- [173] *ibid.* p. 283.
- [174] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 63.
- [175] *ibid.* p. 192 and entire section xciv.
- [176] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 126.
- [177] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 61-2.
- [178] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, in *High Endeavors*, p. 70.
- [179] Cited in Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 43.
- [180] Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, pp. 425-6.
- [181] Qur'án 27:48.
- [182] Cited Bahá'í World, vol. 13, p. 1187.
- [183] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation*, p. 295.
- [184] Attributed to `Abdu'l-Bahá, in Goodall and Cooper, *Daily Lessons Received at `Akká*, pp. 43-4.
- [185] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to a National Spiritual Assembly, 2 July 1939, in Shoghi Effendi, *Dawn of a New Day*, p. 79.
- [186] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 132.
- [187] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 79.
- [188] `Abdu'l-Bahá, in a Tablet quoted in Goodall and Cooper, *Daily Lessons Received at `Akká*, p. 81.
- [189] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 42.
- [190] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 96.
- [191] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 140-1.
- [192] al-Bayḏáwí.
- [193] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, pp. 190-1.
- [194] `Abdu'l-Bahá, in *Bahá'í World Faith*, pp. 364-5.
- [195] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 30 July 1941, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 496.
- [196] Cited from the Súriy-i-Damm in Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 88-90, and in Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, pp. 118-19.
- [197] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 8 February 1949, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 498.
- [198] Momen, Introduction to Shi'í Islam, pp. 30-1.
- [199] Majmú'iy-i-Alváh, pp. 202-11.
- [200] John 19:1-16.
- [201] Dartmouth Bible, p. 973.
- [202] *ibid.* p. 848.

- [203] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets*, p. 10.
- [204] Quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 98.
- [205] Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 116.
- [206] Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, pp. 115-16.
- [207] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp.118-19.
- [208] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 184.
- [209] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 311.
- [210] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 83-4.
- [211] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 76.
- [212] See Qur'án 5:27-31 and Genesis, chapter 4.
- [213] Memorandum of the Research Department at the Bahá'í World Centre, 20 November 1996.
- [214] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 8 February 1949, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 498.
- [215] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 101.
- [216] Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 54.
- [217] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 183.
- [218] *ibid.* pp. 197-8.
- [219] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 14 March 1955, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 478.
- [220] The Báb, *Selections*, pp. 105-6.
- [221] See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 347.
- [222] Al Beidawi, Jallaloddin, Al Zamakh.
- [223] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 13 December 1948.
- [224] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 214. See also Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets*, *Ishráqát*, pp. 108-10; and `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 171.
- [225] Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, para. 161. Also at Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 86-7.
- [226] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets*, vol. 2, p. 244.
- [227] Attributed to `Abdu'l-Bahá, in *Star of the West*, vol. 8, no. 11, p. 143.
- [228] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 41.
- [229] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 113.
- [230] Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 114.
- [231] Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 42-3.
- [232] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 2 November 1938.
- [233] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 19 April 1947, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 475.
- [234] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 4 October 1950, Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, pp. 457-8.
- [235] `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections*, p. 207.
- [236] Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 3.
- [237] Shoghi Effendi, *Dawn of a New Day*, p. 200.
- [238] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to two believers, 7 December 1935, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 482.
- [239] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 29 October 1938, in Shoghi Effendi, *Dawn of a New Day*, p. 202.
- [240] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, August 1936, in Shoghi Effendi, *Directives of the Guardian*, pp. 7-8.
- [241] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 24-5.
- [242] Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day is Come*, p. 25.
- [243] Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 102.
- [244] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets*, pp. 87, 96.
- [245] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 50.
- [246] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 11-12; see also pp. 42-4, 50.
- [247] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 12. See also pp. 44 and 50.
- [248] *ibid.* p. 10.
- [249] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 63.
- [250] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 27.
- [251] Nabil, *Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 304-5.
- [252] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 23.
- [253] *ibid.* p. 54.
- [254] *ibid.* p. 51.
- [255] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 146.
- [256] Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 123.
- [257] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 25.

[258] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 10 July 1939, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 483.

[259] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 16 January 1939.

[260] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 91.

[261] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 118.

[262] The Báb, *Selections*, p. 12.

[263] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *World Order*, p. 104.