

# Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE

## Part 4 – Chaste and Holy Life ; Nearness to God (1+ hour)

### Demystifying the Advent of Divine Justice

### ADJ in 2020

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## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

### the three weapons of the Double Crusade ; a stainless garment ; Bahá'u'lláh's army of light

ADJ's Double Crusade has three “weapons”; 1) rectitude, 2) chastity and holiness, and 3) the elimination of racial prejudice. Shoghi Effendi broadly defined each to include a series of spiritual principles which cleanse the North American Bahá'ís of these inherited cultural evils, thus removing these barriers to higher spiritual growth. The weapons work together: rectitude and chastity align and purify the body, mind, and heart towards God; holiness and race unity prepare the soul for nearness and unity with the divine.

“In the sight of God, trustworthiness is the bedrock of His Faith and the foundation of all virtues and perfections. A man deprived of this quality is destitute of everything. What shall faith and piety avail if trustworthiness be lacking? Of what consequence can they be? What benefit or advantage can they confer?”

'Abdu'l-Bahá cited by Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, Vol. 4.2

**“A chaste and holy life must be made the controlling principle in the behavior and conduct of all Bahá'ís.”** “As to a chaste and holy life, it should be regarded as no less essential a factor [*than rectitude*,] that must contribute its proper share to the strengthening and vitalization of the Bahá'í community.”

Shoghi Effendi, *ADI*

For the individual Bahá'í, internal faith and piety are secondary to internal rectitude; but external chastity and holiness are of equal importance as rectitude of conduct. For the Bahá'í community, chastity and holiness are of equal importance as rectitude. Bahá'ís who focus on rectitude without having a comparable degree of chastity and holiness will seem more secular than religious and may become indistinguishable from modern secular progressive groups which do not receive the divine blessings of a religion. Bahá'ís who focus on chastity and holiness without having a comparable degree of rectitude will be perceived as old-school religious hypocrites and will not attract many new believers. Having a high degree and balance of the first two weapons is ideal for the spiritual health of Bahá'í individuals and the Bahá'í community. The third weapon, race unity, is of “paramount importance” for all Bahá'ís, and is essential for both the spiritual health and the spiritual growth of individual Bahá'ís and their communities.

As a Double Crusader polishes and practices with their weapons, they break down barriers between themselves and God. The external behavior of a Double Crusader luminates outwards like a stainless garment, which is a spiritually (but not necessarily physically) protective defensive armor that repels external worldliness and reflects the light of God. Sainly Bahá'ís will also have a glowing heart which mirrors God's light and burns away their internal worldliness. Attacks against these saintly Bahá'í warriors would be undeserved, as with Bahá'u'lláh as the “Wronged One”; with God's divine justice, the attacks will be reflected and eventually redirected against the perpetrators' evils.

“My eternity is My creation...Make it the garment of thy temple. My unity is My handiwork...clothe thyself therewith.” #A64

“Thy heart is my home; **sanctify** it for My descent. Thy spirit is My place of revelation; **cleanse** it for My manifestation.” #A59

“Thou art My lamp and My light is in thee.” #A11 Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*

“Protect us from what lieth in front of us and behind us, above our heads, on our right, on our left, below our feet and every other side to which we are exposed.”

the Báb, *Bahá'í Prayers*

As the Double Crusaders perfect their weapons to externally fight their society's cultural evils, they wield their tongues and pens as swords with words reflecting righteousness and the keenness of “consummate tact”; their bodies are also wielded as weapons when performing saintly deeds. These Double Crusaders are spiritual warriors in Bahá'u'lláh's army of light; they choose to battle their inherited North American evils, internally by self-cleansing and externally by exemplifying and spreading the Bahá'í teachings. The external aspects of race unity can be seen in the unity in diversity of Bahá'u'lláh's army of light; this spiritual army was envisioned in Biblical scripture:

“The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations... KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

*Holy Bible* NIV, Rev 19:14-16

“Thou art even as a finely tempered sword...come forth from the sheath of self and desire.” Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, #P72

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

### “a chaste, pure, and holy life” – the second weapon of the Double Crusade

“A **chaste and holy life** must be made the controlling principle in the behavior and conduct of **all Bahá'ís**, both in their social relations with the members of their own community, and in their contact with the world at large... It must be upheld, in all its integrity and implications, in every phase of the life of those who fill the ranks of that Faith... It must be closely and continually **identified with the mission of the Bahá'í youth**, both as an element in the life of the Bahá'í community, and as a factor in...future progress.”

“the American believers must...strive to promote” “a **chaste, pure, and holy life**, unsullied and unclouded by the indecencies, the vices, the false standards, which an inherently deficient moral code tolerates, perpetuates, and fosters... In these days when the forces of irreligion are weakening the moral fiber, and undermining the foundations of individual morality, the obligation of chastity and holiness must claim an increasing share of the attention of the American believers... All of them, be they men or women, must... examine themselves, scrutinize their conduct, and with characteristic resolution arise to purge the life of their community of every trace of moral laxity that might stain the name, or impair the integrity, of so holy and precious a Faith.

“The second [*weapon*] is mainly and directly concerned with the **Bahá'í youth**, who can contribute so decisively to the virility, the purity, and the driving force of the life of the Bahá'í community, and upon whom must depend the future orientation of its destiny, and the complete unfoldment of the potentialities with which God has endowed it.

“Such a chaste and holy life, with its implications of **modesty, purity, temperance, decency, and clean-mindedness**, involves no less than the exercise of **moderation** in all that pertains to dress, language, amusements, and all artistic and literary avocations. It demands **daily vigilance** in the **control** of one's carnal desires and corrupt inclinations. It calls for the abandonment of a frivolous conduct, with its excessive attachment to trivial and often misdirected pleasures. It requires total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, from opium, and from similar habit-forming drugs. It condemns the prostitution of art and of literature, the practices of nudism and of companionate marriage, infidelity in marital relationships, and all manner of promiscuity, of easy familiarity, and of sexual vices. It can tolerate no compromise with the theories, the standards, the habits, and the excesses of a decadent age. Nay rather it seeks to demonstrate, through **the dynamic force of its example**, the **pernicious** character of such **theories**, the **falsity** of such **standards**, the **hollowness** of such **claims**, the **perversity** of such **habits**, and the **sacrilegious** character of such **excesses**.”

“let them focus their attention...on their own selves, their own individual needs, their own personal deficiencies and weaknesses, ever mindful that every intensification of effort on their part will better equip them for the time when they will be called upon to eradicate in their turn such evil tendencies from the lives and the hearts of the entire body of their fellow-citizens.”

Shoghi Effendi, ADI

*Rectitude counteracts North American Bahá'ís' inherited evils of corruption and injustice; chastity and holiness counteract moral laxity, degeneracy, and a lack of sanctity. A lack of rectitude, a lack of chastity and holiness, a lack of race unity; in order to approach God, each of these deficiencies in godliness must be replaced with Bahá'í virtues.*

“It behoveth the people of Bahá to die to the world and all that is therein, to be so detached from all earthly things that the inmates of Paradise may inhale from their garment the sweet smelling savor of **sanctity**, that all the peoples of the earth may recognize in their faces the brightness of the All-Merciful... They that have tarnished the fair name of the Cause of God, by following the things of the flesh—these are in palpable error!”

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, XLVI

“Wherein **the embodiments of His Cause cleansed themselves of self and passion**.” Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablet of the Holy Mariner*

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

### why a “chaste, pure and holy life” ? why not North American secular liberty?

“Chaste...1. Pure from unlawful sexual intercourse... 2. Celibate... 3. Morally pure... 4. Decent; free from indecency or offensiveness” *Oxford Univ. Dictionary, 1943*

“chaste... 3: pure in thought and act : modest... 4a: severely simple in design or execution : austere b: clean, spotless” *merriam-webster.com, 2022*

*In ADJ, “chastity and holiness” is an inner purity which guides an external behavior of moderation and a turning away from unlawful sexual and worldly desires. Shoghi Effendi expands “chaste” to include its modern definition’s implications of restraint, with a modesty which counteracts ego, and an austerity which counteracts materialism.*

“To be **pure** and **holy** in all things is an attribute of the consecrated soul and a necessary characteristic of the unenslaved mind. The best of perfections is **immaculacy** and the **freeing of oneself from every defect**. Once the individual is, in every respect, cleansed and purified, then will he become a **focal centre reflecting the Manifest Light**.

“**First** in a human being's way of life **must be purity**, then freshness, cleanliness, and independence of spirit. First must the stream bed be cleansed, then may the sweet river waters be led into it. Chaste eyes enjoy the beatific vision of the Lord and know what this encounter meaneth; a pure sense inhaleth the fragrances that blow from the rose gardens of His grace; a burnished heart will mirror forth the comely face of truth... the Teachings which come from God...cleanse the human heart... in every aspect of life, purity and holiness, cleanliness and refinement, exalt the human condition and further the development of man's inner reality... although bodily cleanliness is a physical thing, it hath, nevertheless, a powerful influence on the life of the spirit.”

*Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, #129*

*Double Crusaders turn away from worldliness and develop virtues; then, cleansed from worldliness and arrayed with virtues, they can approach a closer nearness to God. The freedoms and affluence that North Americans cherish is based upon a self-focused indulgent materialism which is inequitable, inherently corrupting, and fuels base desires. A Double Crusader’s “true liberty”, happiness, and spiritual wealth are from a God-focused, consecrated inner and outer life which reflects divine justice and fuels the desire to do good deeds and become nearer to God. A lack of this sanctity leads to feelings of entitlement and a self-centered rebelliousness against authority, both secular and divine.*

“Consider the pettiness of men’s minds. They ask for that which injureth them, and cast away the thing that profiteth them... We find some men desiring liberty, and priding themselves therein. Such men are in the depths of ignorance. **Liberty must**, in the end, **lead to sedition**, whose flames none can quench... Know ye that the embodiment of liberty and its symbol is the animal. That which beseemeth man is **submission** unto such **restraints** as will protect him from his own ignorance, and guard him against the harm of the mischief-maker. Liberty causeth man to overstep the bounds of propriety, and to infringe on the dignity of his station. It debaseth him to the level of extreme depravity and wickedness... We **approve of liberty in certain circumstances**, and **refuse to sanction it in others**...

“**True liberty** consisteth in **man’s submission unto My commandments**... Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. **Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God**... The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in **complete servitude unto God**, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven.” *Bahá’u’lláh, The Most Holy Book, Kitáb-i-Aqdas, par 122-125*

“Sedition...1. Violent party strife... 2.a. A concerted movement to overthrow an established government; a revolt, rebellion, mutiny” *Oxford Univ. Dict., 1943*

*America’s vaunted, but egocentric, core values of freedom and liberty are based upon Euro-Americans’ sedition from England. Double Crusaders are constantly tested to replace their inherited cultural evil of secular freedom and liberty, with Bahá’í “true liberty”; this replacement will result in a personal saintliness which will spiritualize the world around them. A Double Crusader’s process may take a lifetime of prayerful effort, while the spiritualization of the world will take generations of dedicated Double Crusaders.*

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life the purpose of rectitude and chastity, from The Most Holy Book, the Kitáb-i-Aqdas

IN THE NAME OF HIM WHO IS THE SUPREME RULER OVER ALL THAT HATH BEEN AND ALL THAT IS TO BE

- 1 THE first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the **recognition** of Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. It behooveth everyone who reacheth this most sublime station, this summit of transcendent glory, to **observe every ordinance** of Him Who is the Desire of the world. **These twin duties are inseparable**. Neither is acceptable without the other. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Source of Divine inspiration.
- 2 They whom God hath endued with insight will readily recognize that the precepts laid down by God constitute the highest means for the **maintenance of order** in the world and the security of its peoples. He that turneth away from them is accounted among the abject and foolish. We, verily, have commanded you to **refuse** the dictates of **your evil passions and corrupt desires**, and **not to transgress the bounds** which the Pen of the Most High hath fixed, for these are the breath of life unto all created things. The seas of Divine wisdom and Divine utterance have risen under the breath of the breeze of the All-Merciful. Hasten to drink your fill, O men of understanding! They that have violated the Covenant of God by breaking His commandments, and have turned back on their heels, these have erred grievously in the sight of God, the All-Possessing, the Most High.
- 3 O ye peoples of the world! Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among **My servants**, and the keys of My mercy for My creatures. Thus hath it been sent down from the heaven of the Will of your Lord, the Lord of Revelation. Were any man to taste the sweetness of the words which the lips of the All-Merciful have willed to utter, he would, though the treasures of the earth be in his possession, renounce them one and all, that he might vindicate the truth of even one of His commandments, shining above the Dayspring of His bountiful care and loving-kindness.
- 4 Say: From My laws the sweet-smelling savor of My garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of Victory will be planted upon the highest peaks. The Tongue of My power hath, from the heaven of My omnipotent glory, addressed to My creation these words: **“Observe My commandments, for the love of My beauty.”** Happy is the lover that hath inhaled the divine fragrance of his Best-Beloved from these words, laden with the perfume of a grace which no tongue can describe. By My life! He who hath drunk the choice wine of fairness from the hands of My bountiful favor will circle around My commandments that shine above the Dayspring of My creation.
- 5 Think not that We have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power. To this beareth witness that which the Pen of Revelation hath revealed. Meditate upon this, O men of insight!

*Bahá'u'lláh, The Most Holy Book; Kitáb-i-Aqdas, opening lines*

*The Aqdas first defines the “twin duties” for “His servants” - to recognize God and to obey His commandments. Most people or “creatures” have not accepted their role as a servant of God, but this was the highest aspiration for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the “Servant of Bahá'u'lláh”. The Aqdas’ second paragraph states the need for the “maintenance of order...and security”, this is the purpose of the first Double Crusade weapon of rectitude; then emphasizes God’s command to “refuse...your evil passions and corrupt desires” in order to accept the “breath of life”, so the Double Crusade’s second weapon of “chastity” and “purity” allows the believer to receive God’s holy fragrances. In the Aqdas’ paragraphs 3, 4, and 125 (on the previous page), Bahá'u'lláh speaks of God’s servants’ happiness as they renounce worldliness in order to obey, serve and grow nearer to Him.*



## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

### three principles of the second weapon - “chaste”, “pure”, and “holy”

*As with rectitude, Shoghi Effendi listed the qualities that characterize a “chaste, pure, and holy life”. To clarify his meaning, he provided examples to illustrate those qualities, along with his new translations of the Bahá’í writings. This deepening categorizes these qualities and examples under the underlying principles of “chaste”, “pure”, and “holy”.*

*In this deepening, ADJ’s broad principle of chastity is considered to relate to a chaste external “behavior and conduct” which leads to individual and societal, physical and spiritual health. The divine laws which direct sanctified behaviors may change depending on the conditions, like the progressive revelation of marriage and dietary laws. “True knowledge” and insight may be necessary to distinguish between chaste and immoral behaviors. Táhirih’s removal of her veil demonstrates the clash between traditional Islamic and the new Bábi/Bahá’í chastity, and also shows an interrelatedness of the first and second weapons; her emancipation from the veil was an expression of rectitude’s equity.*

*In this deepening, the ADJ principle of purity is considered as an internal spiritual health, where thoughts and feelings are sanctified from worldliness. So, a Double Crusader’s “inner purity” is expressed as ADJ’s “outer chastity”. ADJ’s chastity and purity are based upon a spiritually healthy humane management and self-control of worldly desires; at a divine level, worldly desires are overpowered by the soul’s desire for God, as with Anís. At a humane level, ADJ’s rectitude, chastity and purity are conducive to the health, security, and stability of civilization, so many societies have adopted variations of these principles, both through cultural religious laws and as secular values.*

*With ADJ’s outer chastity and inner purity, the body, mind, and heart are cleansed of unlawful actions, thoughts, and desires; with this cleansing, the believer is prepared to approach God. Holiness is an inner nearness to God that is outwardly expressed with qualities such as piety, humility, and modesty. So, the believer’s body turns away from worldliness with chastity; with purity, their mind and heart turn away from the world; and with holiness, they develop godly virtues and their soul turns towards God. In this manner, ADJ’s chastity, purity, and holiness can be viewed in terms of the Four Valleys.*

Valley 1, body, behavior **CHASTE** – “**chastity**” [abstinence from extramarital sex] ; “**temperance**” [abstinence from alcohol] ; “**decency**”; “**modesty**”, “**moderation** in all that pertains to dress, language, amusements, and all artistic and literary avocations”

Valley 2, mind, thoughts **PURE** – “**clean-mindedness**”, **pure-heartedness** ; “daily vigilance in the control of one's carnal desires and corrupt inclinations” ; **maturity** “the abandonment of a frivolous conduct, with its excessive attachment to trivial and often misdirected pleasures”

Valley 4, soul, being **HOLY** – “**moral fiber**”, “**integrity**” ; “**precious**”

**UNCHASTE** – “vices”, “perverse...habits”, “indecencies”, “decadent”, “pernicious” [harmful, destructive] “weaknesses”, “sacrilegious...excesses” ; “the prostitution of art and of literature, nudism, companionate marriage, infidelity in marital relationships, and all manner of promiscuity, of easy familiarity, and of sexual vices” ; “alcoholic drinks,...opium, and...similar [mind altering and] habit-forming drugs”

**IMPURE** – “evil tendencies”, “moral laxity”, “false standards”, “deficient moral code”, “sullied”, “stain”

**UNHOLY** – “irreligion”, “sacrilegious”, “hollow claims”, “clouded”

*Chastity, purity, and holiness are based upon a self-control of worldly desires which helps lead to a nearness to God; whereas rectitude is based upon an alignment to the eternal laws of divine justice, which regulate balance, growth and material wealth – both weapons are different facets of godliness. From a progressive secular North American point of view, rectitude is often seen as a desirable strength; but chastity, purity, and holiness are often seen as weaknesses, especially with the world-wide rise of violent religious fundamentalism. Shoghi Effendi rejects this negative, spiritually deficient view of sanctity by associating chastity with “youth”, “virility” and “the dynamic force of its example”, as well as creating the Double Crusader archetype where the intensity of a spiritual warrior is aligned with God through a just and consecrated restraint.*

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life purity – spiritual cleanliness ; personal responsibility for spirituality through discernment of good and evil

*The Bahá'í/ADJ concept of chastity and purity is more illuminated, expansive, and elevated than similar principles from previous religions. Two thousand years ago, Jesus repealed the Jewish dietary restrictions against “unclean” foods; now, Bahá'u'lláh has eradicated the whole concept of “unclean”, especially to abolish the traditional stigmas that oppress people. But eliminating the designation of “unclean” doesn't mean that everything and everyone is “clean” and perfectly acceptable in the eyes of God; many of the Bahá'í writings give guidance regarding spiritual and physical cleanliness and purity to prepare the believers for attaining a nearness to God.*

“God hath...abolished the concept of ‘uncleanness’, whereby divers things and peoples have been held to be impure.... Verily, all created things were immersed in the sea of purification when, on that first day of Ridván, We shed upon the whole of creation the splendours of Our most excellent Names and Our most exalted Attributes.... Consort ye then with the followers of all religions, and proclaim ye the Cause of your Lord... this is the very crown of deeds, if ye be of them who understand.

“God hath enjoined upon you to **observe the utmost cleanliness...** Fear Him, and **be of those who are pure.** Should the garb of anyone be visibly sullied, his prayers shall not ascend to God, and the celestial Concourse will turn away from him.” Bahá'u'lláh, *The Most Holy Book*, par 75-6

*Bahá'u'lláh made three momentous statements on the first day of Ridván: first, forbidding the use of the sword; second, that no other Manifestation of God would appear before a thousand years had passed; and third, that all the names and attributes of God were fully manifested within all created things. By this He implied the advent of a new Day and the infusion of a fresh capacity into all beings.”* Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh Vol 1*, ch.16

*The purpose of ADJ's chastity and purity is to elevate people's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual “four valleys” health. In the Bahá'í era, instead of religious designations of “clean” and “unclean”, the sciences, including social sciences, are unlocking the mysteries of healthfulness and toxicity; this new knowledge is leading to practical, science-based guidelines and laws. Thus, the guidance for societal laws is in the process of transfer, from being the role of religion through divine and religious decrees, to becoming humanity's own responsibility, with science-based knowledge of the intricacies of God's creation. This self-determination is one aspect of the maturation of humankind.*

“It is neither possible nor desirable for the Universal House of Justice to set forth a set of rules covering every situation. Rather it is the task of the individual believer to determine, according to his own prayerful understanding of the Writings, precisely what his course of “conduct should be in relation to situations which he encounters in his daily life. If he is to fulfill his true mission in life as a follower of the Blessed Perfection, he will pattern his life according to the Teachings. The believer cannot attain this objective merely by living according to a set of rigid regulations. When his life is oriented towards service to Bahá'u'lláh, and when every conscious act is performed within this frame of reference, he will not fail to achieve the true purpose of his life.”

*UHJ letter to an individual Bahá'í, 10/17/1968*

*There has also been a shift towards personal spiritual accountability. The Bahá'í Faith's “universal education” and “independent investigation of the truth”, along with the lack of professional Bahá'í clergy, establishes the condition for everyone to become responsible for their own spirituality, although religions are still responsible for providing the means for spiritual education. This uplifts the believers into having a more direct relationship with Bahá'u'lláh and removes the need for literate clergy intermediaries to God. Thus, a Bahá'í's spiritual insight and discernment are of great importance, because people live and are tested in a huge intermediate area between absolute godliness and absolute evil. There are countless situations which the scriptures, society, and sciences do not adequately address; those lacking in sincerity and true knowledge may easily be led astray, in the name of God or not. The spiritual quandaries of these situations test each individual, requiring them to draw the line on their own behavior, which may help them gain experience and develop their own spirituality. Double Crusaders are at the front lines of these types of tests, their spiritual cleansing process requires them to discern between the elevated godliness of the Bahá'í era and their inherited evils from Adamic era cultural values, which their societies have systemically trained them to believe are good and righteous. Bahá'í spiritual education and “true knowledge” are essential under these conditions and times of spiritual tests, especially in a rapidly changing world.*

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

### why “temperance” ? ; the “ungodly” ; prioritizing spiritual survival over extinction

*Temperance is modernly defined as an abstinence from alcohol; its older meaning implies moderation - a clean and sober self-control and restraint from indulgence and passion.*

“It is inadmissible that man, who hath been endowed with reason, should consume that which stealeth it away. Nay, rather it behoveth him to **comport himself in a manner worthy of the human station.**”

*Bahá'u'lláh, The Most Holy Book, par 119*

“As to opium, it is foul and accursed...it is forbidden... For opium fasteneth on the soul, so that the user's conscience dieth, his mind is blotted away... In this, the cycle of Almighty God, violence and force, constraint and oppression, are one and all condemned. It is, however, **mandatory that the use of opium be prevented by any means whatsoever...**

“Bestow Thou in all things purity and cleanliness upon the people of Bahá. Grant that they be freed from all defilement, and released from all addictions. Save them from committing any repugnant act, unbind them from the chains of every evil habit, that they may live pure and free, wholesome and cleanly, **worthy to serve at Thy Sacred Threshold** and **fit to be related to their Lord...**

“the renouncing of smoking, of intoxicating drink, and of opium, conduceth to health and vigour, to the expansion and keenness of the mind and to bodily strength... Make ye then a mighty effort, that the purity and sanctity shall distinguish the people of Bahá... that both outwardly and inwardly they shall prove superior to the rest... And that by their **freedom from enslavement**, their knowledge, their self-control, they shall be first among the **pure**, the **free** and the **wise**.”

*Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, #129*

*Although Bahá'u'lláh abolished the concept “unclean”, which revoked caste systems, the Bahá’í Faith has the concept of “ungodly” people with a strict prohibition against contact with formally designated “covenant-breakers” – these are the “nakazeen” which translates to the “ungodly”. Disobedience to this law often results in a fall from Bahá'u'lláh's grace - down to normal worldly evils or lower to abasement. Bahá'u'lláh's family members who became covenant-breakers had an inner worldliness, but they had the inestimable privilege and test of literally being close to God, through blood and being in His household; their choice of worldliness led them to fail their most crucial of tests.*

“The company of the ungodly increaseth sorrow, whilst fellowship with the righteous cleaneth the rust from off the heart.” ; “Beware! Walk not with the ungodly and seek not fellowship with him, for such companionship turneth the radiance of the heart into infernal fire.”

*Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, #P56, #P57*

“Once the Master came to [Shoghi Effendi]...where he was working...the laughing and chattering voices of the family could be heard in another room. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá turned to Shoghi Effendi and said, **'I do not want you to be like them - worldly.'**”

*Rúhiyyih Khánum, The Priceless Pearl, ch.2*

“many of those who were closest to Bahá'u'lláh fell from grace because of their insincerity and selfish interests. These people...could have remained faithful believers if they were not serving in His presence. A proud and egotistical person...in his local community, may create many unpleasant problems...but these difficulties will not necessarily be the cause of the extinction of his faith... A man who falls on the ground may hurt himself, whereas if a person is flying high above the ground, his fall will be fatal... The high esteem in which they were held by the believers, and the tokens of respect shown to them... instead of making them humble and lowly as it would true believers, made them haughty and vain.”

*Taherzadeh, The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, ch.32*

*“By any means whatsoever” temperance from opium over the abolition of “uncleanness”, avoiding “the ungodly” over social unity, taqiyyah\* over truthfulness; in dire situations, God has approved the bypass of some of the most important Bahá’í principles to avoid the extinction of an individual's relationship with God, or the degradation of society, or the physical extinction of the community of the Cause of God. However, the Bahá’í writings typically guide us towards sacrifice under difficult conditions. “True knowledge” can discern whether God approves of sacrifice or bypass in a situation; this is especially valuable to Double Crusaders who are prone to encountering unsavory circumstances.*

“ever mindful that every intensification of effort on their part will better equip them for the time when they will be called upon to eradicate in their turn such evil tendencies from the lives and the hearts of the entire body of their fellow-citizens.” Shoghi Effendi, ADI



## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life holiness through prayer

*ADJ's chastity and purity and holiness is a three-step process; chastity is primarily related to the self-control of physical desires, purity cleanses the thoughts and emotions away from worldliness, and holiness lifts the soul towards God. The prayerful development of virtues is the essential tool for expressing holiness.*

“O SON OF LIGHT! **Forget all save Me and commune with My spirit.** This is of the essence of My command, therefore turn unto it.”  
*Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, #A16*

“Thou hast asked the wisdom of prayer. Know thou that prayer is indispensable and obligatory, and man under no pretext whatsoever is excused from performing the prayer unless he be mentally unsound, or an insurmountable obstacle prevent him.

“The wisdom of prayer is this: That it causeth a connection between the servant and the True One, because in that state (i.e., prayer) man with all heart and soul turneth his face towards His Highness the Almighty, seeking His association and desiring His love and compassion. The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing; that is why with every soul who is attracted to the Kingdom of God, his greatest hope is to find an opportunity to entreat and supplicate before his Beloved, appeal for His mercy and grace and be immersed in the ocean of His utterance, goodness and generosity. Beside all this, **prayer and fasting** is the cause of **awakening** and **mindfulness** and **conducive to protection** and **preservation from tests.**”

*Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 1909 ed., pp 683-4*

“Spirit has influence; prayer has spiritual effect. Therefore, we pray, ‘O God! Heal this sick one!’ Perchance God will answer... Does it matter who prays? **God will answer the prayer of every servant if that prayer is urgent... He answers the prayers of all His servants...** But we ask for things which the divine wisdom does not desire for us, and there is no answer to our prayer. His wisdom does not sanction what we wish. We pray, ‘O God! Make me wealthy!’ If this prayer were universally answered, human affairs would be at a standstill... Therefore, it is evident that it would not be well for us if all prayers were answered... But whatever we ask for which is in accord with divine wisdom, God will answer. Assuredly!”

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Dublin Inn talk, New Hampshire, Aug 5 1912*

“The Guardian wishes you, therefore, to pray, and to supplicate the Almighty that He may give you a fuller measure of His grace; that through it your spiritual energies may be quickened and that you may become more imbued with that spirit which must needs animate, sustain and strengthen every sincere and true follower of the Faith.”

*letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 13 March 1934, Prayer and Devotional Life, #9*

“The believers...should therefore fully realize the necessity of praying. For prayer is absolutely indispensable to their inner spiritual development, and this, as already stated, is the very foundation and purpose of the religion of God.”

*letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 8 Dec 1935*

“Just as our bodies require nourishment to develop properly, we need regular prayer for our spiritual sustenance and health. **Prayer is food for the soul**; it deepens the love of God in our hearts and draws us closer to Him... ‘**There is nothing sweeter in the world of existence than prayer...** The most blessed condition is the condition of prayer and supplication.’ To live in a state of prayer entails not only uttering sacred verses in moments of devotion; it suggests, too, that throughout the day we should turn our hearts towards God... ‘The true worshipper, while praying, should endeavour not so much to ask God to fulfil his wishes and desires, but rather to adjust these and make them **conform to the Divine Will**. Only through such an attitude can one derive that feeling of **inner peace and contentment** which the power of prayer alone can confer.’... We need to have complete trust in the mercy of God and be certain that He will grant that which is best for us.”

*bahai.org/.../prayer, 2021*

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

### how to pray

“When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in New York, He called...[upon Mountfort Mills], an ardent Bahá’í and said, ‘If you will come to Me at dawn tomorrow, I will teach you to pray.’ Delighted, Mr M arose at four...arriving for his lesson at six... He found ‘Abdu’l-Bahá already at prayer, kneeling by the side of the bed. Mr M followed suit, taking care to place himself directly across. Seeing that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was quite lost in His Own reverie, Mr M began to pray silently for his friends, his family and finally for the crowned heads of Europe. No word was uttered by the quiet Man before him. He went over all the prayers he knew then, and repeated them twice, three times - still no sound... Mr M surreptitiously rubbed one knee and wondered vaguely about his back. He began again, hearing...the birds heralding the dawn outside the window. An hour passed, and finally two. Mr. M was quite numb now. His eyes, roving along the wall, caught sight of a large crack. He dallied with a touch of indignation but let his gaze pass again to the still figure...

“The **ecstasy** that he saw arrested him and he drank deeply of the sight. Suddenly he wanted to pray like that. **Selfish desires were forgotten.** Sorrow, conflict, and even his immediate surroundings were as if they had never been. He was conscious of only one thing, a **passionate desire to draw near to God**. Closing his eyes again he **set the world firmly aside**, and amazingly his heart teemed with prayer, eager, joyous, tumultuous prayer. He felt **cleansed by humility and lighted by a new peace**. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had taught him to pray!

“The ‘Master of Akká’ immediately arose and came to him. His eyes rested smilingly upon the newly humbled Mr M. ‘When you pray,’ He said, ‘you must not think of your aching body, nor of the birds..., nor of the cracks in the wall!’ He became very serious then, and added, **‘When you wish to pray you must first know that you are standing in the presence of the Almighty!’**”

*Honnold, Vignettes from the Life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, His Radiant Heart #27*

“[Bahá’u’lláh’s] Tablet of Ashraf contains a significant statement concerning the power of prayer when freed from desire. He [Bahá’u’lláh] declares that the outpouring of grace in this day is so great, that should an individual raise his hands in supplication to God and ask for the treasures of earth and heaven, his wish will be granted even before he lowers his hands, provided that he is freed from attachment to all created things. Indeed, the key for attaining this glory lies in the word **‘detachment’**. From the study of the Writings it becomes clear that not until man reaches a state of **absolute servitude** wherein he dies to his own self, and has no desire except what God desires, can he ever ascend to such a lofty station.

“The **purest form of prayer is one which is freed from [worldly] desire**. Such a prayer will cause the bounties of God to descend upon the soul. Nevertheless, human beings have many needs in this life and when in difficulty, pain or grief, they turn to God for assistance. The Báb and Bahá’u’lláh have both revealed special prayers for various occasions to be said when one is in need. If a man must have a desire--and it is quite natural for him to do so--his prayer should be that in the end he may attain the good-pleasure of his Lord. For any other desire, even service to the Cause, meritorious though it is, will not necessarily result in his salvation. There have been some who rendered notable service to the Cause and yet spiritually their lives ended in tragedy...

“the **most befitting form of prayer is that of praising God**. Through it the channels of grace are opened up and He bestows His powers and blessing upon the individual. Turning to God in prayer for the sole purpose of glorifying His Name and extolling His Attributes is the most natural move that man can make towards his Creator. It is like a plant which turns towards the sun. Although the sun pours out its energies regardless, yet, by its very nature, the tree cannot help but stretch its boughs and branches in the direction of the sun. For it to remain insensible to the life-giving rays of the sun is a sign that it is dead... This two-way relationship is the basis for growth. Similarly, God bestows His boundless favours and grace upon His creation, but man must by his own volition turn to Him in adoration and praise in order to receive them. If he fails to do this, he becomes deprived and spiritually starved... The **sign of true spiritual life in man is to yearn after God and long to adore and glorify Him**. The Báb and Bahá’u’lláh have shown us the way by revealing most of their prayers in praise of God. These prayers evoke in the soul feelings of utter self-effacement and absolute poverty, while the power of God and His glory become the motivating influence in guiding and sustaining it throughout its life.

“The power which can be generated in the heart of the believer, when he is freed from all desire and turns to God with songs of praise and glorification, is beyond the comprehension of man. Suffice it to say that many heroes of the Faith have derived their courage and steadfastness from this source.”

*Taherzadeh, Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh, Vol 2.10*

# Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life

## Short Obligatory Prayer – our purpose ; styles and stages of “to know” recognition and “to worship” servitude to God

**“We have enjoined obligatory prayer upon you.”** Bahá'u'lláh, *The Most Holy Book; Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, par 6

“the fundamental purpose of all religion is the spiritual development of the souls of human beings.  
This is expressed in the Short Obligatory Prayer” UHJ, letter to an individual believer, June 12, 1984

our purpose and the meaning of life

our relationship to God

“I bear witness, O my God, that Thou hast created me **to know Thee** and **to worship Thee**.”

“I testify, at this moment, to my powerlessness and to Thy might, to my poverty and to Thy wealth.

There is none other God but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.” Bahá'u'lláh, *Short Obligatory Prayer*

After revealing the *Aqdas*, Bahá'u'lláh revealed three obligatory prayers. The Short Obligatory Prayer condenses the *Aqdas*'s “twin duties”, of recognizing God and obeying His commandments, into the affirmations “to know” and “to worship”. This concisely states the meaning and purpose of life for a Bahá'í – “to know...and...to worship” God.

To “bear witness” and “testify” are legal terms, so Bahá'ís are accepting the terms of a divine contract in this prayer. To “bear witness” means to have direct proof, not just blind faith. “To **know** Thee” is interpreted as the *Aqdas*' “first duty”- recognizing Bahá'u'lláh as God's manifestation for today. “To **worship** Thee” is interpreted as the *Aqdas*' “twin duty” to “observe every ordinance” of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings, where prayers are direct worship and a working servitude to God is indirect worship.

“To know Thee” can also be broadly interpreted; secular peoples may have an unintentional knowledge of God by recognizing God's qualities and understanding God's creation, as with virtues and the sciences. “To worship Thee” can also be broadly interpreted to encompass a secular indirect “worship” of godliness, such as through the cultivation of virtues and good deeds. Since we were created “to know...and to worship” God, we have a natural, innate curiosity, and an aspiration towards godliness which helps us fulfill our purpose. Practicing “to know...and to worship” God is a spiritual process that draws the believers nearer to God and also brings secular peoples towards godliness.

Much of humanity's secular efforts are aimed at the transformation from material “powerlessness...to...might” and material “poverty...to...wealth.” Through these efforts, humanity has increasingly gained worldly powers and wealth. In today's Formative Age, we are transitioning from the earthly nature of the Adamic era to the heavenly nature of the Bahá'í era, “on earth as it is in heaven.” As we continue to increase our material power and wealth, Bahá'ís must still acknowledge our weaknesses compared to God; this implies our choice of the spiritual over the material and puts us in a position of deference and humility before God, which is essential for our approach to nearness.

The last line states God's singleness, our dependence upon God, and God's independence from humanity, implying that God may replace us if we don't fulfill our purpose. In the Short Obligatory Prayer, Bahá'ís are stating an awareness of their purpose and their weaknesses as believers; those taking action upon these beliefs are servant believers. The Medium and Long Obligatory Prayers have increasing levels of intensity, commitment, and fealty that exemplify a Bahá'í's progressive spiritual growth.

Bahá'ís “know” and “worship” by following the teachings with their own *Four Valleys*' personal style which evolves along the four earthly “valleys” of spiritual growth.

<u>Four Valleys</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
type	<u>body, physical, actions</u>	<u>mind, mental, thoughts</u>	<u>heart, emotional, feelings</u>	<u>soul, spiritual, “be”-ing</u>
“to know” belief style	accept God's authority	understand the teachings	love and passion for God	recognize godliness within
nearness and	obedience to God's teachings	comprehend and follow God's	please God and develop a	reject worldly self to become
“to worship” alignment style		teachings with wisdom	loving relationship with God	internally and externally godly
<u>Seven Valleys</u>	<u>1 - search</u>	<u>2 - love</u>	<u>3 - knowledge</u>	<u>4 - unity</u>
“to know” stage	distinguish good from evil	on fire with God's reciprocal love	comprehension of God's creation	in unity with the divine
“to worship” stage	attraction to God's qualities dedication to finding God	renounce your satanic self fall victim to the love of God	wisdom which guides mature deeds	inner and outer godliness “be and it is” deeds

## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Chaste and Holy Life the dynamics of prayer

“**The Dynamics of Prayer...** [The Guardian stressed] the need of more prayers and meditation among the friends, he said to use these five steps if we had a problem of any kind for which we desired a solution or wished help.

First Step.– **Pray and meditate about it.** Use the prayers of the Manifestations as they have the greatest power. Then remain in the silence of contemplation for a few minutes.

Second Step.– **Arrive at a decision and hold this.** This decision is usually born during the contemplation. It may seem almost impossible of accomplishment but if it seems to be as answer to a prayer or a way of solving the problem, then immediately take the next step.

Third Step.– **Have determination to carry the decision through.** Many fail here. The decision, budding into determination, is blighted and instead becomes a wish or a vague longing. When determination is born, immediately take the next step.

Fourth Step.– **Have faith and confidence that the power will flow through you**, the right way will appear, the door will open, the right thought, the right message, the right principle or the right book will be given you. Have confidence, and the right thing will come to your need. Then, as you rise from prayer, take at once the fifth step.

Fifth Step.– Then, he said, **lastly, ACT; Act as though it had all been answered.** Then act with tireless, ceaseless energy. And as you act, you, yourself, will become a magnet, which will attract more power to your being, until you become an unobstructed channel for the Divine power to flow through you.

“Many pray but do not remain for the last half of the first step. Some who meditate arrive at a decision, but fail to hold it. Few have the determination to carry the decision through, still fewer have the confidence that the right thing will come to their need. But how many remember to act as though it had all been answered? How true are those words - ‘**Greater than the prayer is the spirit in which it is uttered**’ and greater than the way it is uttered is **the spirit in which it is carried out.**”

“The above statement belongs properly to the class of statement known as “pilgrim's notes” and as such has no authority but, since it seems to be particularly helpful and clear, it was felt that believers should not be deprived of it.”

Shoghi Effendi cited by Ruth Moffet, Principles of Bahá’í Administration, appendix

The next “ADJ in 2020” sections are optional; Part 5 describes aspects of humanity’s path towards approaching God - nearness to God is humanity’s ultimate objective and the purpose for developing a “chaste, pure, and holy” life. We achieve our God given purpose as human beings of growing towards God by becoming more godly, both as individuals and with our ever-advancing civilization. This individual and collective growth towards God is at the core of humanity’s special spiritual connection with the divine and is beyond the capacity of other earthly beings. Without the second weapon, our souls would remain mired with an ungodly worldliness, holding us back from nearness to God. Part 6 continues with the second weapon, discussing ADJ’s purification process and the nature of Bahá’í chastity, purity, and holiness with historical examples from the Bahá’í Faith. Part 7 more directly addresses some of North America’s issues of chastity. Part 8 discusses “unity in diversity” with a science and religion approach which addresses North America’s chastity related LGBTQ issues as well as introducing the third weapon of race unity.

Our growth towards God is part of God’s grand plan of the continuing evolution of the created universe. Evolution is a form of transformational equity for both material and spiritual growth. The creation of something new requires a spiritual/material sacrifice, where something old is destroyed as it is transformed into a new creation. With the Double Crusade, our energies which perpetuated old inherited evils, become redirected to bring us closer to God and develop new virtues. This individual spiritual cleansing process opens portals for divine assistance, which deepens the impact of our efforts to replace our old cultural evils with new Bahá’í virtues.



## Demystifying The ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE

### Part 5 – Growth towards Nearness to God, knowledge, volition, action (2+ hours)

#### Demystifying the Advent of Divine Justice

#### ADJ in 2020

Part 1	Overview	Spiritual descendants of the dawnbreakers/living sacrifice
Part 2	Double Crusade and Moral Rectitude	Moral Rectitude – divine justice
Part 3	Moral Rectitude ( <i>continued</i> )	Moral Rectitude – knowledge, truth, trustworthiness, and progress
Part 4	Chaste and Holy Life	
<b>Part 5</b>		<b>Growth towards Nearness to God ; knowledge, volition, action</b> science and religion ; the physiology of spirituality from the worldly self to transcendence ; hierarchy of needs and evolution humanity in God's stepped continuum of universal evolution our complex interconnected universe ; new creations require new laws humanity's material and spiritual pathways the spiritual precedes the material ; Seven Valleys' spiritual growth from nature to knowledge of "good and evil" to "true" and "perfect" knowledge realms of heaven and humanity divine justice of choices ; enlightenment/detachment from worldliness ; servitude the human soul's journey towards God - from earth through the 7 valleys to heaven omniscience ; Seven Valleys stories ; "knowledge...of God" to "genuine love" "free will" choices ; "stillness or motion" ; stages of volition ; spiritual accountability volition ; Manúchihr Khán's radiant acquiescence ; predestination God's reciprocal love ; "true liberty" in "servitude unto God" ; nearness destinations "the greatest attainment...is nearness to God" ; pathways to nearness humanity's evolution towards God – from "captives" to the creators of the Bahá'í era humanity in universal evolution ; four pathways of love ; spiritual & material cycles "be as I am" - 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Perfect Exemplar, as a Servant of Bahá'u'lláh
Part 6		Chaste, <u>Pure, and Holy</u>
Part 7		<u>Chaste, Pure, and Holy</u> ; North America's chastity issues
Part 8 TBD		<i>Unity in Diversity</i>
Part 9 TBD	<i>Elimination of Racial Prejudice</i>	
Part 10 TBD		<i>the Supreme Effort</i>
Part 11 TBD		<i>the Corresponding Effort</i>
Part 12 TBD		<i>Let Neither... ; Double Crusade summary</i>
Part 13 TBD	<i>Pioneering</i>	<i>Detachment</i>
Part 14 TBD	<i>Destiny of America</i>	<i>Destiny in 2020</i>

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**  
**science and religion ; the physiology of spirituality**

“Religion and Science are inter-twined...and cannot be separated.” *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p 28-9*

“Religion and science are the two wings upon which man's intelligence can soar into the heights, with which the human soul can progress... Should a man try to fly with the wing of religion alone he would quickly fall into the quagmire of superstition, whilst...with the wing of science alone he would also make no progress, but fall into the despairing slough of materialism.” *‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Paris Talks, Part II, Nov. 12, 1911*

*Religious teachings provide divine truths based upon revelation and inspiration from God's authority. Science is based upon material world experience; the human mind discovers divine truths through a trial-and-error experimental process. So, religion has a top-down approach to truth, which is limited to what God divulges; while science has an experimental approach to truth. Using science and religion together can provide a more complete perspective on complex issues. “ADJ in 2020” uses a religion with modern science approach which may appeal primarily to the Valley 2-mind types, whose spirituality relies upon their knowledge and comprehension.*

*The Double Crusade's first weapon, rectitude, has an external aspect of a “rectitude of conduct” which is based upon divine universal laws of balance. The second and third weapons, a “chaste, pure and holy life” and the “elimination of racial prejudice”, are also founded upon universal principles, of purity and holiness, and of love and unity; these principles are manifested externally through chastity and race unity. So, all three weapons are based upon divine principles which can be internalized to guide external behavior. Religious guidance for individual and societal behaviors of rectitude, chastity, and social unity has progressively changed over time, leading humanity away from our animal natures to bring us closer to God, both in our spiritual relationships with God, such as with prayer, and with humanity's increasingly godly attributes, behavior, and civilization.*

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want... thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” *Holy Bible, KJV, Psalm 23.1,4*

“man, if...left without education, becomes bestial..., whereas if he is educated he becomes an angel.” *‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions 1.3*

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“physiology – the branch of biology that deals with the normal functions of living organisms and their parts.” *Oxford Languages online, 2022*

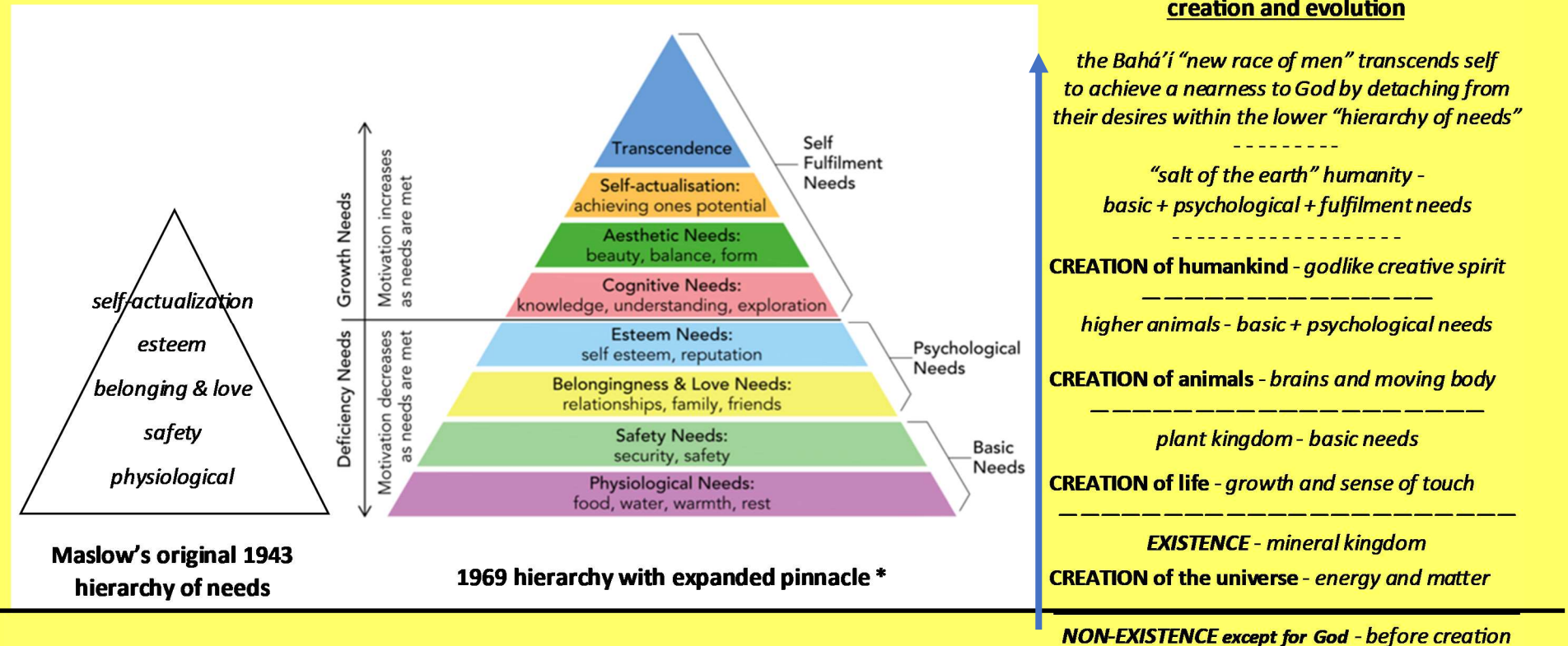
*Earthly pleasures are like shadows of the ineffable feelings that accompany true spiritual states. For example, lust and illicit sex are worldly physical/emotional expressions of God's true love and the sanctity of chastity for human procreation. Many recreational drugs produce feelings that mimic true spiritual states; the drug MDMA is commonly known as ‘ecstasy’ and is under research for the treatment of PTSD. Even worldly addictions are physical shadows of the spiritual state of nearness to God, where the rare believers at the divinely bestowed level, like Anís, are so focused and attracted to God that they are not interested in much else.*

*The loftiest of spiritual states, with their heavenly feelings of connection to the spiritual worlds, are rarely experienced during a person's earthly life. But after death, when the soul is freed of bodily constraints, the believers' souls naturally rise to higher spiritual states which are closer to God - such as the divine unity, contentment, wonderment, and absolute nothingness described by Bahá'u'lláh in The Seven Valleys. The experience of touching the divine while on the earthly plane, often has a high price: these moments are often associated with extreme events such as personal sacrifices, emergencies, or the death of loved ones. So, divine justice necessitates that artificially inducing these heavenly experiences and feelings must have an equally profound price; the cost of illicit desires and behaviors is the abasement of the soul, and also possibly the abasement of the body, mind, and/or heart, such as with drug abuse.*

*American neuroscientist Andrew Newberg's research\* since the 1990's has identified parts of the brain that are associated with spirituality. His brain scans of Buddhist monks and Franciscan nuns showed that meditation increased and decreased activity in specific areas of the brain. Later research showed that when these parts of the brain were stimulated in volunteer American college students, they had profound feelings of spirituality, which were life changing for some of the students. This type of research is shedding light on the connection between the physical brain and the spiritual soul, which may lead to new therapies that enhance spirituality and trigger spiritual awakenings, where an appropriate spiritual price will be living a life changed towards godliness. Neurotheological therapies may become an integral part of the Golden Age, but if they are treated like recreational drugs, they will become the cause of individual and societal abasement.*

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**  
**from the worldly self to transcendence ; hierarchy of needs and evolution**

American Abraham Maslow's original 1943 "hierarchy of needs" has been refined over the years; the expanded 1969 model redefined the previous pinnacle of self-actualization to encompass a four valleys group of "self-fulfillment needs", with a new apex of transcendence. In religious terms, this transcendence represents an abiding nearness to God which may override worldly desires and even some physical needs. Self-actualized transcendence also seems to describe the nature of the "new race of men". This secular model of "needs" can be connected to religion's description of creation and evolution; where creatures have more complex "needs" as they become more evolved towards godliness.



Religious writings address every level of human needs, from dietary laws to transcendence, with the intent to guide the reader away from their animalistic base natures and towards a more elevated nearness towards God. The outer aspects of the Double Crusade; rectitude of conduct, chastity and race unity; correct the North American Bahá'ís' cultural deficiencies or "evils", which have aspects in all of the need levels below transcendence. The inner aspects of the Double Crusade, moral rectitude, purity, holiness and spiritual unity, are godly self-fulfillment traits that uplift souls towards transcendence. Today's ADJ archetypes - the living martyrs, Double Crusaders and pioneers - must choose to give up some of their basic and psychological needs on their path of service to God. As humanity becomes more godly, the key ADJ archetype of the future, the Bahá'í administrators of the world-wide Houses of Justice, will serve God with a self-actualized humility and rectitude to address every level of needs within their communities.

"A race of men...incomparable in character, shall be raised up which, with the feet of detachment, will tread under all who are in heaven and on earth, and will cast the sleeve of holiness over all that hath been created from water and clay." Bahá'u'lláh cited by Shoghi Effendi, ADJ

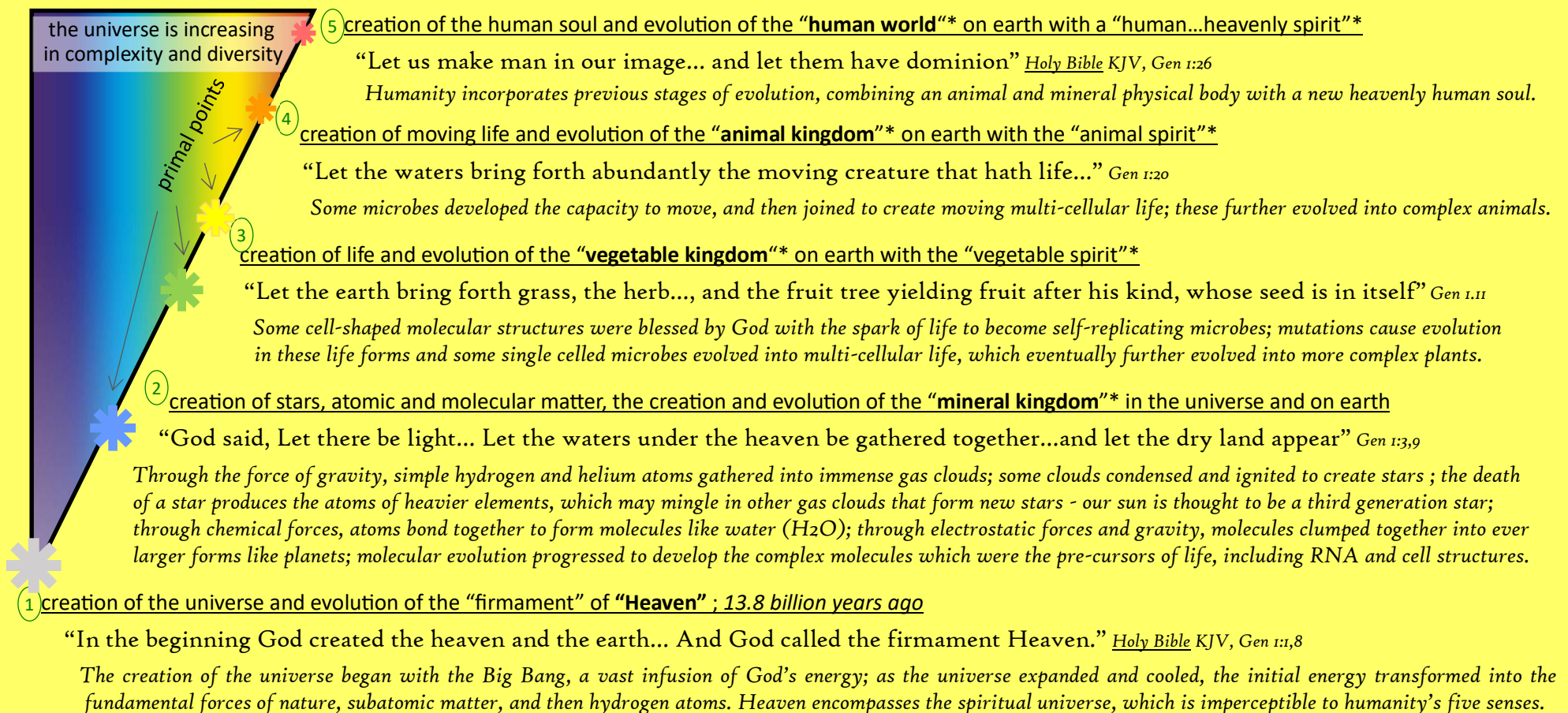
(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**  
**humanity in God's stepped continuum of universal evolution**

“continuum - a continuous sequence in which adjacent elements are not perceptibly different from each other, although the extremes are quite distinct.”

*Oxford languages online, 2022*

God created our dynamic universe to evolve. While there are distinct defining moments of creation and evolutionary change, from an overarching viewpoint, innumerable changes combine into a stepped continuum with chaotic times of transition and relatively stable periods of order. Life is at the forefront of the universal evolutionary process and humanity is at the vanguard of life. At critical moments, God infuses new primal point energies into the universe to create new “kingdoms” that lead to explosive new transformations, but aspects of previous stages may be retained and continue to evolve. So, every part of the universe is changing and evolving, from the heavens to life on earth. Thus, humanity exists separately, alongside, and within the animal, mineral, and heavenly kingdoms in a universe of increasing diversity and complexity.

**the science and religion of creation and evolution** (read each numbered paragraph from 1-5)





(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**

**our complex interconnected universe ; evolving conditions allow for new creations, new creations require new laws**

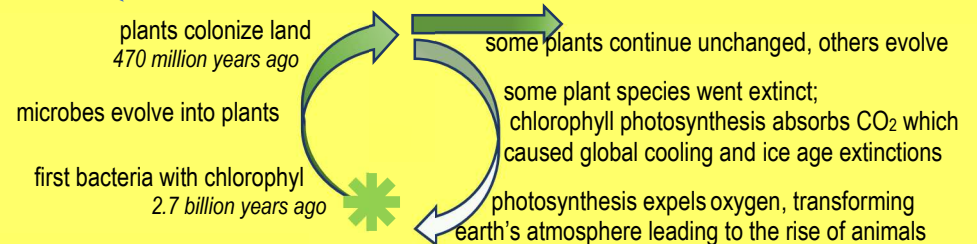
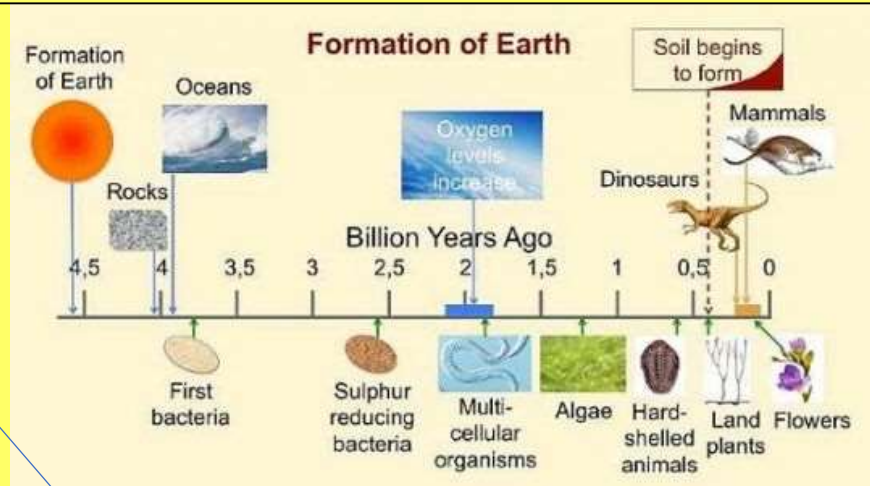
Our history and evolution can be simply illustrated in timelines with milestones for events. These can demonstrate cause and effect relationships and processes; for example, overlapping the timelines of earth's geology with life helps show the relationships between the evolution of earth's living and mineral kingdoms. —→

Evolution can also be described with cycles. 'Abdu'l-Bahá compared religious cycles with astronomical orbits. Evolutionary cycles begin with a spark of a new creation, a primal point, and may not end with complete extinction; older forms often persist even as newer forms are created and expand, just as the plant kingdom continues to exist and evolve along with the rise of animals.

"Each one of the luminous bodies in this limitless firmament has a cycle of revolution...and every one revolves in its own orbit, and again begins a new cycle...that is to say, the first cycle is again renewed. In the same way, for the whole universe, whether for the heavens or for men, there are cycles of great events... When a cycle is ended, a new cycle begins; and the old one...is completely forgotten..."

"Each of the Divine Manifestations has likewise a cycle... When His cycle is completed by the appearance of a new Manifestation, a new cycle begins. In this way cycles begin, end and are renewed."

'Abdu'l Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, #41



"fractal...a...geometric figure...in which similar patterns recur at progressively smaller scales" Oxford Languages online 2022

Timelines and grand cycles are very simplified descriptions of the universe from a distance; up close, the actual universe is much more complex. Within the larger cycles, there are smaller fractal cycles, which can be recurring and relatively stable - like days and years, or transformative - like the cycle of life, with growth and change from birth to death. In addition to cycles, the universe can be described with other types of fractals, such as *The Seven Valleys* which describes the spiritual growth of individuals as well as of the human race. A roots and branches fractal model can describe relationships, such as family trees of ancestors and descendants, and chemistry's periodic table; the sun's rays are like branches, but they are also the roots for life on earth. Innumerable and varied fractals combine into the vast and deeply interconnected web of a universal continuum.

Modern science has uncovered many mysteries, so some of the past is no longer "completely forgotten". Humanity's increasing knowledge can also help us better prepare for the future. The universe is expanding and cooling; as conditions change, the environment deteriorates for some existing forms, but new conditions allow for God's new creations which could not exist in the previous environment. Each new stage of evolution requires a new set of divine laws to govern them, while God is above His created laws. God's infusions of energy create each major new step in evolution; after these primal points, the new laws start to eclipse the former laws. Humankind required new divine laws which were beyond the animal kingdom's laws of nature. With the progressive revelation process, Bahá'u'lláh's laws govern humanity's newest stage of evolution, but as civilization advances and conditions change, new laws will be necessary to govern new situations, while some existing laws will become obsolete or will need to be adjusted.

(optional) ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God

humanity's material and spiritual pathways ; human dominion over nature ; true religion vs. inherited materialism

*Humanity is at the intersection of the spiritual and material universes with a spiritual pathway leading towards God, and a material pathway from our animal natures.*

“From the time of the creation of Adam to this day there have been **two pathways in the world of humanity**: one the natural or **materialistic**, the other the religious or **spiritual**. The pathway of nature is the pathway of the animal realm. The animal acts in accordance with the requirements of nature, follows its own instincts and desires... It cannot deviate in the least degree from the road nature has established...for in its highest station it is a **captive** of nature.” “[*The five senses*] are acceptable and sufficient for the animal. But that which is beyond the range of the senses...the conscious pathway to the Kingdom of God..., the world of spirit...-- of these the animal is completely unaware....

“Consider how all other phenomenal existence and beings are captives of nature. The sun..., the earth itself and its kingdoms of life lower than the human--all are captives of nature except man. No other created thing can deviate in the slightest degree from obedience to natural law... Man is the ruler of nature... Man makes nature his servant... Though he is a dweller upon earth, he penetrates the mysteries of starry worlds...brings these realities forth from the invisible plane to the visible. This is contrary to nature's law... Nature is inert; man is progressive. Nature has no consciousness; man is endowed with it. Nature is without volition and acts perforce, whereas man possesses a mighty will... Nature is uninformed of God; man is conscious of Him. Man acquires divine virtues; nature is denied them. Man can voluntarily discontinue vices; nature has no power to modify the influence of its instincts... man is more noble and superior... He has...divine attributes and virtues of which nature is completely deprived and bereft...

“How strange then it seems that man...will descend to a level beneath him and declare himself no greater than that which is manifestly inferior to his real station. God has created such a conscious spirit within him that he is the most wonderful of all contingent beings. In ignoring these virtues he descends to the material plane, considers matter the ruler of existence and denies that which lies beyond. Is this virtue? In its fullest sense this is animalistic, for the animal realizes nothing more...

“The **second pathway is that of religion, the road of the divine Kingdom**. It involves the acquisition of praiseworthy attributes, heavenly illumination and righteous actions in the world of humanity. This pathway is conducive to the progress and uplift of the world. It is the source of human enlightenment, training and ethical improvement -- the magnet which attracts the love of God because of the knowledge of God it bestows. This is the road of the holy Manifestations of God...the cause of human betterment...and the illumination of mankind.

“Alas that humanity is completely submerged in imitations and unrealities... **True religion is the source of love and agreement** amongst men, the cause of the development of praiseworthy qualities, but the people are holding to the counterfeit and imitation...bereft and deprived of the radiance of religion. They follow superstitions inherited from their fathers and ancestors...and sit in the darkness of imitations and imaginations... Therefore, the realm of the religionist has gradually narrowed and darkened, and the sphere of the materialist has widened and advanced; for the religionist has held to imitation and counterfeit, neglecting and discarding holiness and the sacred reality of religion.

“When the sun sets, it is the time for bats to fly. They come forth because they are creatures of the night. When the lights of religion become darkened, the materialists appear. They are the bats of night. The decline of religion is their time of activity; they seek the shadows when the world is darkened and clouds have spread over it.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, 9 June 1912, Baptist Temple, Philadelphia PA

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**

**the spiritual precedes the material ; humanity's evolution along the Seven Valleys ; the Bahá'í Faith's evolving focus**

"The spiritual world is like unto the phenomenal world. They are the exact counterpart of each other. Whatever objects appear in this world of existence are the outer pictures of the world of heaven." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, 11 April 1912 talk at Kinney home, New York City

Evolution is the universal process of transformational equity from God's divine justice. In the beginning, God created the spiritual firmament of heaven, then evolved part of the heavens into the material universe – so, in creation, the spiritual preceded the material. God's primal point infusions of spiritual energies transformed into bursts of new material creations and their laws; so, with evolution, the spiritual precedes the material. God created humanity to grow, both spiritually and materially, through God's progressive revelation process; so, the spiritual precedes the material for humanity as well. This mode of universal evolution, where God's spiritual energies transform into evolving material creations, is a cause-and-effect process that is not obvious to humanity. We also transform the spiritual into material everyday - "knowledge" and "volition" are in the spiritual realm and guide our physical "actions" in the material realm; so, the spiritual precedes the material for individuals as well as for the greater universe.

God creates primal points at critical junctures; when the environmental conditions change to the point where the old order declines towards ungodliness, God and evolution fashion a new age and order which will thrive under the new conditions. God's primal points result in explosive changes which spread like ripples, their energies are gradually absorbed into their environments to eventually stabilize the new evolutionary step. Through science, we can trace our material heritage back to the big bang through numerous primal points. We are physically made of stardust with complex bodies from millions of years of evolution. But God created humanity in His own "image" with a special set of four valleys' tools; our human hands, brains, hearts, and souls - these gifts elevated humanity to become earth's apex species. With humanity, God opened a new return path towards Him; human souls may ascend to the heaven of nearness, while progressive revelation keeps raising the bar for the human race to evolve towards godliness.

Humanity's evolution parallels our physical growth; from our embryonic origins in pre-human ancestors, to a prehistoric infancy through childhood, and an Adamic adolescence, to our Bahá'í era's adulthood and maturity. Humanity's spiritual evolution follows our spiritual growth through the Seven Valleys; from a prehistoric "search", through the Adamic era's development of "love", to the Bahá'í era's expanding "knowledge" that leads to a Golden Age of "unity" and "contentment". This trend may continue where part of humanity's future goes into decline with a senior era of "wonderment" and an elderly era of "true poverty and absolute nothingness", while another part continues with:

"This is the Day that shall not be followed by night... would that ye might understand!" Bahá'u'lláh, "Tablet of the Temple", 63.6

🌐 **prehistoric infancy-childhood:** search, love - "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion" KJV, Gen 1:28

⚠️ **Adamic adolescence:** search, love, knowledge - "**love** the Lord thy God with all thy **heart**,...**soul**, and...**mind**. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is...**love** thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt 22:37-39

⚙️ **Bahá'í adulthood:** - love, knowledge, unity, contentment - "Thou hast created me to **know** Thee and to **worship** Thee." Bahá'u'lláh, Short Obligatory Prayer

Heroic Age, 1844-1921 : love, knowledge – teaching, Persians to Bábis; teaching; Bábis to Bahá'ís; consolidating Persian Bahá'ís + teaching/conversions in the west

we are here ➡️ Formative Age, 1921-? : knowledge, unity – world-wide teaching/conversions; build Bahá'í administration; consolidate the Bahá'ís ; build the new world order

Golden Age, ?-? : knowledge, unity, contentment – an evolved "new race of men" manages the new world order with divine justice; humanity faces transcendence

Today's exponential spiritual and material advancements are due to the dual energies released through the Primal Point of the Báb and the "He is God" of Bahá'u'lláh. Their new energies destabilized the Adamic world, so the new world order would be built upon refreshed Bahá'í era foundations. Their teachings are formulas for the growth and success of individuals and societies to transform the world. The intense transition of the Heroic Age has led to our current Formative Age, where the energies from the Twin Manifestations are causing a world-wide break from the Adamic era, while also building the foundations of the new world order. As civilizations evolve, Bahá'ís must adjust to changing conditions. The Bahá'í Faith currently has a nascent community framework, but much more work lies ahead before the Faith can become earth's new world order. The Bahá'í Faith is at the vanguard of human spirituality and North America is at the leading edge of humanity's material capacities. So, North American Bahá'ís are at humanity's evolutionary spearhead, with the double cutting edges of both the material and the spiritual. In ADJ, Shoghi Effendi provides guidance for this specific condition.

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God – knowledge, volition, action**  
**nature's “very good” pathway, to knowledge of “good and evil”, to “true knowledge” and “perfect knowledge”**

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá defined the material pathway as descending towards our worldly animal natures and the spiritual pathway as ascending towards godliness - here, these pathways are explored further. These pathways reflect our free will choices between good and evil. On the extremes of these pathways are the saintly and the abased.*

*regarding creation: “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” Holy Bible KJV, Genesis 1:31*

*Humanity has a limited free will choice towards good or evil, but the rest of the created universe of nature is “captive” to God’s created laws of nature. Humanity has material bodies and spiritual souls - our souls belong to the spiritual universe and have a return path to nearness to God, the ascending spiritual pathway. Nature has its own mineral, plant, and animal spirits, but not human souls; so, nature has its own spiritual and material paths of existence and transformation, but not humanity’s saintly return pathway to nearness. God’s creation of the natural universe and humanity was all “very good”; and since nature is “captive” to God’s created laws - with nature, it is all “very good”.*

*the serpent said to Eve: “your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Holy Bible KJV, Genesis 3:5*

*Our ancient pre-human ancestors were at the forefront of animal kingdom evolution, but they were still “captive” to the laws of nature and were on nature’s non-judgmental, “very good” material pathway. The first “Adams” and “Eves” awakened with the godly ability to distinguish good from evil. As this capacity spread, Adamic era peoples came out from their ancient “very good” innocence as hunter-gatherers, into agricultural societies with the moral dilemmas of free will choices between “good and evil”.*

*“Knowledge is of two kinds: Divine and Satanic. The one welleteth out...of divine inspiration; the other is but a reflection of vain and obscure thoughts. The source of the former is God Himself;...of the latter the whisperings of selfish desire...The former bringeth forth the fruit of patience, of longing desire, of true understanding, and love; whilst the latter can yield naught but arrogance, vainglory and conceit... those Masters of holy utterance...have expounded the meaning of true knowledge... “He that treadeth the snow-white Path [purity], and...of the Crimson Pillar [sacrifice], shall never attain unto his abode unless his hands are empty of those worldly things cherished by men.” This is the prime requisite of whosoever treadeth this path.”*

*Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán, par 76,77*

*God graced humanity with the capacity, free will, and purpose to grow towards Him by individual spiritual nearness, cultivating godly virtues, and through our ever-advancing civilization. From the lofty and rare saintly return pathway to nearness, morality is absolute; only the Divine is “good”, everything else is “worldly”, “evil”, “Satanic”.*

*The vast majority of people are on a moderate, intermediate path between the saints and the abased, where many worldly concerns seem to be relative instead of absolute, often with conflicting worldly designations of “good” or “evil” depending on the situation and viewpoint. The ambiguity of these worldly situations can be clarified with “true knowledge” which has a universal and divine point of view, and where “good” and “evil” are weighed with a divine justice that transcends the material world with an afterlife of “rewards and punishments” to balance past, present, and future injustices. Our worldly human viewpoints may or may not align with this divine “true knowledge”.*

*“the acquisition of knowledge of phenomena is according to...four criteria...sense perception..., reason..., traditions..., inspiration..., and all of them are faulty and unreliable... the breaths and promptings of the Holy Spirit...is light and knowledge itself. Through it the human mind is quickened and fortified into true conclusions and perfect knowledge.”*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Promulgation of Universal Peace, April 17, 1912, NYC*

*From God’s divine point of view, creation and nature are “very good”; from a saintly point of view the divine is “good” and the material is “evil”; from different worldly viewpoints, “good and evil” may seem relative instead of absolute. The Adamic era’s binary distinction between “good and evil” is evolving towards the broader concept of Bahá’í “true knowledge” - movements towards godliness and God are “good”, and away from God are “evil”. Through the millennia, humanity’s knowledge has been “quickened” towards “true conclusions” in many areas, not just morality. Humanity is increasingly growing towards “perfect knowledge” with our worldly understanding of God’s creation and laws, and a divinely bestowed “true knowledge” which turns towards the Creator. Humanity’s “perfect knowledge” is effectively expanded through education; material education to understand and function in our material world, and spiritual education for understanding our divine purpose and true selves.*



(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**  
**realms of heaven and humanity**

*Bahá'u'lláh affirmed an Islamic understanding of the heavenly realms, but also acknowledged our human limitations in describing the nature of the spiritual universe.*

“Then bear thou witness that for “food” are diverse levels of meaning...

“...the realm of...(Hahut), the Paradise of the Divine Oneness...” *[the pre-existent, unapproachable realm of God the Holy Spirit]*

“...the realm of the Paradise of Endless Duration...(Lahut)...is allotted unto those **servants** who are established upon the Seat of Glory, who quaff liquid camphor nigh unto the All-Beauteous One... Thereby are they enraptured and from that “food” derive comfort.” *[this heavenly realm would have opened early in creation, with the highest, primary named angelic beings who are intoxicated by their nearness to God the Creator]*

“...the Paradise of the Divine Unicity... realm of the Divine Omnipotence (Jabarut)... It is the realm...allotted unto those **servants** who...with the **permission** of God...act according to His command and ever restrain themselves in accordance with His wisdom...” *[realm of secondary angels and prophets; in the Bahá’í era this realm is accessible in the afterlife to those who are nearest to God, the prophets and servant instruments of God]*

“...the Paradise of **Justice**...the Fathomless Deep of Kingdom of God (Malakut) allotted to those **servants** who...are the companions of the Light. They enter therein with the **permission** of God and find rest...” *[realm of personal angels and the souls of servant believers]*

“...**human realm (Nasut)**.” *[humanity’s mortal realm on earth where our physical bodies are connected with our immaterial minds, hearts, and souls]*

“...the significance of “food” is the essence of knowledge.” Bahá'u'lláh, “Tablet of All Food”, bahai-library.com/bahauallah\_lawh\_kull\_taam, Lambden provisional translation

“The stages that mark the wayfarer's journey from the abode of dust [Násút] to the heavenly homeland [Malakút] are said to be...Seven **Valleys**... *[or]...*Seven **Cities**... until the wayfarer taketh leave of self, and traverseth these stages, he shall never reach to the ocean of nearness and union...”

“Although the divine worlds be never ending, yet some refer to them as four: The world of **time** (zamán), which is the one that hath both a beginning and an end; the world of **duration** (dahr), which hath a beginning, but whose end is not revealed; the world of [“primordial reality”] **perpetuity** (sarmad), whose beginning is not to be seen but which is known to have an end; and the world of **eternity** (azal), neither a beginning nor an end of which is visible... Others have called these the worlds of the Heavenly Court (Lahút), of the Empyrean Heaven (Jabarút), of the Kingdom of the Angels (Malakút), and of the mortal world (Násút).”

*Bahá'u'lláh, “The Seven Valleys” – preamble & Valley of Unity, Gail translation*

*The first and highest realm is “Hahut”, home to the unknowable Holy Spirit of God. In “Lahut” with “the Heavenly Court”, God as the Father manifests His fundamental attributes; Bahá'u'lláh, as “He is God” in Lahut, envisioned these attributes as heavenly maidens. From God’s core attributes emanate a complex of secondary attributes and divine laws reflecting “His command” in “Jabarut”, the inhabitants here, such as secondary angels and prophets, are champions of God’s divine laws.*

*The distinct realms in the spiritual and material world are on a stepped continuum; each realm has its own environment and inhabitants, but there may be some overlap. Thus, the universal divine laws may be seen as a single multi-faceted and chaptered book. Each realm is ruled by local divine laws that apply within its environmental range; one realm’s “food” may be irrelevant or toxic in another. A realm and its inhabitants may evolve, requiring adjustments to their laws. The mineral kingdom is ruled by the laws of physics and chemistry; the plant and animal kingdoms follow these laws but are also governed by biological laws for basic survival and for the animals’ psychological needs.*

*Humanity’s earthly “mortal world” of “Nasut” connects the material and spiritual universes; we are governed by physical and biological laws, and also by divine laws for humanity’s psychological and self-fulfillment needs. Those on spiritual pathways are also governed by religious laws and teachings. At death, the human soul leaves Nasut to be cleansed with an individual judgement day before it progresses into the spiritual universe’s higher valleys. Those who were not servants of God, do not have the desire to serve and the spiritual qualities that are needed to withstand the environments of the higher realms, so will begin their afterlife journey in an appropriate lower valley. With “permission”, Bahá’í era servants of God may rise to the higher heavens of the “Divine Kingdom” of “Malakut”, or even Jabarut, for the servant instruments of God.*

“believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many **mansions**...I go to prepare a place for you.” Jesus, Holy Bible KJV, John 14.1,2

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God ; knowledge, volition, action  
the divine justice of our free choice of pathways ; enlightenment and detachment from worldliness ; path of servitude**

“education is of three kinds: material, human, and spiritual. **Material** education aims at the growth and development of the **body**, and consists in securing its sustenance and obtaining the means of its ease and comfort. This education is common to both man and animal.

“**Human** education...consists in **civilization** and progress, that is, sound governance, social order, human welfare, commerce and industry, arts and sciences, momentous discoveries, and great undertakings, which are the central features distinguishing man from the animal.

“As to **divine** education, it is the education of the Kingdom and consists in **acquiring divine perfections**. This is indeed true education, for by its virtue man becomes the focal centre of divine blessings and the embodiment of the verse “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.” This is the ultimate goal of the world of humanity.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, #3

*The early Adamic era’s binary “good and evil” paths leading to heaven and hell have been expanded into a more varied Bahá’í era spectrum of paths with a broader range of free will choices. In our mortal realm, religion’s spiritual pathway is a high road for God’s servants who recognize and devotedly follow God’s teachings (know and worship); the low road of the abased, anti-God material pathway is for those whose souls are consumed by their destructive desires (do not know and do not worship); and there are countless humane intermediate paths for those who neither wholly turn directly towards God nor intentionally turn away from God (partially know and partially worship).*

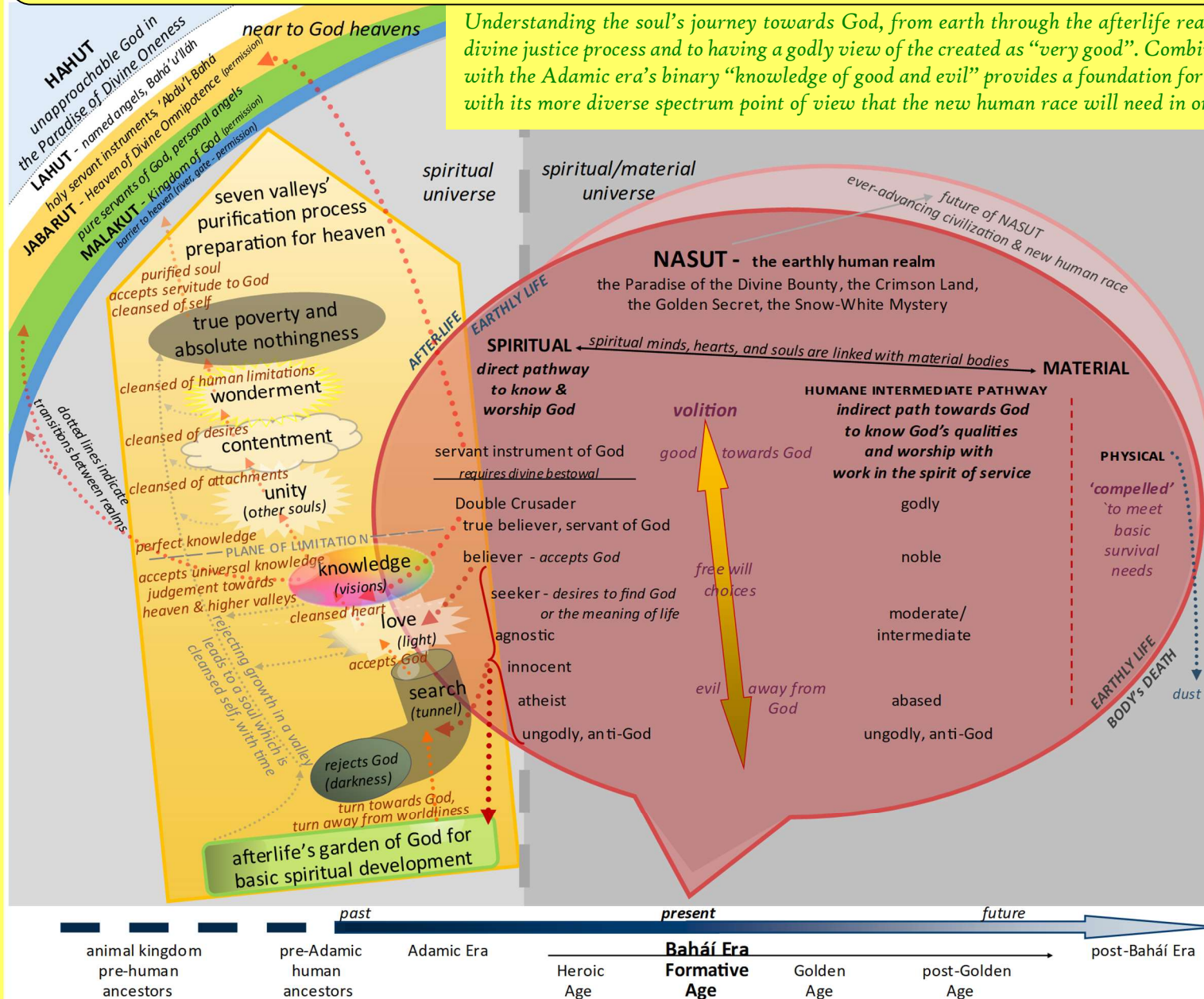
*After death, the soul travels from the human realm of Nasut to spiritual places where near-death experiences (NDE) correlate with religious depictions of the afterlife. At death, the soul detaches from the corpse and rises above earth. The souls of innocents may experience a garden-like afterlife realm to complete their basic spiritual development\*. Unbelievers may experience traveling with others towards the light in an afterlife valley of search. This has been described as an earth-like procession of people, or souls in a dark tunnel, heading towards “the light” - this tunnel effect has been reproduced in Newberg’s neuroscience research subjects\*\* (p 4.12). Reaching the light brings feelings of unconditional love corresponding with finding God and the valley of love. Those who do not accept God may have a dark extended stay in the afterlife’s valley of search.*

*Those with longer NDEs have described an elevated, hyper-aware vision with a life review, seeing the consequences of their actions, and/or a universal consciousness of divine knowledge; this seems to be a soul-illuminating individual day of judgement and the afterlife’s valley of knowledge (p 2.16). Those who chose to not accept this divine knowledge may have a hellish extended stay viewing the impact of their own actions. After the day of judgement, cleansed souls may pass beyond “the plane of limitation” to enter the spiritual universe’s intermediate realm with heavenly feelings of unity, contentment, wonderment, and absolute nothingness. This journey is illustrated on the next page.*

*With permission, the cleansed souls of God’s servants may rise to the eternal higher heavens of Malakut or Jabarut; this passage has been described as St. Peter at the pearly gates or paying the ferryman to cross the river Styx. God’s servants’ free will choices to sacrifice their worldly selves creates the payment needed to attain the higher heavens. The servant instruments of God have transformed themselves into sterling hollow reeds to carry out God’s will on earth, so they are prepared to serve God in heaven and withstand the nearness to God environment of Jabarut, where the pith of self must burn away; they may bypass the seven valleys. Those who do not wish to be servants of God would experience heaven as a hellish, burning slavery; so, their souls reside in more appropriate realms where divine bounty and prayers balance their earthly lives in heaven-like valleys, cities, gardens, mansions, and rooms that can accommodate the diversity of these souls who were on a wide variety of intermediate pathways on earth.*

*Those with NDEs may experience meeting loved ones or a manifestation of God, and return reborn with a life-changing spirituality, like Newberg’s neurotheology research subjects. Thus, although the human brain has a capacity towards spirituality\*\*, it must be triggered for a transformation. Transformed people rise above the materialism of their ‘basic’ ‘physiological’ and ‘security needs’; this is comparable to a Buddhist enlightenment from worldly desires and suffering, or a Bahá’í detachment from worldliness. While some transformations are extensive, sudden, and unintentional like the NDEs, God also purposely aims the believers towards enlightenment through steady religious practices, including repetition of prayers and movements, fasting, studying the teachings, fellowship, work in the spirit of service, and tests. Those seeking enlightenment may benefit from a variety of methods to gradually build their spiritual capacity with small transformative steps. These seekers may also become familiar with transformation through fellowship with enlightened souls, or through Bahá’í and NDE stories\*\*\* which describe an elevated human connection with the divine.*

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God ; knowledge, volition, action**  
**the human soul's journey towards God - from earthly life through the seven valleys to the heavens**



Understanding the soul's journey towards God, from earth through the afterlife realms, is conducive to a certitude in the divine justice process and to having a godly view of the created as "very good". Combining God's ancient singular viewpoint with the Adamic era's binary "knowledge of good and evil" provides a foundation for the Bahá'í era's "perfect knowledge", with its more diverse spectrum point of view that the new human race will need in order to progress to the Golden Age.

God's divine justice for humanity transcends our earthly Nasut, into our spiritual afterlives. Our Nasut choices affect our spiritual status, both on earth and in our afterlife. The concepts here are based upon various Bahá'í writings\*, stories of near-death experiences\*\*, and visions of the afterlife\*\*\*. Many afterlife stories share similarities, but some report other experiences.

A soul's degree of spirituality and actions in Nasut will lead them to an appropriate starting point in the afterlife. This diagram shows some typical afterlife pathways. Servant instruments may bypass the seven valleys; they were tested and divinely bestowed in Nasut with a near to God relationship. Double Crusaders' efforts are specific to their knowledge of good and evil; they will complete this valley in the afterlife. Others may need more development and cleansing before they attain heaven. Those clinging to their human self and refuse to grow towards God may experience a hellish 'eternity' stuck in a valley's recesses. But every soul will receive God's bounty, grace, justice, and tests in their journeys.



(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God – knowledge, volition, action**

**“true knowledge” vs. omniscience ; Seven Valleys stories ; “true knowledge...of God” to “genuine love”**

*“True knowledge” seems to be divinely bestowed for specific circumstances, instead of being a comprehensive divine morality for every situation, which would overwhelm the human brain. So, “true knowledge” is not the same as God’s omniscience. As “He is God”, Bahá’u’lláh had mind-blowing omniscient experiences; but His divine insights were mostly revealed as situational “true knowledge”. Humanity’s ever-advancing “perfect knowledge” will continue to mature towards, but can never reach, God’s true omniscience.*

*“whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and of the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and Scriptures...” Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, Tablet of Wisdom, par 34*

*With the divine morality of “true knowledge”, God’s spiritual considerations are primary, while human morality is secondary. Divine morality may be completely incomprehensible without the illumination of “true knowledge” to clarify any veiled or morally ambiguous distinctions between “good and evil”. In Quran 18:60-82, Moses sought to learn from the wise prophet Khidr. Khidr accepted Moses as a travel partner, so long as Moses did not question his actions. Moses was appalled when Khidr scuttled the boat on which they had been generously offered passage; then Khidr killed a child; and later repaired a broken wall in a town where no one had extended hospitality to them. Having “true knowledge”, Khidr explained how his apparently unjust actions would result in a more just future, then he left Moses because of the impertinent questions! In “The Seven Valleys”, Bahá’u’lláh uses His “true knowledge” to explain the divine morality of God’s “secret justice” in the watchman story and later references Khidr:*

*“he had found many a secret justice in this seeming tyranny of the watchman, and seen how many a mercy lay hid behind the veil... Now if the lover could have looked ahead, he would have blessed the watchman at the start, and prayed on his behalf, and he would have seen that tyranny as justice; but since the end was veiled to him, he moaned and made his plaint in the beginning. Yet those who journey in the garden land of knowledge, because they see the end in the beginning, see peace in war and friendliness in anger.”*

*“At this hour the morn of true knowledge hath dawned...‘Veiled from this was Moses too, Despite His virtue and His light’... ‘If Khidr did wreck the vessel on the sea, A thousand rights are in this wrong concealed.’ ” Bahá’u’lláh, “The Seven Valleys”, Valleys of Knowledge and Unity*

*The Khidr and watchman stories illustrate the long arm of divine justice; “true knowledge” illumines how the tyranny of the “bats of night” are balanced through a “secret” divine justice. A similar grasp of “true knowledge” may be attained through an individual’s free will choice instead of divine bestowal, without having the need to understand the specifics of every situation. This can be achieved through the “true knowledge...of God”, where the saintly believer’s deep faith and trust in God’s love, motives, and plans leads to their own increasing godliness, good deeds, and especially their acceptance of the will of God. This faith in God’s love and justice frees the believer from judgmental feelings; this freedom creates a “let go and let God” environment which lifts the burden of judgement from the believer to allow for a “genuine love” of all. There is a high cost for this degree of faith; the saintly believer who has this “true knowledge...of God” must also have the capacity to acquiesce to the will of God.*

*“Man’s highest station...is attained through faith in God in every Dispensation and by acceptance of what hath been revealed by Him...*

***True knowledge...is the knowledge of God**, and this is none other than the recognition of His Manifestation in each Dispensation... it behooveth man...to render thanksgiving for the day of his conception as an embryo. For had the embryo not existed, how could he have reached his present state? Likewise had the religion taught by Adam not existed [*past*], this Faith would not have attained its present stage.*

*Thus consider thou the development of God’s Faith until the end that hath no end [*future*].” Selections From the Writings of the Báb, pp.88-89*

*Although humanity is growing increasingly godly, we are still human and do not always choose “good” over “evil”, even if it is obvious or even when we have “true knowledge”; Adam and Eve were well-aware of their disobedience to God when they bit the apple... With an awareness of “good and evil”, the knower is on their first step towards the spiritual pathway with “knowledge, volition and action”, but it takes the additional step of “good” volition to actually get onto the spiritual pathway. Shoghi Effendi’s “Dynamics of Prayer” follows ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s “knowledge, volition and action” process, which has the same sequence as the secular, militaristic “ready, aim, fire”.*

*“volition...1. An act of willing or resolving;... decision or choice made after due consideration or deliberation. 2...exercise of the will” Oxford Universal Dictionary, 1943*



(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God – knowledge, volition, action**

**“free will...choices”, “stillness or motion...conditioned upon the aid of God” ; stages of volition ; spiritual accountability**

“Certain matters are subject to the **free will** of man, such as acting with justice and fairness, or injustice and iniquity—in other words, **the choice of good or evil actions...** But there are certain matters where man is forced and **compelled**, such as sleep, death, sickness, failing powers, misfortune, and material loss: These are not subject to the will of man and he is **not accountable** for them, for he is compelled to endure them. But he is **free in the choice of good and evil actions...** He can light the candle of his heart with the flame of the love of God and become a well-wisher of the world, or he can become an enemy of all mankind or set his affections on worldly things... these deeds and actions are under his own control, and he is therefore accountable for them...

“Moreover, man’s stillness or motion itself is conditioned upon the aid of God...should that assistance be cut off, he would become absolutely powerless... This condition can be likened to that of a ship that moves by the power of wind or steam. Should this power be cut off, the ship would become entirely unable to move... in whatever direction the rudder is turned, the power of the steam propels the ship in that direction... This motion does not arise from the ship itself, but from the wind or steam... **all the doings of man are sustained by the power of divine assistance, but the choice of good or evil belongs to him alone**.”

*’Abdu’l Bahá, Some Answered Questions, #70*

*Our free will choices between good and evil represent the “volition” in the “knowledge, volition and action” process. Volition unlocks the spiritual power of this process, whether for “good” or “evil”. Knowledge and volition exist in the spiritual universe; so, intentionally choosing “good” over “evil” has its just rewards on the spiritual plane. Every intentional human action is prefaced with knowledge and volition; so, aside from accidents, our external “actions” or “motions” have both material and spiritual consequences. Knowledge and volition are internal. The awareness from knowledge is “still”, whether acquired intentionally or unintentionally. “Good” volition is a process; first are the internal free will choices to reject “evil” and to turn internally to aim the “rudder” towards “good”. Next are internal motions, such as prayers and plans; these steps are “conditioned upon the aid of God”. Then volition is projected outwards for “action” with words and deeds; external “motions” are especially “conditioned upon the aid of God”. Our free will choices for good or evil lay the foundations of the pathways of our lives; but being human does not allow us to be either perfectly godly or completely abased; we all have a blend of both the spiritual and the material, both “captive” and free will choices, to different degrees within our personalities and our lives. Regardless of our circumstances, we all are tested and we all have the potential for spiritual growth, but our “stillness or motion... is conditioned upon the aid of God.”*

“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.”

“If thou lovest Me, turn away from thyself; and...regard not thine own; that thou mayest die in Me and I may eternally live in thee.”

“Thou art but one step away from the glorious heights... Take thou one pace and with the next advance into the immortal realm.”

“Holy words and pure and goodly deeds ascend unto the heaven of celestial glory. Strive that your deeds may be cleansed from the dust of self and hypocrisy...; for ere long the assayers of mankind shall...accept naught but absolute virtue and deeds of stainless purity.”

*Bahá’u’lláh, Hidden Words, #P12, #A7, #P7, #P69, #P57*

“Walk not with the ungodly and seek not fellowship with him, for such companionship turneth the radiance of the heart into infernal fire.”

*Bahá’ís are guided to avoid those who choose an abased, ungodly pathway. We are accountable for our choices of good or evil, which often have predictable worldly consequences; thus, human morality often views “misfortune” as deserved punishments and good fortune as earned blessings. However, religion rejects that there is an absolute causal link between “good” spiritual and “good” material, especially since the afterlife balances worldly injustices. We are “not accountable” for “captive” matters that we are “compelled to endure”, so humanity’s moral judgements which consider oppressive “captive” conditions as divine retributions are “faulty”. “True knowledge” may be required to distinguish between the spiritual accountability of free will choice consequences, and “captive” conditions where we are being spiritually or materially tested. God may not bless us with the divine bestowals of “true knowledge”, but we have the free choice towards “true knowledge...of God” which can shield us from the “faulty” judgements of human morality.*

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God – knowledge, volition, action**  
**volition ; Manúchihr Khán's radiant acquiescence ; predestination**

Some religious sayings imply that God values actions over volition, such as “deeds, not words” and that “The road to Hell is paved with good intentions”, but Bábi martyrs like Manúchihr Khán, and the contrast between Anís and the Báb's amanuensis, clarify that a “true” devotion to God with a saintly degree of “good” volition is most valued by God. Today's highest attainable spiritual stations are for Bahá'í living martyrs who are servant instruments of God; they are hollow reeds filled with the divine; everyone else will be more worldly within their selves and their choices. The rarest saintly ones pay the price of their “high” station by choosing to be strenuously tested; when God opens a door, they willingly enter. Since this saintly pathway leads to the highest Heaven of human nearness to God, all other pathways may seem like Hell in comparison.

On the more typical human spiritual and material pathways, an individual's volition and actions are more of a mixed blend between “good and evil”. “Good intentions” and “good” words bring a person closer to God; but “good” external actions must match the level of internal “good” volition to achieve the full effect, a proof of sincerity. Without comparable deeds, the internal and external levels of “good” do not align, and that step towards God is incomplete. Also, when not supported by internal “good” intentions, false “good” words or deeds may be intended for a self-promoting ‘virtue signaling’. Struggles and tests are an inseparable part of our spiritual growth process, and humanity is tested across the whole spectrum of spirituality. We may easily grow in one area, while another area may be so difficult that we may experience the same test for years.

“acquiescence... the reluctant acceptance of something without protest” Oxford Languages online, 2022

“As the Báb approached the city of Isfahan, He wrote a letter to the governor of that province, Manúchihr Khán [an honorable man, who]...decided to take the Báb under his protection... Manúchihr Khán, came one night to visit the Báb...[and] was deeply impressed... [Later, after further protecting the Báb from persecution, he told Him,] "The Almighty has endowed me with great riches. Now that I have recognized the truth of your Message, I desire to offer all of my possessions to further the interests of this Faith...It is my intention...to...do my best to win over the king. His confidence in me is firm and unshaken... I am certain that he will embrace this Faith and arise to promote it... I hope...to attract the hearts of the kings and rulers...to this wonderful Cause."

“The Báb was deeply moved... "So lofty a purpose is to me even more precious than the act itself. Your days and mine are numbered, however; they are too short for Me to witness, and allow you to achieve, the realization of your hopes." The Báb told Manúchihr Khán that the Faith of God would not be spread by noble and wealthy figures. Rather...it would triumph through the efforts of the poor, the persecuted, and the lowly. Through the blood they shed in the path of their Lord, and through the sacrifice and suffering of those humble people, the Faith of God would be spread...

“The Báb made Manúchihr Khán a promise as a reward for his love and service. "God...will in the world to come shower upon you inestimable blessings, but of your earthly life there remain only three months and nine days." ... the governor spent more and more time with the Báb. "I feel a great happiness flooding my life," he told the Báb..."but I am apprehensive for You..." "Fear not," the Báb assured him..."Of My own will have I chosen to be afflicted by My enemies that God might accomplish the thing destined to be done." Manúchihr Khán was satisfied with these words...he had not spent his own days on earth in vain. He had met and believed in the Promised One...had not been stopped by his own learning, nor...been blinded by his own wealth. Serene and confident, he died three months and nine days later after a slight fever.” Sears, Release the Sun, ch 9

On Manúchihr Khán's pathway towards becoming a Bábi, he sincerely investigated the truth, recognized the Báb's godliness, and became a follower. He was a completely devoted Bábi, laying his most valuable resources in front of the Báb; his offering to teach was “more precious” to the Báb than his actions would have been. Manúchihr Khán's noble plans were not in alignment with God's plan; instead, God blessed him with the honor of his service and nearness to the Báb for several months. His sudden death and the Báb's guidance prevented him from using his influence to change the course of the Báb's martyrdom; without these, he may well have succeeded in converting the royals of Persia and beyond. This would have extended the Bábi Faith and the Adamic era's imposition of religion by authorities, dampening the impact of the Bahá'í era's free will to choose God. God's greater plans are predestined, but individuals have the free will to choose between good and evil, and we are accountable for those choices. Thus, the pathways of our lives are not completely predetermined and “captive”, however the “stillness or motion” that determines so much in our lives is “conditioned upon the aid of God.”

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God – knowledge, volition, action**

**God's reciprocal love ; free will to choose “true liberty” in “servitude unto God” ; Four Valleys' destinations of nearness**

*Although God created human beings “in His own image” and with free will, we were clearly created as subordinates, with our own free will to choose to become one of His servants. Saintly Bahá'ís accept this servitude and are on God-focused paths towards a sanctified nearness, thus receiving the divine bestowals of God's special reciprocal love.*

“Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O **servant**.” Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, #A5

“The journeys in the pathway of love are reckoned as four: From the creatures to the True One; from the True One to the creatures; from the creatures to the creatures; from the True One to the True One.” Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, the Valley of Unity

*The nature of God's reciprocal love can be seen in Bahá'u'lláh's brief description of a journey of love towards God, “from the creatures to the True One.” People who do not love God may live happy, loving, worldly lives with love “from the creatures to the creatures”; believers also have this pathway of love with God's creation. God's love permeates all of creation “from the True One to the creatures”, but there is a special reciprocal bond of love between God and His believers “from creatures to the True One” and “from the True One to the creatures.” Those who do not love God deeply do not have this bond, but they also do not need to pay the price, which is servitude to God.*

“Agency...The capacity of an individual to actively and independently choose and to affect change; free will or self-determination.” *sociologydictionary.org*, 2023

*Sociology's definition of “agency” combines free will with an active self-determination that is a modern positive spin on the concept of rugged individualism. Bahá'u'lláh's experiences of suffering led Him to target society's injustices so that the Bahá'í era would allow individual agency within a social contract of justice and non-oppression. Thus, humanity will increasingly have the freedom to choose to become His servants on the spiritual pathway from their own free will decisions instead of from outside pressures.*

*Humanity's own attempts to describe the meaning of life may be uplifting, but have earthly limitations. America's Declaration of Independence proclaims that “all men are created equal” with the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”; but in 1776, these “equal” men were only property owning, white adult males, excluding: women, Blacks, American Indians, slaves, indentured servants, the poor, and children. Even if America's rights become inclusive, they reflect a temporal worldliness that falls far short of a heavenly eternal life with the “true liberty” and joy that comes from turning away from worldliness to choose to serve God and experience God's reciprocal love.*

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that **all men are created equal**, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness**.” Thomas Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence*, 1776

“**Liberty** must, in the end, lead to **sedition**, whose flames none can quench... **Happy** is the man that hath apprehended the **Purpose of God**...”

The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in **complete servitude unto God**” Bahá'u'lláh, *The Most Holy Book*, par 125

*Nearness to God can be described with a Four Valleys approach. During the Manifestations' lifetimes, it was possible to be physically close to God – today, Valley 1 physical nearness is possible through pilgrimage. Similarly, during the Manifestation's lifetimes, Valley 3 nearness was possible through bonds of love and friendship, even with physical separation – today, nearness through love is possible with the bond of God's reciprocal love. Valley 2 nearness comes by fulfilling our purpose “to know” God, which may be direct through acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh or indirect through knowing God's creation – the summit of Valley 2 nearness is “perfect knowledge”. Valley 4 nearness is internal, with nearness coming from the personal transformation of worldly qualities into godly qualities – this nearness of being has a societal aspect which is driven by progressive revelation, where humanity becomes increasingly like God with escalating qualities of godliness. So, there are various spiritual and secular paths that lead to different types of nearness to God. Humanity's collective efforts towards God contribute to our “ever-advancing civilization” of material and spiritual evolutionary growth.*

*The different paths of the servant believers lead to different destinations of nearness. These heavenly locales reflect the individual's commonality with their fellow believers, their individual uniqueness, and God's varied attributes. Bahá'u'lláh describes levels of nearness in *The Seven Valleys* as “stages that mark the wayfarer's journey from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland” and in *The Four Valleys* where He names the nearness goals of each valley's archetype: “the goal of the Intended One (Maqsúd) [1]... the Praiseworthy One (Mahmúd) [2]... the Attracting One (Majdhúb) [3]... the Beloved One (Mahbúb) [4].” Likewise, each ADJ archetype will have heavenly destinations which are both common with their fellow archetypes and have allowances for their individual conditions and their unique paths.*

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God**

**“the greatest attainment...is nearness to God” ; pathways to nearness ; developing the capacity for nearness**

“The heart is a divine trust; **cleanse** it **from the stain of self-love**, adorn it with the coronal of **pure intent**, until the sacred honor, the abiding greatness of this illustrious nation [*Persia*] may shine out like the true morning in an auspicious heaven... Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and like the chosen ones of God, vie with his fellows in service to the good of all.” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, closing lines, 1875

**“The greatest attainment in the world of humanity is nearness to God.** Every lasting glory, honor, grace and beauty which comes to man comes through nearness to God... But nearness to God is not an easy accomplishment... Divine nearness is dependent upon attainment to the knowledge of God, upon severance from all else save God. It is contingent upon self-sacrifice and...forfeiting wealth and worldly possessions.

“It is made possible through the baptism of...the water of life, which is **knowledge**, and...the Holy **Spirit** and the fire of the **love** of the Kingdom [*Valleys 2, 4, and 3*]. Until he attains these **three degrees**, **nearness to God** is not possible. This is the process by which the Bahá’ís of Persia have attained it. They gave their lives for this station, sacrificed honor, comfort and possessions, [*sacrifice of Valley 1*] hastened with the utmost joy to the place of martyrdom; their blood was spilled, their bodies were tortured and destroyed, their homes pillaged, their children carried into captivity. They endured all these conditions joyfully and willingly. Through such sacrifice nearness to God is made possible. [*martyrs*]

“...this nearness is not dependent upon time or place. Nearness to God is dependent upon purity of the heart and exhilaration of the spirit through the glad tidings of the Kingdom... The more pure and sanctified the heart of man becomes, the nearer it draws to God, and the light of the Sun of Reality is revealed within it. This light sets hearts aglow with the fire of the **love of God**, opens in them the doors of **knowledge** and unseals the divine mysteries so that spiritual discoveries are made possible. All the Prophets have drawn near to God through severance. We must emulate those Holy Souls and **renounce our own wishes and desires**. We must purify ourselves from the mire and soil of earthly contact until our hearts become as mirrors in clearness and the light of the most great guidance reveals itself in them... [*saints*]

“nearness to God is possible through devotion to Him...and service to humanity;...by unity with mankind and through loving-kindness to all; it is dependent upon investigation of truth, acquisition of praiseworthy virtues, service in the cause of universal peace and personal sanctification... nearness to God necessitates sacrifice of self, severance and the giving up of all to Him. Nearness is likeness [*saintly pathway*]... the sun shines upon all creation, but only surfaces that are pure and polished can reflect its glory and light... Green and living trees can absorb the bounty of the sun; dead roots and withered branches are destroyed by it.” “the soil of self...does not produce [*spiritual*] growth”

“man must seek capacity and develop readiness. As long as he lacks susceptibility to divine influences, he is incapable of reflecting the light and assimilating its benefits...[so] the beauties and bounties of God cannot penetrate... the **blessed souls who are attentive...will advance** day by day toward full fruition, yea **even to the Supreme Concourse**... attainment [*is*] dependent upon capacity. Unless capacity is developed, the summons of the Kingdom cannot reach the ear, the light of the Sun of Truth will not be observed, and the fragrances of the rose garden of inner significance will be lost. Let us endeavor to attain capacity, susceptibility and worthiness that we may hear the call..., hoist the standard of the oneness of humanity, establish human brotherhood, and...attain the everlasting and eternal life.”

“O Lord! Bestow Thy gracious aid and confirmation upon this just government [*USA*]. This country lieth beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy protection and this people is in Thy service... Suffer this esteemed nation to be held in honor and enable it to be admitted into Thy kingdom.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, 26 May 1912, Mount Morris Baptist Church, New York City



(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God ; knowledge, volition, action**  
**humanity's evolution towards God - from “captives” in God's creation to the creators of the Bahá'í era**

God created humanity “to know” and “to worship” Him with a physical body in the material universe and a transcendental mind, heart, and soul in the spiritual universe. God graced humanity with this duality beyond our animal predecessors who were “captives” to their material world, so we could use our god-like spiritual capacities to grow, both internally/spiritually towards Him and also externally/materially, developing our ever-advancing, heaven on earth, civilization. This internal personal spiritual growth and external societal growth parallels “to know” and “to worship”; these dualities are the basic principles underlying the inner and outer aspects of the Double Crusade.

God constantly tests us in both “captive” and free choice matters. Most of our pre-historic and Adamic era ancestors lived under difficult survival conditions as “captives” of their bodies' needs and their environments. Humanity's progress beyond “captive” conditions required both material and spiritual advances to create the infrastructures that have liberated many from dire ‘basic needs’ conditions to a physical freedom with a multitude of choices. Continued advances will create increasingly secure material conditions, allowing us more time to address our higher ‘psychological’ and ‘self-fulfillment needs’, to grow more mature and more godly. Under these Bahá'í era conditions, God's tests for us will transition, from material ‘basic needs’ to more spiritual ‘psychological’ and ‘self-fulfillment’ tests; the Double Crusade's three weapons exemplify these new tests.

“the wayfarers in the wilderness of search and longing, of attainment and reunion, have numerous degrees and countless stations. Some, after spiritual struggle and physical toil, ascend from the lower reaches of “no God is there” [abased path of the material pathway] to the lofty bowers of “but God” [saintly path of the spiritual pathway], flee from the shadow of negation to abide in the limitless realm of affirmation...

This is the uttermost limit of the realm of effort and striving.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Call of the Divine Beloved, From the Letter Bá' to the Letter Há', par 2-3

God created us to exist and to grow in humanity's interconnected material and spiritual spectrum with “countless stations”. Thus, civilization keeps advancing in complexity and diversity, both materially and spiritually. Humanity's material and spiritual pathways have broadened to encompass a widening array of free will choices between the worldly and the godly. The Adamic era's simpler binary knowledge and choice between “good and evil”, and life or death, is expanding into the Bahá'í world civilization's body of universal “perfect knowledge”, with a deeper grasp of the “true knowledge...of God” with many free will choice options of good, evil, or the intermediate areas between.

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“Jesus answering said..., ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.’ ” Holy Bible KJV, Mark 12:17

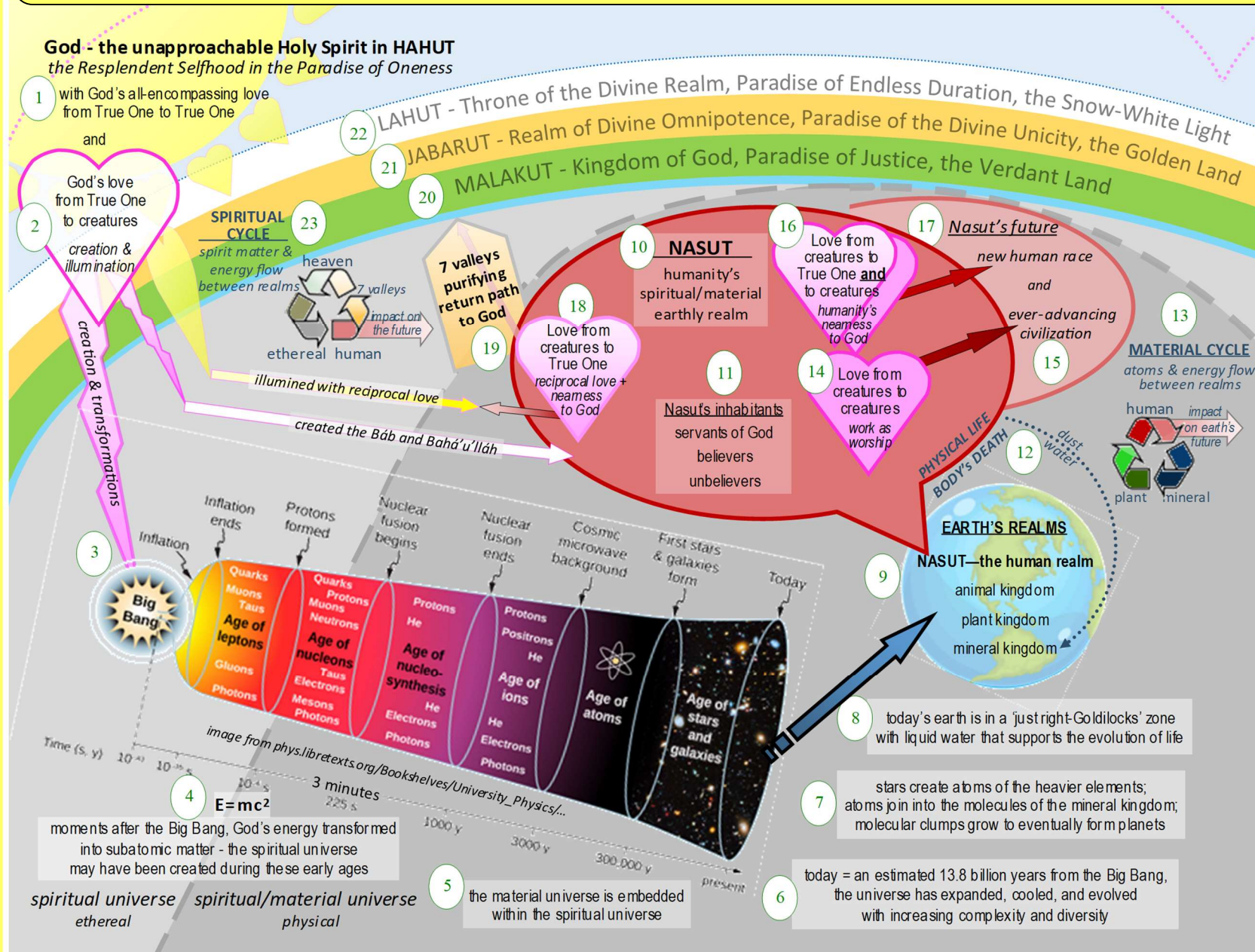
“Thou art My dominion... Thou art My light... Thou art My glory... thou art My robe...” Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, #A14

People on materialistic pathways often gravitate towards their own material best interests and desires, choosing the path which they feel most benefits and validates their base selves. Societies have developed along many self-interests, such as food security, with group-interests that may create material prosperity and social order. “Human betterment” requires an element of spirituality, so these material advancements also have a spiritual basis. Like people, societies exist in an ambiguous intermediate area with a blend of both the material and the spiritual. Most peoples are on an intermediate path, choosing the worldly security of their societies and reinforcing their culture's box of both “good and evil” norms; these intermediate wayfarers often provide societal stability. To attain the spiritual pathway, the wayfarer turns away from humanity's ambiguous murky areas to work towards godliness and servitude to God; these spiritual wayfarers help drive change and spiritual advances, which are vitally needed in today's Formative Age.

“Virtues...we acquire just as we acquire craft, by having first activated them...; we become builders...by building and we become harpists by playing the harp. Similarly...we become just by doing just actions, temperate by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions.” Aristotle, Ethics

The Double Crusader's journey on the spiritual pathway requires them to distinguish between “good and evil” within their own cultures, and the volition to choose and actions to practice “good”. Double Crusaders rework their box of inherited cultural norms into their own new box of Bahá'í behavior, transforming their cultural “evils” into virtues while retaining their culture's “good” qualities. To cleanse themselves of the unholy mire that accumulates from directly facing and battling “evil”, Double Crusaders must often connect with God. A recent study\* shows that gratitude and altruism are linked, both in personal behavior and in activating the same region of the brain. Thankfulness towards God helps align us with God's Will; so, we may regard difficulties as tests between ourselves and God, instead of between us and the created. A believer's thankfulness and true submission to God creates a stainless spiritual armor that resists spiritual attacks, allowing them to continue serving God and humanity during challenging times.

(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God ; knowledge, volition, action**  
**humanity's pathway within universal evolution\* ; the four pathways of love ; spiritual and material cycles**



ADJ in 2020 describes divine justice with a science and religion approach\*\* that may give an understanding beyond our normal points of view so we may better see our divine purpose.

Part 5's ADJ in 2020 is summarized with this diagram, which shows the transformative flow of God's divine love from the pre-existent Hahut to the spiritual universe, and then to humanity on earth in the material universe.

After death, our souls cross spiritual valleys to return to God in heaven in a universal spiritual cycle. Our bodies return to earth in a similar material cycle. Each realm has its own cycles of birth, growth, and death; the cycles fuel evolution and change. This balanced growth of the universe expresses God's divine justice and love of the created.



(optional) **ADJ in 2020 – DOUBLE CRUSADE: Growth towards Nearness to God ; knowledge, volition, action**

**“be as I am” – ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Perfect Exemplar as a Servant of Bahá’u’lláh**

“Pray that your hearts may be cut from yourselves and from the world, that you may be confirmed by the Holy Spirit and filled with the fire of the love of God. The nearer you are to the light, the further you are from the darkness; the nearer you are to heaven, the further you are from the earth; the nearer you are to God, the further you are from the world... I give you a commandment...that ye have faith...As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the balance--this is the balance.”

“Then He [*‘Abdu’l-Bahá*] arose and bade us follow Him. He led us into the next room, and there...was the portrait of Bahá’u’lláh...[and] also the picture of His Highness the Bab... ‘Abdu’l-Bahá turned...and raising His voice in a tone so poignant that it pierced every heart...and said:

‘Now the time has come when we must part, but the separation is only of our bodies, in spirit we are united. Ye are the lights which shall be diffused; ye are the waves of that sea which shall spread and overflow the world. Each wave is precious to Me and My nostrils shall be gladdened by our fragrance. Another commandment I give unto you, that ye **love one another even as I love you**.

Great mercy and blessings are promised to the peoples of your land, but on one condition: that their hearts are filled with the fire of love, that they live in perfect kindness and harmony like one soul in different bodies. If they fail in this condition the great blessings will be deferred. Never forget this;

**look at one another with the eyes of perfection; look at Me, follow Me, be as I am; take no thought for yourselves or your lives, whether ye eat or whether we sleep, whether we are comfortable, whether we are well or ill, whether ye are with friends or foes, whether ye receive praise or blame; for all of these things we must care not at all.**

**Look at Me and be as I am; ye must die to yourselves and to the world, so shall ye be born again and enter the Kingdom of Heaven.**

Behold a candle and how it gives its light. It weeps its life away drop by drop in order to give forth its flame of light.’

“When He had finished speaking we were led gently away by the members of the Holy Family, and for a moment it seemed that we were dying; but our Master never removed His compassionate gaze from our faces, until we could see Him no longer, for our tears. Then we were clasped one after the other in the arms of the Holy Family, and the hearts were wrung, and it seemed as if all the cords of life were breaking; until, as we drove away from the home of our Heavenly Father, suddenly His spirit came to us, a great strength and tranquillity filled our souls, the grief of the bodily separation was turned into the joy of spiritual union.”

May Maxwell, *An Early Pilgrimage*, 1917

*In ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s farewell address to the first contingent of North American pilgrims, he stated three principles which are at the foundation of the Double Crusade.*

*He urged the pilgrims to turn towards God and to turn away from worldliness – this is the essence of the Double Crusade’s second weapon of chastity, purity, and holiness.*

*He commanded the pilgrims to have “faith”, with the promise that their deeper faith would be balanced by divine “powers and blessings” – this describes the workings of the divine justice which underlies the fairness and equity of the Double Crusade’s first weapon of rectitude.*

*He commanded the pilgrims to “love one another even as I love you” – this is the “genuine love” of the Double Crusade’s third weapon of true unity.*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá also told the Bahá’ís to “be as I am”, an exemplary Servant of Bahá’u’lláh. As Bahá’ís approach God, they transform their worldly personalities and missions to align with God’s attributes and will; at the highest levels, they become God’s servant instruments. It is in this way that the collective body of the Bahá’ís combine to form an orchestral unity in diversity as instruments of the Cause of God, with the most saintly ones being the most in tune and aligned with the Divine Conductor.*

*Part 5’s “ADJ in 2020” provides a foundation for Part 6, which examines “chaste, pure, and holy” within Bahá’í history. Part 7 directly addresses some North American chastity issues.*