

Elucidation of the meaning of the Greatest Name by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl ¹

Compiled by May Maxwell

The wisdom of repeating the Greatest Name 9 times before each prayer and 95 times daily is as follows: ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said that there is in man a power of concentration not yet fully developed, which power rightly directed can lead him to great heights of knowledge, understanding and illumination. *“Prayer and supplication are the ladder,”* He said, *“by which the souls ascend”* and as the power of sustained communion with God develops the capacity to receive, the influx of the Holy Spirit to penetrate the *“hidden mystery”*, unfolds. Prayer and communion is the only approach of the soul to God, and Bahá’u’lláh has likened it unto a *“river of milk”* which is the perfect nutriment, and the more we partake of this life-giving food the more the soul shall advance in the path of God and the greater will be its progress.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá has likened the power of concentration to a cubic crystal. He said: *“If you place a ruby, the hardest stone, in a 7 times heated furnace the heat will have no effect, but if you place that ruby in a cubic crystal in the rays of mid-day sun, it will be dissolved. This He has likened to the power of concentration in man.”* He said: *“Whatsoever man concentrates upon, he will draw to himself. Therefore in prayer and supplication he must close the door to all the outer world and turn his whole being to the Focal Point, the Manifestation of God, in His Day and thus draw into his soul the burning rays of the Sun of Truth, the Infinite Love, light Beauty and Perfection of God.”*

Therefore, before each prayer, man should repeat the Greatest Name 9 times and each morning he should repeat it 95 times (successively) seeking the Divine Beloved with all his heart and soul.

Yá Shoghi Effendi Valí-i-Amru’lláh² (Jinábí Faḍl)

When in America, Jinábí Faḍl told Mrs Shahnáz Waite³ that the “straight way” to the united presence of the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was through the call of the Guardian of the Faith which is

Yá Shoghi Effendi, Valí-i-Amru’lláh

meaning Shoghi Effendi Guardian of the Cause. This call we are to give to bring us into communion with him and through him, to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the Supreme Concourse, of course this call does not take the place of the Greatest Name, but it is a means of **contact** with our beloved Guardian, and the great Ones who have ascended.

Commune

O God! I ask Thee by Thy supreme Pen and by Thy Name the Most Holy, the Greatest, the Impregnable, the Most High, the Most Glorious, to forgive our debts through Thy Grace and Bounty, and to overlook and pardon our trespasses by Thy Benevolence and Mercy. Then make us steadfast in Thy Service and an utterer of Thy Name and Praise.

Verily, Thou art the Exalted the forgiver, the Clement!

Alláh-u-Abhá!

¹ This document is from the Emma Maxie Jones Collection, https://bahai-library.com/emma_maxwell_jones_collection, prepared by E. Jones, M. Thomas, and J. Winters (2021-2022). Transcribed with minor typographical and spelling corrections from scanned photographic image of typewritten copy. First page notes collected by May Maxwell.

² Walíy al-Amru’lláh (Pers. Walí-i-Amru’lláh): “Guardian of the Cause of God”, a title given to Shoghi Effendi by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

³ Louise Dunn (1866–1939); used the name Louise Robinson Spencer; was a poet, composer of music and songs, and writer. Married Edger Francis Waite (1865–1931) in 1902. Named Shahnáz (“sweet music”) Khánúm by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and called a “sweet singing bird” and a “nightingale”.

The Greatest Name is Bahá (Glory, Splendour, Light)¹

Uses of the Greatest Name:

Alláh'u'Abhá: God is the Most Glorious

Alláh interpreted signifies God

Abhá interpreted signifies "The Most Glorious"

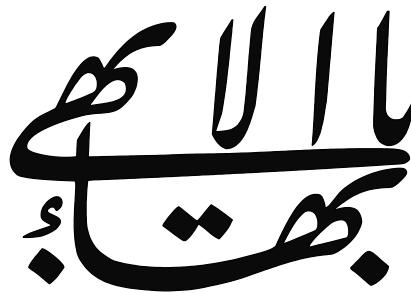
Alláh'u'Abhá is the greeting (or commemoration) to the Greatest Name. To be used 95 times every morning.

Walk above the world by the power of the Greatest Name that thou mayest see the secrets of pre-existence and know that which none know of.²

This Greatest Name of God is of the Arabic tongue. It's [a] Divine expression, none save the soul who truly receives it can understand. The greatness of this name consists not in the giving or in the receiving but in the use. That use confers life. The neglect of it destroys life. When its utterance is laid upon the soul, that soul has received its great gift, and its equal responsibility. By its use the Doors of the Kingdom of God open, illumination is vouchsafed, and Divine Union results.

The use of the Greatest Name, and dependence upon it, causes the soul to strip itself of the husks of mortality and to step forth, freed, reborn, a new creature, redeemed from the law, and At-One with its Creator in the union of that Love which has its origin in Heaven.

The Greatest Name should be found upon the lips in the first awakening moment of the early dawn. It should be fed upon by constant use in daily avocation, in trouble, under opposition, and should be the last word breathed when the head rests upon the pillow at night. It is the Name of comfort, protection, happiness, illumination, love, and unity.



Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá (O Glory of Glories or O Glory of the All-Glorious)³

This is used in calling upon Bahá'u'lláh for aid or bestowals. It is the symbol [that is often] placed in a frame.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said the believers must applaud in the meetings when they desire to do so, by saying in unison, "Yá Bahá' al-Abhá", not otherwise, such as hand clapping, etc.

References

Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas, Vol. I, p. 215.

God Passes By, p. 176.

Bahá'í Glossary, p. 7.

Bahá'í News, July 1935, p. 1.

Bahá'í News, Oct. 1949, #224, p. 5.

Bahá'í News, Feb. 1950, #228, p. 4.

Bahá'í News, Feb. 1955.

A. Q. Faizi, *Explanation of the symbol of the Greatest Name*, 1968.

¹ Additional notes.

² *Bahá'í Scriptures*, p. 193.

³ A form used in the calligraphy designed by Mishkín-Qalam. This is a scalable vector image.