

Part III presents additional background on the Tablet of the Holy Mariner, with Bau’s extended analyses and individual interpretations. Those who are studying the Tablet at this level should also read the Tablet of the Holy Mariner commentaries from the other authors (Taherzadeh, Sours, Samandari, etc.) to get a more well-rounded view of the Tablet. Some readers will find this material tedious, while others will be fascinated... to each their own and proceed (or not) as appropriate!

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Optional - Audio. If you enjoyed the audio backgrounds, you may want to select appropriate background music for your individual study of Part III.
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8) THEMES AND SYMBOLS FROM SCRIPTURES

The Arabic Tablet of the Holy Mariner was revealed in a marvelous symbolic language; those who are not familiar with the meanings of the symbols will not perceive the underlying messages.

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“Bahá’u’lláh’s writings are full of symbolism, mostly in the form of metaphors and similes based on well-known religious themes, places, and personages. This is especially so with the Tablet of the Holy Mariner... Without knowledge of the various ancient scriptural stories to which Bahá’u’lláh is alluding, the Tablet would appear far more cryptic than it is. Bahá’u’lláh said that sacred writings often have many meanings, but there is no reason to confuse this with the idea that they can have arbitrary meaning...”

“The Tablet of the Holy Mariner contains numerous symbols... [which] fall within basic groups with known scriptural antecedents... Hebrew scriptures... folklore... Christian and Islamic sources... the writings of the Báb... the poetry of the mystics [and Bahá’u’lláh’s other writings]. Yet to the modern reader raised in a secular society, these symbols may only be recollected vaguely and their rich theological associations completely unknown... It is not only the symbols themselves that have importance, the new retelling must also be appreciated. The more familiar the listener is with the original symbols, the easier it is to detect the nuances of the new message.

“Many of the symbols... are derived from... Jewish tradition and scripture... Since each of these symbols is already rich with associations, their use allowed Bahá’u’lláh to put volumes of meaning into concise expressions. In some cases, there are aspects of the original symbols that are not expressed openly in the Tablet, but which contain keys to understanding the meaning. For example, the motive of jealousy and the act of betrayal are nowhere stated explicitly in the Tablet, but in the quranic and biblical account of the fall of the angels (and in particular the angel Lucifer), pride and jealousy are major aspects of the accounts. Anyone familiar with these accounts would probably have recognized the underlying suggestions in Bahá’u’lláh’s words.”

Sours, An Illustrated Guide, pp.43-46.

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JUDEO-CHRISTIAN-ISLAMIC. The Arabic Tablet contains several unmistakable references to ancient Hebrew stories which were retold in the Quran. The stories of Noah, Moses, and Joseph were briefly described in Part II. Knowing the stories directly from the scriptures allows for a deeper appreciation of the Tablet.

Main Symbols and Scriptural Antecedents

Symbol	Scripture
1. The ark of eternity	Noah’s ark: See Qur’an 11:36-49, 26:119 and Genesis, chapters 6-8. Ark of the covenant: See Exodus 25:10-22, 40:1-38.
2. The expulsion of the angels	The fall of Iblis or Lucifer: See Isaiah 14:12-15, Qur’an 2:32; 38:74-78. Also related to this symbolism: The guardian angels Cherubim: See Qur’an 2:97-98, 50:17-18, Genesis 3:24 Exodus 25:18-22, and Psalm 91:11. The angelic concourse The hosts of heaven: For examples see Qur’an 35:1, 42:5, 79:1-5; Deuteronomy 4:19, 1 Kings 22:19, Nehemiah 9:6.
3. The flame within the deathless tree	The Sinai episode in the Book of Exodus, in particular, the burning bush encountered by Moses. See Qur’an 27:7-14, 28:29-32. For parallel in Bible see Exodus, chapter 3 and 4:6-7. See also Genesis 3:2-4, Revelation 22:2.
4. The Maid of Heaven	The female personification of wisdom: Proverbs 9:1-6 and especially the Apocryphal books of The Wisdom of Solomon, chapters 6-10 and Ecclesiasticus, chapters 1, 4:11-19, 6:18-31, and 24.
5. The robe and fragrance of the Beloved Youth	The story of Joseph: Qur’an 12:4-101. For parallel in Bible, see Genesis, chapters 37-48.

Sours, An Illustrated Guide, p.45.

CONNECTIONS TO BAHÁ’U’LLÁH’S OTHER WRITINGS

“In the broad context of Bahá’u’lláh’s writings, the Tablet of the Holy Mariner belongs to the early period in both date and content. Prior to 1863, Bahá’u’lláh’s most important and well-known writings – such as the Book of Certitude, the Hidden Words, the Seven Valleys, the Four Valleys – focus on the individual’s search, the necessary spiritual and ethical discipline required for that search, and instruction in how to understand certain central spiritual truths... After 1863, Bahá’u’lláh’s most well-known writings – his Tablets to various monarchs and religious leaders, the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Bishárát, Tajalliyát, Tarázát, and others – continue many of these themes but with an expanding emphasis on the well being of the community of believers and the world as a whole. These writings concerning the oneness of humankind, religious toleration, and various teachings aimed at bringing about collective security for all humankind.”

Sours, An Illustrated Guide, 2002, p.83.

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Kitáb-i-Íqán/Book of Certitude – The Tablet of the Holy Mariner has been compared to the Kitáb-i-Íqán (the Book of Certitude, revealed by Bahá’u’lláh in 1862) which is a “comprehensive exposition of the nature and purpose of religion.” It

was Bahá'u'lláh's response to four questions presented by Khál-i-Akbar, the "Greatest Uncle" who raised the Báb and who became a Bábí (and a devoted follower of Bahá'u'lláh) only after receiving the Kitáb-i-Íqán. It was translated by Shoghi Effendi and first published in English in 1931.

"As you know, the Tablet of the Holy Mariner conveys a message using allegory or symbolic narrative. But what might it look like if it was written in an expository way instead? In many ways it might look very much like the Íqán. The Íqán follows the same outline, but without the use of pure allegory and in much greater detail. For example, a few parallels are:

1. The Íqán begins with the ocean voyage metaphor.
2. Bahá'u'lláh is the mariner/expositor guiding us through the waters of past revelations to the summit of understanding.
3. Those cast out who try to be more than they really are, are the clergy who failed to understand the scriptures and denied the Manifestations, and especially Karim Khán (discussed in part 2 of the Íqán). In the Tablet of the Holy Mariner there is the meteor, in the Íqán, the exposition of the Matthew 24, the stars (clergy) failing from heaven.
4. The handmaiden's search for the faithful is mirrored in part 2, the quest of the true seeker.
5. The seemingly gloomy ending of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner is likewise repeated in the Íqán:

'We perceive none, however, amongst the people of the earth who, sincerely yearning for the Truth, seeketh the guidance of the divine Manifestations concerning the abstruse matters of his Faith. All are dwellers in the land of oblivion, and all are followers of the people of wickedness and rebellion. God will verily do unto them that which they themselves are doing, and will forget them even as they have ignored His Presence in His day. Such is His decree unto those that have denied Him, and such will it be unto them that have rejected His signs.' (Íqán 256-7)"

Sours, Wilmette Institute – Tablet of the Holy Mariner: faculty notes, 1999, bahai-library.com.

“Maiden Tablets” – Tablet of the Immortal Youth – As mentioned in Part II, Bahá'u'lláh had recurring mystical visions of a heavenly maiden which started in the Sáyáh-Chál in 1852. Many of Bahá'u'lláh's tablets which feature the maiden, sometimes referred to as the “hourí tablets” or “maiden tablets,” do not have authorized translations. Most of Bahá'u'lláh's writings contained messages to various recipients, but the “maiden tablets”, such as the Tablet of the Holy Mariner, seem to be a connected series of divine messages revealed specifically for Bahá'u'lláh Himself. At the end of the Tablet of the Maiden (revealed before 1863), Bahá'u'lláh wanted to know the meaning of His intimate vision, so these visions were mysterious to Him as well as tantalizing. Several provisional translations of and commentaries on the “maiden tablets” are available online at bahai-library.com.

Bahá'u'lláh's earlier “maiden tablets” describe a yearning for the maiden and a mutual adoration, as seen in the excerpt of the Tablet of the Maiden on page K. His later “maiden tablets” do not have the aching desire, but still express a longing and a loving mutual adoration, as seen in the Tablet of Carmel below. If the Sáyáh-Chál maiden is the same as the Mount Carmel maiden, the changing tone of communication sounds like a burning romance which led to an ardently loving marriage.

“Seized with transports of joy, and raising high her voice, she thus exclaimed: ‘May my life be a sacrifice to Thee, inasmuch as Thou hast fixed Thy gaze upon me, hast bestowed upon me Thy bounty, and hast directed towards me Thy steps. Separation from Thee, O Thou Source of everlasting life, hath well nigh consumed me, and my remoteness from Thy presence hath burned away my soul. All praise be to Thee for having enabled me to hearken to Thy call, for having honoured me with Thy footsteps, and for having quickened my soul through the vitalizing fragrance of Thy Day and the shrilling voice of Thy Pen...

“No sooner had her voice reached that most exalted Spot than We made reply: ‘Render thanks unto thy Lord, O Carmel. The fire of thy separation from Me was fast consuming thee, when the ocean of My presence surged before thy face, cheering thine eyes and those of all creation, and filling with delight all things visible and invisible. Rejoice, for God hath in this Day established upon thee His throne, hath made thee the dawning-place of His signs and the dayspring of the evidences of His Revelation.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of Carmel.

Bahá'u'lláh had three wives and had children with all of them: Navváb (Asíyih Khánum), married 1835; Mahd-i-'Ulyá (Fátimih Khánum), married 1849; and Gawhar Khánum, married ~1862. Islam allows up to four wives, and it was customary for prominent men of that time and place to have more than one wife. The Kitáb-i-Aqdas (completed in 1873) allows two wives but indicates a preference for monogamy. Bahá'u'lláh's first wife and her children were the “Holy Family” of the Bahá'í Faith, but His other two wives and their children broke the Covenant after His death.

The Tablet of the Immortal Youth, is a recently translated “maiden tablet” that resembles the form and content of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner; beginning with Arabic poetry with refrains and ending with Persian prose. Although the Tablet of the Immortal Youth was revealed on the anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb in ~1862, which was around the time of Bahá'u'lláh marriage to His third wife and in the year before Bahá'u'lláh's own Declaration, the identity of the Youth is clearly Bahá'u'lláh, since verse 7 describes the face of Bahá'u'lláh.

“Upon His right cheek was a mark whose sight caused every man of understanding to waver in his faith. And they that dwell behind the veil of the Unseen exclaimed: ‘Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty secret.’ ”

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of the Immortal Youth, Days of Remembrance, 2016, p132.

In this Tablet, the heavenly “Maid of beauty” unveils the Youth (see verses 21-36 below), so this Tablet has been interpreted as a preview of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration. Brides are traditionally unveiled at their wedding ceremonies, so Bau interprets the unveiling of the Youth as describing Bahá'u'lláh's “wedding” with the “Maid of beauty” who represents Bahá'u'lláh's “Cause of God” and was Bahá'u'lláh's “fourth wife”; in other words - He “married the Church.” Under this interpretation, Bahá'u'lláh's apparent approval of bigamy in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas becomes monogamy for the “true believer” who is “married to the Bahá'í Faith” and is therefore only allowed one physical spouse.

“Written partly in Arabic and partly in Persian, is the Tablet of Ghulámu'l-Khuld (The Youth of Paradise). It is a very beautiful Tablet, and was revealed by Bahá'u'lláh to celebrate the anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb. Filled with imagery and allegorical language, it conveys clearly the glad-tidings of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. Alluding to Himself in symbolic terms, He announces the unveiling of His Beauty, glorifies His own Revelation, identifies Himself as the Word upon which depended the souls of all the Prophets of God and His chosen ones, declares to all His companions that He Who was hidden from the eyes of men has now come, asserts that through His coming a breath of life has been wafted over all created things, invites His true lovers to come forward and become united with their Beloved, exhorts them to purify their hearts so that they may be acceptable in His presence, and counsels them to rid themselves of every attachment to this world and to cast away their vain imaginings and superstitions.

“Also in this Tablet Bahá'u'lláh testifies to the loftiness of the station of the Báb and affirms that He is the Point from which all knowledge has been generated.”

Taberzadeh, Revelation-Vol. 1, pp.213-214.

- 21 She advanced, arrayed with a rare and glorious adorning, till she stood face to face before the Youth. Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with enchanting grace.
- 22 From beneath her veil she drew forth her hand, golden tinged as a sunbeam falling upon the face of a stainless mirror. Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with a resplendent adorning.
- 23 Her incomparable ruby fingers seized the hem of the veil that hid the face of the Youth—Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with a mighty glance—
- 24 And drew it back, whereupon the pillars of the Throne on high were made to tremble. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.
- 25 Then did the spirits of all created things part from their bodies. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.
- 26 And the inmates of Paradise rent their garments asunder as they caught a lightning glimpse of His ancient and shining countenance. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with an effulgent light.
- 27 At that moment the Voice of the Eternal was heard from beyond the veil of clouds with a sweet and enchanting call. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty enchantment.
- 28 And from the source of God's inscrutable decree the Tongue of the Unseen proclaimed: “By God! The like of this Youth the eyes of the former generations have never beheld.” Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.
- 29 And the maids of holiness cried out from the chambers of exalted dominion. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with manifest sovereignty.
- 30 By God! This is that Youth Whose beauty is the ardent desire of the celestial Concourse. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.
- 31 Then did the Youth lift up His head to the concourse of heavenly angels—Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty spirit—
- 32 And gave voice to a single word, whereupon the denizens of heaven arose, one and all, to a new life. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty trumpet blast.
- 33 He looked then upon the inhabitants of the earth with a wondrous glance. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty glance.
- 34 And with that glance He gathered them together each and all. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.
- 35 With another look He signalled to a chosen few, then repaired to His habitation in the everlasting Paradise. And this, truly, is a mighty cause!
- 36 The Herald of Eternity proclaimeth from his cloud-wrapped throne: O ye that wait expectant in the vale of patience and fidelity! O ye that long to soar in the atmosphere of nearness and reunion! The celestial Youth, hidden ere now within the inviolable treasuries of God, hath appeared, even as the Sun of Reality and the Eternal Spirit, from the Dawning-Place of changeless splendour, adorned with the ornament of the Almighty and the beauty of the All-Praised. He hath rescued all who are in heaven and on earth from the perils of death and extinction, clothed them in the garment of true and everlasting existence, and bestowed upon them a new life.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of the Immortal Youth

Optional – Review The full Tablet of the Immortal Youth published in Days of Remembrance (2016) pages 131-137.

Lawh-i-Hawdaj/ Tablet of the Howdajh – Bahá'u'lláh referred to the Tablet of the Holy Mariner several months after His declaration in the Tablet of the Howdajh. The Tablet of the Howdajh affirms Sour's physical interpretation of the first part of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner, which describes a journey across various seas and lands.

“Sighting from His howdah the Black Sea, as He approached the port of Samsun, Bahá'u'lláh, at the request of Mírzá Áqá Ján, revealed a Tablet, designated Lawh-i-Hawdaj (Tablet of the Howdah), which by such allusions as the “Divine Touchstone,” “the grievous and tormenting mischief,” reaffirmed and supplemented the dire predictions recorded in the recently revealed Tablet of the Holy Mariner.”

Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p157.

“Bahá'u'lláh on many occasions had warned His companions of their fate and of the calamities which would befall them in future. Now He predicted dire afflictions in the Lawh-i-Hawdaj (Tablet of the Howdah) revealed in Arabic in the port of Samsun on His way to Constantinople... As far as we know this was the first Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh after He left Baghdád. In it He referred to the forthcoming voyage by sea and stated that it had been foreshadowed in the Tablet of the Holy Mariner. Thus he linked the Tablet of Hawdaj with the Holy Mariner and mentioned that the study of these two Tablets would enable the believers to understand the mysteries of the Cause of God and become strong in faith. The dire predictions already foreshadowed in the Tablet of the Holy Mariner would come to pass, He affirmed, and He further warned His companions of the 'grievous and tormenting mischief' which would assail them from every direction, and would act as a divine touchstone through which the faith of every one would be severely tested and truth separated from falsehood.”

Taberzadeh, Revelation-Vol. 2, pp.6-7.

Here is an excerpt from a provisional translation of the Tablet of the Howdajh which can be found online at: <http://bahaiprovisionaltablets.blogspot.com/2018/03/tablet-of-howdah-lawh-i-hawdajsamsun-by.html>.

“O Holy Mariner! (ya mallāh al-quds) The promise hath come to pass just as We promised thee through a sure and knowing Tongue... And Thou, O Ark of the Cause! Transport them! Embark across the Ocean with the permission of God, the Mighty, the Powerful.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of the Howdah, provisional translation by S. Lambden

Tablet of the Temple – The Tablet of the Holy Mariner is similar to the individual Tablet of the Temple in many ways. The Tablet of the Holy Mariner was revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in 1863 and is associated with His Declaration to His fellow Bábis at Ridván. Likewise, the Tablet of the Temple, initially revealed in 1866 after the Most Great Separation, is one of Bahá'u'lláh's most significant writings related to His Proclamation to the peoples of the world. Thus, the Tablet of the Temple can be interpreted as part of the prophecy in the Arabic Tablet's verses 27-29, where the Maid of Heaven's radiant light illuminates heaven and earth, which occurs after the meteor cast out Mírzá Yahya from the presence of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Tablet of the Temple's first complete and authorized English translation was published in The Summons of the Lord of Hosts in 2002. There are some famous aspects of this tablet that many Bahá'ís are familiar with (mentioned below). The entire Tablet of the Temple, is a composed of six sections; the first section is considered to be the individual Tablet of the

Temple and has a mystical style that is similar to the Tablet of the Holy Mariner, the other sections are addressed to world leaders and are not studied in this deepening. Some verses from the Tablet of the Temple are shown below.

Súriy-i-Haykal

*This is the Súrih of the Temple which God hath ordained to be the Mirror of His Names
between the heavens and the earth, and the Sign of His Remembrance amidst the peoples of the world.*

He is the Most Wondrous, the All-Glorious!

- 1 Glorified is He Who hath revealed His verses to those who understand. Glorified is He Who sendeth down His verses to those who perceive. Glorified is He Who guideth whomsoever He pleaseth unto His path. Say: I, verily, am the Path of God unto all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth; well is it with them that hasten thereunto!
- 2 Glorified is He Who sendeth down His verses to those who comprehend. Glorified is He Who speaketh forth from the Kingdom of His Revelation, and Who remaineth unknown to all save His honoured servants. Glorified is He Who quickeneth whomsoever He willeth by virtue of His word "Be", and it is! Glorified is He Who causeth whomsoever He willeth to ascend unto the heaven of grace, and sendeth down therefrom whatsoever He desireth according to a prescribed measure.
- 3 Blessed is He Who doeth as He willeth by a word of His command. He, verily, is the True One, the Knower of things unseen. Blessed is He Who inspireth whomsoever He willeth with whatsoever He desireth, through His irresistible and inscrutable command...
- 6 While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice, calling above My head. Turning My face, I beheld a Maiden—the embodiment of the remembrance of the name of My Lord—suspended in the air before Me. So rejoiced was she in her very soul that her countenance shone with the ornament of the good pleasure of God, and her cheeks glowed with the brightness of the All-Merciful. Betwixt earth and heaven she was raising a call which captivated the hearts and minds of men. She was imparting to both My inward and outer being tidings which rejoiced My soul, and the souls of God’s honoured servants.
- 7 Pointing with her finger unto My head, she addressed all who are in heaven and all who are on earth, saying: By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive. This is He Whose Presence is the ardent desire of the denizens of the Realm of eternity, and of them that dwell within the Tabernacle of glory, and yet from His Beauty do ye turn aside...

100 O Temple of Divine Revelation! Sound the trumpet in My Name! O Temple of Divine mysteries! Raise the clarion call of Thy Lord, the Unconditioned, the Unconstrained! O Maid of Heaven! Step forth from the chambers of paradise and announce unto the people of the world: By the righteousness of God! He Who is the Best-Beloved of the worlds – He Who hath ever been the Desire of every perceiving heart, the Object of the adoration of all that are in heaven and on earth, and the Cynosure* of the former and the latter generations – is now come!

*cynosure = someone who is the center of attention and admiration

Bahá’u’lláh, Tablet of the Temple.

Some of the similarities between the Tablet of the Temple and the Arabic Tablet of the Holy Mariner are:

St. Ephrem. Just as the beginning of the Arabic Tablet of the Holy Mariner resembles St. Ephrem’s hymn on Noah and the Ark, the Tablet of the Temple’s first verses follow the form of some of St. Ephrem’s other hymns. The Tablet of the Temple begins with verses of “Glorified is He...” and “Blessed is He...” These verses sound like some of St. Ephrem’s Hymns on the Nativity (which are available in English from several online sources); hymns #15 - #17 contain recurring verses that start with “Blessed is He”, and most of the stanzas in hymn #2 start with wording similar to “Blessed is He” or “Glorified is He.” The nineteen Hymns on the Nativity start by testifying to Christ’s fulfillment of prophecy and touch on many subjects. The repeated “Blessed is He” format is also found in Bahá’u’lláh’s prayer which begins with “Many a chilled heart...”

Heavenly Maidens. Immediately after the final “Blessed is He” verse Bahá’u’lláh recounts His visitation at the Síyáh-Chál prison by a heavenly maiden, who appears and addresses heaven and earth. This is similar to the Tablet of the Holy Mariner’s maid of heaven and handmaiden; who appear and illuminate heaven and earth, and then speak. In the Tablet of the Temple, Bahá’u’lláh has “divine conversations” with a heavenly maiden starting with the Síyáh-Chál maiden in verse 6; at the end of the Tablet, the Maid of Heaven is summoned in verse 100 to make an illuminating announcement.

Bahá’u’lláh, the Bahá’í’s and the Bábis. The remainder of the individual Tablet of the Temple is composed of verses that include topics such as: a call to action to parts of Bahá’u’lláh’s human temple; praise for the steadfast believers - the Bahá’ís; and stern rebukes to Mírzá Yahyá and the Bábis. The Tablet of the Holy Mariner also contains a call to action to Bahá’u’lláh, praise for the believers and admonishments to the “claimants.” So, four years after the Tablet of the Holy Mariner, the individual Tablet of the Temple was revealed to serve a similar purpose; with similar styles, formats, and symbols.



9) OTHER TRANSLATIONS

“Bahá’u’lláh enjoyed a superb mastery of Arabic, and preferred to use it in those Tablets and other Writings where its precision of meaning...[and] the style employed is of an exalted and emotive character, immensely compelling, particularly to those familiar with the great literary tradition out of which it arose... Shoghi Effendi faced the challenge of finding an English style which would not only faithfully convey the exactness of the text’s meaning, but would also evoke in the reader the spirit of meditative reverence which is a distinguishing feature of response to the original. The form of expression he selected, reminiscent of the style...of the [King James] Bible, captures the elevated mode of Bahá’u’lláh’s Arabic, while remaining accessible to the contemporary reader. His translations, moreover, are illumined by his uniquely inspired understanding of the purport and implications of the originals.

“Although both Arabic and English are languages with rich vocabularies and varied modes of expression, their forms differ widely from one another... It is a characteristic of [the Arabic literary] style that if a connotation is obvious it should not be explicitly stated. This presents a problem for a reader whose cultural, religious and literary background is entirely different from that of Arabic. A literal translation of a passage which is clear in the Arabic could be obscure in English. It therefore becomes necessary to include in the English translation of such passages that element of the Arabic sentence which is obviously implicit in the original. At the same time, it is vital to avoid extrapolating this process to the point where it would add unjustifiably to the original or limit its meaning. Striking the right balance between beauty and clarity of expression on the one hand, and literalness on the other... has caused repeated reconsideration of the rendering of certain passages.”

Universal House of Justice, Introduction to The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 9-10.

“Bahá'u'lláh designated 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His eldest Son, as His Successor and the Interpreter of His Teachings. 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His turn appointed His eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, to succeed Him as interpreter of the holy Writ and Guardian of the Cause. The interpretations of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi are considered divinely guided and are binding on the Bahá'ís.”

note #130 to Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

“Shoghi Effendi served as the principal translator of the Bahá'í Writings. He had studied English from his early childhood and, as a young man, was able to continue his studies at the American University of Beirut and subsequently at Oxford University, where he remained until the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing in 1921. Since the major administrative bodies of the Faith during the first critical decades of the Guardianship were located in English-speaking countries, Shoghi Effendi's ability to express and interpret Bahá'í concepts in English provided an invaluable source of guidance to the Faith's new followers in the Western World. The Guardian's superlative command of language and meticulous choice of words set the standard for all Bahá'í translations to follow.”

www.bahai.org/shoghi-effendi/guidance-translations, 2017.

While Shoghi Effendi himself wrote that his translations were not final and would be subject to review in future (*Shoghi Effendi, letter of 14 August 1930*), his position as Guardian allowed him to make decisions about the authorized interpretation of a potentially ambiguous text at the same time that he was translating it into English. Because of this and because of the inherent ambiguity of Persian and Arabic rhetoric, which Shoghi Effendi felt had to be made more explicit in English translation, Ruhíyyih Rabbani (*The Priceless Pearl 202*) explains that this interpretive dimension made his translations an even clearer representation of the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh than the originals.

Craig Volker, Translating the Bahá'í Writings, Journal of Bahá'í Studies Vol. 2, number 3, 1990; bahai-library.com.

AN ALTERNATE TRANSLATION OF THE ARABIC TABLET – Another translation of the Arabic Tablet is shown on page M. This translation is by Cole, the same translator of the Persian Tablet on Page B. It is included this deepening because it appears to be closer to a literal translation than Shoghi Effendi's authorized version. Cole's translation of the Arabic Tablet is dated 1999-2012; 80-90 years after Shoghi Effendi's translation. The two pages are printed so that the verses can be studied side by side.

Translator's note: I have striven for a happy medium between a literal...translation and a rendering that seems idiomatic and flows in English.

Cole, Tablet of the Holy Mariner, Provisional Translations, bahai-library.com, 1999-2012.

Optional - Review the condensed version of Cole's alternate translation of the Arabic Tablet on page N.

Note these differences between Cole's and Shoghi Effendi's translations:

Verse 2 – The word “new” is in Cole's translation, but not in Shoghi Effendi's. When Shoghi Effendi translated the Tablet in 1921, Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration had happened over 50 years ago in 1863, so was no longer “new”.

Verse 9 – Cole's translation mentions “sandals”; while Shoghi Effendi's does not. Taking off sandals on “holy ground” is a part of the Moses story in the Bible's Exodus 3.5. Many peoples of the world have the custom of removing shoes in homes and holy places, such as at the Bahá'í House of Worship in India; but this is not a custom among the English speaking peoples of the west, who were the intended recipients of Shoghi Effendi's translation in 1921.

Verse 31 – “exalted and glorious Arabian Youth” vs. “radiant Iraqi youth” – In Cole's translation, the Youth is clearly Bahá'u'lláh, since the Báb would not have used the term “Iraqi” to describe Himself. In Shoghi Effendi's translation, the Youth apparently represents both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh; the Báb's given name was Ali, which can be translated as “exalted,” and “glorious” is a variant of glory or bahá.

Verse 25 – “maid of heaven” vs. “houri of the spirit”

Verse 41 – “favored damsel” vs. “houri of nearness”

Verse 49 – “immortal maids of heaven” vs. “houris of eternity”

Houris are described in the Quran as virtuous and beautiful celestial beings who serve the faithful in heaven. “Houris” are commonly translated into English as “virgins,” but this does not adequately convey their spiritual nature. When Shoghi Effendi encountered an Arabic or Persian word which could be translated into multiple similar English words, he usually would use the multiple English words in his translations; here he used maid and damsel to translate “houri.”

Cole's translation “names” the Tablet's two individual houris and a group of houris. Since Shoghi Effendi translated the Arabic Tablet specifically to address Covenant-breaking, naming the houris was not essential to this purpose; by not naming the houris, Shoghi Effendi may have avoided a potentially frivolous distraction to the English-speaking Bahá'ís of the time, many of whom were spiritualists.

Shoghi Effendi didn't translate the Tablet literally: he fused the original wording with his unerring understanding of the meanings within the Tablet, to an appropriate literary style; and also addressed the purpose of the translation and the nature of the recipients. Cole's translation may be closer to a word-for-word literal translation, but there are no major differences in the essential meaning between Shoghi Effendi's and Cole's translations.

ANOTHER PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION OF THE PERSIAN TABLET – The Persian Tablet does not yet have an authorized English translation, but it has at least two full provisional English translations. Cole's translation was presented on Page B. Page O shows another provisional English translation of the Persian Tablet, by Ghasempour. Buck also presents a partial translation in his book *Paradise & Paradigm* on pages 222-223.

Ghasempour. Ghasempour's translation is in the lofty modified Old English style used by Shoghi Effendi and contains a few untranslated words. Comparing the Cole and Ghasempour translations of the Persian Tablet helps us appreciate the art of translating mystical text. This deepening uses the Cole translation for commentary since it is in plainer language and closer to

modern English. However, when the authorized English translation of the Persian Tablet is eventually released, it is more likely to sound like Ghasempour's translation. When that happens, this deepening should be revised or new deepening materials should be generated!

Optional – Review Ghasempour's provisional translation of the Persian Tablet on page O.

COMPARING THE ARABIC AND PERSIAN TABLETS – The Arabic Tablet was obviously revealed to Bahá'u'lláh since it begins with a request for Him to launch the ark. The Persian Tablet's recipients apparently are Bahá'u'lláh's Persian Bábi companions at the 1863 Naw-Rúz celebration since it contains Persian cultural symbols and clear spiritual guidance, and also omits the heavenly characters of the Arabic Tablet which might have distracted the recipients from their spiritual responsibilities. Here are examples of differences between the Arabic and Persian Tablets:

In the Arabic Tablet, the glorious journey of travelers in the ark abruptly ends with "They have desired to ascend." The Persian Tablet clarifies this transition adding "distracted" "heedless" and "imagined" to the reasons for the casting out. This additional clarity is useful to those who consider themselves to be passengers of the ark.

The Arabic Tablet has several references to the story of Moses where God prepares Moses for prophethood; these stories are in the Bible's Exodus 3.1-4.17 and are also in several surihis of the Quran. The burning bush, taking off the sandals (in Cole's translation) and the white hand from the bosom are all famous images from the Moses story. The Persian Tablet does not mention Moses at all, but instead refers to Mount Qaf, which is a mythological mountain in Persian tradition, where climbing the mountain represents the pilgrim's progress through spiritual states.

Bau considers the Persian Tablet to be Bahá'u'lláh's "translation" of the Arabic Tablet for His Persian companions. If Shoghi Effendi also considered the Persian Tablet to be divine translation of the Arabic Tablet, he would have seen that Bahá'u'lláh addressed the comprehension level and needs of the intended recipients more than providing a literal translation. Thus the Arabic and Persian Tablets may have guided Shoghi Effendi in his role as the authoritative translator for the Bahá'í writings. So it appears that both Bahá'u'lláh and Shoghi Effendi translated the Arabic Tablet specifically for the benefit of their intended recipients; the Persian Bábis in 1863 and the English speaking Bahá'ís in 1921.

Shoghi Effendi also may have benefitted from deepening on the Arabic Tablet as he was translating it. In Bau's interpretation, the Arabic Tablet was meant to motivate Bahá'u'lláh towards His Declaration by prophesying the future successes of His new religion and allaying His concerns about Mírzá Yahyá and the Bábis. This also sounds like Shoghi Effendi's situation, where he felt unprepared to take on the leadership of the Bahá'í Faith. Shoghi Effendi also had to address the attempts to seize power by Mírzá Muhammad `Alí, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's half brother, and also the attempts of his extended family to undermine his leadership. Studying the Arabic Tablet may have helped motivate Shoghi Effendi towards accepting his difficult new responsibilities, just as it had helped Bahá'u'lláh.



10) ANALYSES OF THE TABLET

The Tablet of the Holy Mariner is unusual in that there are two versions of the Tablet which are quite different but are also clearly linked. The Arabic and Persian Tablets have a literary device where different "speakers" are apparently using Bahá'u'lláh as their mouthpiece. This section describes Bau's in-depth analyses of these distinct features of the Tablet, which reviews the structure of the Tablet instead of a typical theological analysis where the Tablet is compared to other scripture and historical events.

PARALLEL STORIES - Our previous readings have maintained the order of the verses, which presents a linear timeline of events. Another way to read the Arabic Tablet is to consider that the same events may be described from more than one point of view or by using different symbols. Having multiple viewpoints allows a more complete picture of a complex event, since each perspective emphasizes a different part of the overall message. An example of this parallel storyline is shown below; where the launch of the ark, the maid of heaven's appearance and the handmaiden's appearance are each seen to describe Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration.

<p>Bid thine ark of eternity appear before the Celestial Concourse, Launch it upon the ancient sea, in His Name, the Most Wondrous... Unmoor it, then, that it may sail upon the ocean of glory... O Mariner! Teach them that are within the ark that which we have taught thee behind the mystic veil.</p>	<p>Whereupon the maid of heaven looked out from her exalted chamber, And with her brow signed to the Celestial Concourse, Flooding with the light of her countenance the heaven and the earth,</p>	<p>Thereupon the countenance of the favored damsel beamed above the celestial chambers even as the light that shineth from the face of the Youth above His mortal temple; She then descended with such an adorning as to illumine the heavens and all that is therein.</p>
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Sours and Winters also noted the parallel nature of the Arabic Tablet with the stories of the meteor and the claimants:

[T]he Tablet of the Holy Mariner is prophetic primarily in the archetypal sense, so it can refer to insincere and faithless believers at any time in the history of the community... In a way, the Tablet of the Holy Mariner is telling us to be aware and understand that when a community forms, it creates power to do good, but there will always be some people who seek to misuse that communal power to serve or elevate themselves... Note that the Tablet twice addresses this...once with the believers being cast out of heaven and once with the handmaiden's unsuccessful quest to find faithfulness "at a time that knoweth neither beginning nor end." In each of these two instances the central point is expressed three times, each time in different words with slightly different implications. These differences help express or suggest the universalism in the message.

Sours and Winters, study guide to the Arabic Tablet of the Holy Mariner on Bahá'í-library.com

PARALLEL ANALYSIS OF THE ARABIC AND PERSIAN TABLETS - The Persian and condensed Arabic Tablets are about the same length, have similar topics, and also have a similar order to their storylines; but are different in style and tone. In this section, the Arabic and Persian Tablets are considered to be parallel accounts of the same revelation and studied with a line-by-line comparative analysis to gain more insight into the meaning of the Tablet.

Some lines were easily matched by topics, keywords, and sequence. Other lines had weaker matches where the similarities were vague. Examples of the method used to match verses are shown below with some other resulting interpretations, none of which are authoritative.

Matching Individual Verses. In some cases, there is a direct match between verses from the Persian and Arabic Tablets.

Example. Arabic verse #13 and Persian line #7 below, show a direct match of topics and keywords, however the styles and some details are somewhat different.

a13 O Mariner! Teach them that are within the ark that
which we have taught thee behind the mystic veil.

pc7 The mariner of eternity was ordered to teach a single letter
of the hidden word to the people of the ark.

Split Verses. In some cases, a verse is split in one Tablet to match multiple verses in another.

Example. Persian line #1 below is split into three parts (a,b,c) and reordered, to match Arabic verses #1, #2 and #3.

a1 Bid thine ark of eternity appear before the Celestial
Concourse,
a2 Launch it upon the ancient sea, in His Name, the Most
Wondrous,
a3 And let the angelic spirits enter, in the Name of God,
the Most High.

pc1b with the permission of the holy mariner in the pre-existent
vessel,
pc1c then did it set sail upon the sea of names.
pc1a When the passengers on the divine ark had clung to one of the
names,

Repeated Verses. Some of the matching lines are repeated in one, but not the other Tablet.

Example. The motionless ark is clearly described in two verses of the Arabic, but only in one line of the Persian Tablet.

a12 Wherein the ark of the Cause remaineth motionless
even though to its dwellers be declared all divine attributes.
a24 “Whereupon the ship of fancy standeth still which the
minds of them that comprehend cannot grasp.”

pc5 Then they reached a place where the name, the Still,
became dominant over their course, so that the ship of
the spirit was becalmed, unable to move.

Matching Sequences. When there is not a direct match, the lines and verses sometimes can be correlated when they have a similar placement within the Tablet, even though the similarities in topic may be implied or vague.

Example. When the last Arabic verse is associated with the last two Persian lines, the Persian lines seem to be Bahá'u'lláh's distressed response to God after witnessing the immortal handmaidens mourn the shocking death of their comrade. The comprehended “word of the tale of the Youth” can be interpreted as “hope” that the maids of heaven remain “undefiled” and that “This is not difficult for God”. In this interpretation, the maidens, who represent different religions, would suffer from the consequences of Bahá'u'lláh's new religion and His new era. But Bahá'u'lláh's compassion is evident as He expresses His “hope” that God would not “defile” the existing religions because of the opening of the Bahá'í Faith and Era.

a57 And as they beheld her state and comprehended a word of the tale told by the Youth, they bared their heads,
rent their garments asunder, beat upon their faces, forgot their joy, shed tears and smote with their hands upon
their cheeks, and this is verily one of the mysterious grievous afflictions—

pc42-43 God willing, we maintain the hope that the immortal temples of glory shall, through the adornment of holiness
and the divine attributes, appear illumined, gentle, pure and undefiled like the eternal sun. This is not difficult for God.

Matching Groups of Verses. Many of the Persian and Arabic Tablet's verses do not seem to match at all! For some of these cases, the order of the unmatched verses was maintained between the closest adjacent verses which could be correlated. This method is much more subjective than directly matching individual verses as seen in the example below.

- 1) Compare Arabic verse (A53) with Persian line 41 (Pc41) below. These are well matched in sequence and by topic.
- 2) Then compare A47 with Pc37. These have a good match in sequence and a vague match in topic. In Cole's translation, “the self” is expended “for others”; in Ghasempour's translation (*Pg37 in italics*) “Our life” is expended for “the Well-Beloved.” Whether the “life” is expended “for others” or for “the Well-Beloved” should be clarified in the authorized translation of the Persian Tablet.

The verses in (1) and (2) are good matches with their sequences and topics, so they can be used to bookend the Arabic verses A48 – A52 and the Persian lines Pc38 – Pc40.

- 3) Compare A50 (which is about “idle claimants”) with Pc39 and Pc40 (which are strong admonishments with keywords “carnal longing,” “the hateful and rebellious” and “miserable”). A50 and Pc39, Pc40 are similar in their strident tone. Connecting A50 to Pc39 creates another bookend.
- 4) A51 matches the topic of Pc33 (loneliness of the Youth/friend), so A51 and Pc33 set up another bookend.
- 5) By maintaining the order of the verses between the bookends, A48 is then matched to Pc38, resulting in the conclusion that the handmaiden's “mystic word” pertains to “justice and fairness” in Cole's translation and “justice and equity” in Ghasempour's translation (*Pg38*). In Cole's translation, the “mystic word” is applied to “the souls that pertain to you”; while in Ghasempour's translation the “mystic word” is “for the sake of your inner selves”. How “justice” should be applied, externally or internally, is another issue that should be resolved in the authorized translation of the Persian Tablet.
- 6) A49 is combined with A50 to describe the heavenly listeners and state the unpleasant “call”; they are matched to Pc39 which contrasts the heavenly “nightingale of immortality” and the “disagreeable croaking of death”, and Pc40.
- 7) A52 is then combined with A53; they are matched to Pc49, so the “cry” that made the Concourse “shriek and tremble” was “We are from God and to him do we return.”

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|---|--|
| <p>2) A47 She then cried aloud, wailed and repaired to her own station within her most lofty mansion,</p> | <p>PC37 We have traversed the stage of expending the self for others.
<i>Pg37 We traversed, expending Our life in the path of the Well-Beloved.</i></p> |
| <p>5) A48 And then gave utterance to one mystic word, whispered privily by her honeyed tongue,</p> | <p>PC38 Arise to expend justice and fairness upon the souls that pertain to you.
<i>Pg38 Arise ye with justice and equity for the sake of your inner selves.</i></p> |
| <p>6) A49 And raised the call amidst the Celestial Concourse and the immortal maids of heaven:</p> | <p>PC39 In the end, however, you prefer the cloak of carnal longing and desire to the robe of divine benediction, and you exchange the song of the nightingale of immortality for the disagreeable croaking of death that issues from the throats of the hateful and rebellious.</p> |
| <p>3) A50 "By the Lord! I found not from these idle claimants the breeze of Faithfulness!</p> | <p>PC40 How miserable a trade you make!</p> |
| <p>4) A51 "By the Lord! The Youth hath remained lone and forlorn in the land of exile in the hands of the ungodly"</p> | <p>PC 33 Perhaps they will visit the illumined beauty of the pure, radiant and sanctified friend in the land of love, detachment, amiability and exaltation.</p> |
| <p>7) A52 She then uttered within herself such a cry that the Celestial Concourse did shriek and tremble,</p> | <p>PC41 We are from God and to him do we return.</p> |
| <p>1) A53 And she fell upon the dust and gave up the spirit. It seemeth she was called and hearkened unto Him that summoned her unto the Realm on High,</p> | <p>Pg41 "Verily, we are God's, and to Him shall we all return."</p> |

Combined Arabic and Persian Tablets. After many iterations of correlating verses, the Persian and Arabic Tablets were combined. Surprisingly, nearly all of the verses were able to be matched between the Tablets! This indicates that Bahá'u'lláh conveyed the full message from the Arabic Tablet into the Persian Tablet, even though they have different symbols, tones, etc. Some of the line matches were subjective; others who attempt to combine the Persian and Arabic Tablets would likely get different results.

Page P shows the combined Arabic and Persian Tablet; a very small font size was used to allow the whole content of both Tablets to be printed on one page. To read the combined Tablet, follow the dominant storyline in bold font. The verses in the combined Tablet were aligned to follow the sequence of the dominant storyline, which is mostly with the Arabic Tablet except for the ascent of the travelers after they leave the ark. Here the Persian Tablet describes the travelers' journey, while the Arabic Tablet describes the spiritual stations that the travelers "perchance" "may attain" if they leave the ark.

Combining the information from both Tablets gives a more comprehensive view of the overall Holy Mariner revelation and revealed some insights to details of the Tablet which could not have been determined without this parallel analysis. For instance, Arabic Tablet verses 25-29 are all repeated; first they are interspersed with other Arabic Tablet verses to describe the Persian Tablet's ascent of the travelers, then they are repeated in their normal sequence. The maid of heaven's brow sign to the Celestial Concourse is then interpreted twice: first as a signal to the houris to serve the new arrivals in the "homeland of lovers"; then in the regular sequence as a warning of the upcoming tests to those in the Concourse "who dwell upon the plain of divine love and drink the wine of unceasing forgiveness" to "not exchange nearness to the beauty of the friend for both worlds."

Optional - Review the correlated and combined Arabic and Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner on page P.

INTERRUPTED STYLES – The Arabic Tablet's tone is consistent throughout; it sounds like there is one "speaker" who starts by bidding Bahá'u'lláh to launch the ark and then becomes the narrator of the meteor and maiden stories. The Arabic Tablet's refrains have a distinct change of pronouns near the end from "my Lord" to "our Lord" (see page L), so the "speaker" is interpreted to be a maid of heaven. The Arabic Tablet describes three heavenly beings who speak; the Voice of Grandeur, the Maid of Heaven, and the favored handmaiden; however, Bahá'u'lláh is always the physical mouthpiece who utters the revelation. There is no duality to God, but some heavenly entities appear to have fluid identities, multiple purposes, and different names and titles.

"Beware lest ye speak of duality in regard to My Self, for all the atoms of the earth proclaim that there is none other God but Him, the One the Single, the Mighty, the Loving... Say: Lordship is My Name, whereof I have created manifestations in the world of being, while We Ourselves remain sanctified above them, would ye but ponder this truth. And Godhead is My Name, whereof We have created exponents whose power shall encompass the people of the earth and make them true worshippers of God, could ye but recognize it. Thus should ye regard all Our Names, if ye be endued with insight."

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of the Temple, verse 45.

Pronoun analysis of the Persian Tablet. The first part of the Persian Tablet is narrated by someone who refers to Bahá'u'lláh as "He is the foreigner, the Persian, the Iraqi". The last section of the Persian Tablet contains three interspersed changes in the use of pronouns, which indicates that there are three different "speakers" with Bahá'u'lláh as a mouthpiece. Both Cole's and Ghasempour's translations have these changes in the use of pronouns.

In the passage below, Bahá'u'lláh, as the mouthpiece, refers to Himself in the third person ("He", "youth", "beloved", "friend", "nightingale") or uses a "divine We". His Bábi companions are referred to as "they", "you", "some", or "all" in the various lines. First, read all of the lines below shifted to the left (1,2,3), then the italics lines in the middle (a,b), and finally the all caps lines shifted to the right (A,B,C,D). Each group of lines seems to have a different "voice."

The text in 1, 2 and 3 has a narrator whose tone is similar to the narrator of the meteor and maiden stories in the Arabic Tablet. Here, the Youth (Bahá'u'lláh) is referred to in the third person like in latter part of the Arabic Tablet. "They" seem to be the Bahá'u'lláh's Bábi companions.

The italicized text (a and b) are admonishments directed to you, the listener, from someone who mentions Bahá'u'lláh as "him." The Arabic Tablet does not have any verses directed to a "you" who would be a human companion of Bahá'u'lláh, but the Síyáh-Chál maiden has a similar tone when she speaks in the Tablet of the Temple:

“O people of the Bayán! Would ye deny Him Whose presence is the very object of your creation, while ye rejoice idly upon your couches?”

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of the Temple, verse 9, voice attributed to the Sáyáh-Chál maiden.

A, B, C and D have a hallowed tone. In the page P parallel analysis, lines A, B and C are associated with the words and actions of the Arabic Tablet's dying handmaiden; line D was associated with Bahá'u'lláh's personal reflections using a “divine We”. The usage of “We” here suggests a close connection between Bahá'u'lláh and the handmaiden.

(1) When these emissaries did not perceive the scent of **the spiritual youth**, they forbade entry to **all**. Afterwards, there occurred what is inscribed upon the guarded tablet.

(a) *Then, you who dwell upon the plain of divine love and drink the wine of unceasing forgiveness, do not exchange nearness to the beauty of the friend for both worlds. Do not prefer the presence of the wine server to meeting him, and do not give your heart to the intoxicant of ignorance and heedlessness in preference to his wine of knowledge and wisdom. Lips are for mentioning the beloved; do not defile them with filthy water. The heart is the home of everlasting mysteries, do not busy it with perishable things. Seek the water of life from the fountain of the beauty of the All-Praised, not from the manifestations of Satan.*

(2) Yes, **this ephemeral youth here** mentions the highest station of the love of the divine friends. **He** does so by reference to the wonders of the text of divine unity and the gems of the wisdom of the self-sufficient sovereign. Thus, perhaps **some** might recognize the value of courage and gallantry, and put off the shirt of negligence and carnal appetites. Perhaps **they** will visit the illumined beauty of the pure, radiant and sanctified **friend** in the land of love, detachment, amiability and exaltation. Thus would **they** receive the lights dawning from the morn of **his** brow and the effulgence of the perspicuous day, to at least the extent that **they** would be enabled to unite **their** inner and outer selves.

(A) **WE HAVE PASSED BEYOND THE LOFTINESS OF ABSTRACTION, THE SUBLIMITY OF DIVINE ONENESS, THE ULTIMATE RECOGNITION THAT GOD IS ABOVE ALL ATTRIBUTES, AND THE MOST GREAT SANCTIFICATION.**

(3) Now, **they** must put forth their utmost effort and give **their** unswerving attention, so that **their** inward secrets not be contrary to **their** overt behavior, nor **their** outward deeds at variance with **their** inner mysteries.

(B) **WE HAVE TRAVERSED THE STAGE OF EXPENDING THE SELF FOR OTHERS.**

(b) *Arise to expend justice and fairness upon the souls that pertain to you. In the end, however, you prefer the cloak of carnal longing and desire to the robe of divine benediction, and you exchange the song of the nightingale of immortality for the disagreeable croaking of death that issues from the throats of the hateful and rebellious. How miserable a trade you make!*

(C) **WE ARE FROM GOD AND TO HIM DO WE RETURN.**

(D) **GOD WILLING, WE MAINTAIN THE HOPE THAT THE IMMORTAL TEMPLES OF GLORY SHALL, THROUGH THE ADORNMENT OF HOLINESS AND THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES, APPEAR ILLUMINED, GENTLE, PURE AND UNDEFILED LIKE THE ETERNAL SUN. THIS IS NOT DIFFICULT FOR GOD.**

Bahá'u'lláh, Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner, Cole translation.



11) HEAVENLY HIERARCHY

In this section, the celestial characters of the Arabic Tablet are considered to be the heavenly beings as stated in the Tablet, not just metaphors. The Arabic Tablet suggests a hierarchy in heaven which was briefly discussed in Part II; in this section, the hierarchy is studied further in an effort to better understand the nature of the heavenly beings. We are naturally fascinated by the mystery of heaven and the after-life; there are many commentaries by Bahá'ís and others on the subject. But the true nature of heaven is completely beyond human imagination, so any description will be inadequate to portray heaven's vast spiritual reality.

“Know thou of a truth that the worlds of God are countless in their number, and infinite in their range. None can reckon or comprehend them except God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise... Verily I say, the creation of God embraceth worlds besides this world, and creatures apart from these creatures. In each of these worlds He hath ordained things which none can search except Himself, the All-Searching, the All-Wise.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 187.

Even though heaven is beyond our comprehension, religious scriptures provide descriptions of some aspects of heaven that are relevant to humanity; these can be used to better understand the characters in the Tablet. Several Bahá'í writings discuss different levels of heaven including; the Tablet of All Food, the Seven Valleys and Gems of Divine Mysteries. Bahá'u'lláh wrote these three tablets in Baghdad several years before His Declaration, as responses to questions about descriptions of heavens which were already defined and refined by Islamic scholars over the centuries. So the heavenly realms described in these tablets already existed in Islamic literature, and were affirmed by Bahá'u'lláh in His responses.

The tables on pages Q and R combine several descriptions of the heavens from Bahá'í texts and other sources, along with comparisons to the characters in the Arabic Tablet. This is Bau's individual effort to provide some clarity to the levels of heaven which help to describe the nature of the heavenly characters of the Tablet, and holds no authority whatsoever. The tables use a baseline of the five levels of heaven and humanity as described by Bahá'u'lláh in the Tablet of All Food; and the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms as described by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

“The reality of the Godhead is beyond the grasp of the mind. When thou dost carefully consider this matter, thou wilt see that a lower plane can never comprehend a higher... The higher plane, however, understandeth the lower. The animal, for instance, comprehendeth the mineral and vegetable, the human understandeth the planes of the animal, vegetable and mineral. But the mineral cannot possibly understand the realms of man. And notwithstanding the fact that all these entities co-exist in the phenomenal world, even so, no lower degree can ever comprehend a higher.”

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #21.

In the Tablet of All Food, Bahá'u'lláh describes the “food” of the different levels of heaven. The Tablet of All Food does not have an authorized translation; the excerpt below is from Lambden's provisional translation, which is a bit rough but displays the deeply symbolic and mystical nature of the text.

“Then bear thou witness that for ‘food’ are diverse levels of meaning; it must suffice thee, however, that We expound four of them.

“It signifieth the realm of the Throne of He-ness (Háhút), the Paradise of the Divine Oneness. None is capable of expounding even a letter of that verse relative to that Paradise. This inasmuch as that realm is that of the Mystery of Endless Duration, the Unique Sonship, the Incomparable Israelicity and the Resplendent Selfhood...

“It signifieth the realm of the Paradise of Endless Duration, the Throne of the Divine Realm (Láhút), the Snow-White Light. It is the realm of ‘He is He Himself’ and there is none other save Him. This Paradise is allotted unto those servants who are established upon the Seat of Glory, who quaff liquid camphor nigh unto the All-Beauteous One, and who recite the verses of Light in the Heaven of Manifest Justice. Thereby are they enraptured and from that ‘food’ derive comfort.

“It signifieth the Paradise of the Divine Unicity, the Golden [Yellow] Land, the Depths of realm of the Divine Omnipotence (Jabarút). It is the realm of ‘Thou art He [God] and He [God] is Thou’ allotted unto those servants who do not cried out except with the permission of God; who act according to His command and ever restrain themselves in accordance with His wisdom -- just as God hath described them [in the Qur'an] for they are the honoured servants of whom it is written: ‘They speak not till He hath spoken; and they do His bidding’ (21:27).

“It signifieth the Paradise of Justice, the Verdent [Green] Land, the Fathomless Deep of Kingdom of God (Malakút) allotted to those servants whom ‘neither traffic nor merchandise beguile from the remembrance of God’ (Qur'an 24:27) since they are the companions of the Light. They enter therein with the permission of God and find rest upon the carpet of the Almighty.

“It signifieth the realm of the Paradise of the Divine Bounty, the Crimson Land, the Golden Secret, the Snow-White Mystery and the Point of human realm (Nasút). In it are the proofs of the Remembrance greatest, if you are of those who are informed.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of All Food, Lambden provisional translation, bahai-library.com

The text in the tables has a small font size to fit the page, and are condensed from their original sources, so any subtleties are lost; hopefully what remains are interpretations and phrases which describe the core of the original texts. Of course, these tables are a gross oversimplification of the nature of heaven; this can be appreciated by comparing the descriptions of “the physical world” to the magnificent diversity of our actual world! The various assignments are arguably correlated with the different baseline levels and with each other. However, these give us a limited view of the heavenly hierarchy which helps define the characters in the Arabic Tablet.

Information from the sources were cross-correlated to provide a background for the understanding of the nature of heaven. The “other qualities of the realms” are results from online searches which included authors Ma'sumian, Lepain, Winters and Taherzadeh, and a wikipedia.com article on “Bahá'í Cosmology.” The assignments of other information to the various levels were made by Bau. The days of creation from the Bible and the stages of the evolution of the universe are shown to further explain the distinctions of the levels of heaven; they also help define the stages of Bahá'u'lláh's dispensation and His roles in the Arabic Tablet. The Seven Valleys and Gems of Divine Mysteries help define the stations of the travelers' journey. The nine ranks of angels from the Catholic Church, which Christian scholars in the middle ages derived from a few passages in the Bible, help define the characters of the meteor story and the maidens.

Optional – Review the tables pages Q and R.

The assignment of the characters in the Tablet to the different baseline levels yields some interesting observations. Remember these are all individual interpretations and carry no authority!

Bahá'u'lláh, in his various roles, spans all of the stations except Háhút. Humans and maidens also span more than one realm. The dying handmaiden's spirit reverts back to Láhút after her roles as enforcer and overseer of the Bábi Faith are shown to be obsolete and cancelled. The Catholic orders of angels are assigned to Láhút, Jabarút and Malakút, but they have tasks which require them to extend into other realms; for example the virtues angels control the laws of physics so their effect is in the mineral kingdom. Thus each angelic order also spans the realms, which is not shown on the table. Bahá'u'lláh's defines “angel” as human souls with angelic qualities, so they add spiritual realms to the span of their regular human realms.

“By ‘angels’ is meant those who, reinforced by the power of the spirit, have consumed, with the fire of the love of God, all human traits and limitations, and have clothed themselves with the attributes of the most exalted Beings and of the Cherubim.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Kitáb-i-Iqán, #86-87.

The ascent of the travelers follows the Persian Tablet's journey; after the travelers leave the ark, they reach the shore of the “city of divine unity” in Malakút; this appears to be a typical progression after physical death - from the valley of knowledge past the plane of limitation to the valley of unity. If these travelers are interpreted as early Bahá'í martyrs, they must have a special place in heaven (“true believers” are also “special”): God wishes to acknowledge these martyrs, so “by the succor of the Unseen” they attain the presence of the “lord of souls” in Malakút; then they receive “breezes” from “the sanctuary of the All-Merciful” in Láhút, which causes them to soar over several stations to “the retreats of nearness in the everlasting realm” of Jabarút and attain His presence again when they reach “the center of heavenly guidance”; they traverse “the spiritual stations in the place of safety and security” in Jabarút. Finally they resume the typical path for the departed souls of their stations; by settling into the “homeland of lovers” in Malakút where they receive the “wine of divine knowledge” which sends them through the valleys of wonderment and of absolute nothingness, before returning for “ages and centuries” to a valley with “perfect joy and happiness”. Bahá'u'lláh states:

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

Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, p.65.

For some topics, the tables show the order of movement up and down the different realms, which can be interpreted as the flow of spiritual energy. For the Tablet's characters, this movement can be interpreted as the result of the release of energy from the updated Covenant; its modernized spiritual and social standards accelerate humanity's ever advancing civilization:

As Bahá'u'lláh descends from Láhút to Malakút, He releases spiritual energy through His movements and His teachings; this allows the travelers to ascend from Nasút to the highest possible spiritual heavens.

The sacrificial energy from Bahá'u'lláh's drinking of Mírzá Yahyá's poison, leads to the casting out of Mírzá Yahyá and his associates during the “Most Great Separation” (1866); after He is released from the grip of the unfaithful Bábis, Bahá'u'lláh can focus His energies towards the future, instead being mired in the past.

Free from the “Faithless” and with new “Bahá'í angels” in the heavens, Bahá'u'lláh then spreads His message worldwide with His tablets to the rulers of the world including the Tablet to the Kings (1867), which Shoghi Effendi states is the “the most momentous Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in which He, for the first time, directs His words collectively to the entire company

of the monarchs of East and West. God Passes By, 171". Bahá'u'lláh's Proclamation has widespread rippling effects that are still unfolding.



FINALE

The Bahá'í Faith requires the efforts and sacrifices of the Bahá'ís in order to grow and progress; these efforts also allow the individual Bahá'í to reach higher levels of spirituality. To attain the highest levels of paradise, like the martyrs/"true believers" in the Tablet, requires a very high degree of sacrifice and detachment from worldly things. While we are no longer in the heroic age of the Faith, many Bahá'ís live in stability and comfort, each individual Bahá'í can still advance the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and still attain the highest levels of heaven as a "living martyr" and/or as a "true believer." In the Hidden Words, Bahá'u'lláh ranks our three ultimate levels of spirituality which correspond to the "true believer," the "Faithful" and the "martyr"; all are within the Tablet of the Holy Mariner and all are stations we can aspire to attain.

O SON OF MAN!

Write all that We have revealed unto thee with the ink of light upon the tablet of thy spirit. Should this not be in thy power, then make thine ink of the essence of thy heart. If this thou canst not do, then write with that crimson ink that hath been shed in My path. Sweeter indeed is this to Me than all else, that its light may endure for ever.

Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words from the Arabic, #71.

Optional - Audio. Search for a good recording of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner chanted in the original Arabic (*not found online in 2016*). Suggested alternate –Tablet of Ahmad (*chanted in Arabic*) – the suggested recording on youtube.com does not have an English title, the video is by Ezzatollah Rouhani Seissan (*uploaded Oct. 21, 2010, 14:35*), the chant is by Adieh. Another suggested alternate – the songs of angels – search for a ~15 minute recording that is reminiscent of angelic maidens singing "Glorified be my (our) Lord, the All-Glorious (Most High)!" Play the recording as a background while reciting the Arabic Tablet as recommended below.

Read or Recite the Arabic Tablet from a Bahá'í prayer book. Try to imbue this reading with a moving spirit!

OR – Recite and Interpret the Arabic Tablet by each verse or by passages; consider the levels of heaven and earth.

Alláh'u'abhá!



Tablet of the Holy Mariner *by Bahá'u'lláh*

*unofficial translation in a condensed format;
translated from the Arabic by Juan R. I. Cole*

- i He is the Precious, the Beloved.
- ii,1 Holy mariner, bring the ship of immortality to the celestial concourse.
- 1p *Praised be my Lord, the most glorious. (=P!)*
- 2 Moor it on the sea of pre-existence by means of a new name. P!
- 3 Then board upon it the temples of the spirit in the name of God, the exalted, the most high. P!
- 4,5 Weigh anchor so that it can ply the ocean of grandeur and deliver its passengers to the precincts of nearness in the sanctuary of eternity. P!
- 6 Behold, you have brought them to the sacred shore, the beach of the crimson sea. P!
- 7 Then disembark them from the ship in this ethereal and most hidden station. P!
- 8 This is a station, wherein God showed forth the fire of beauty in the everlasting bush. P!
- 9 Therein the temples of the Cause put off the sandals of carnal desire. P!
- 10 11 This is a station, wherein the hand of God was drawn forth from the cloak of grandeur. P!
- 12 This is a station, wherein the ship of the Cause shall never move, even though all the divine names be recited to it. P!
- 13 Then, holy mariner, teach the passengers on the ship what we taught you behind the cloud of unknowability-- P!
- 14 lest they become idled in the valley of the white dune. P!
- 15 And so that they might fly with the wings of spirit to the station that God has sanctified above mention in the kingdoms of creation-- P!
- 16 and might move through the sky like birds of nearness in the realm of the divine presence P!
- 17 and learn the mysteries concealed within the waves of light. P!
- 18 They traversed the way-stations of worldly limitations, until they arrived at the station of divine unity in the center of guidance. P!
- 19,20 They desired to ascend to a station that God ordained to be above their ranks, when the luminous comet expelled them from among the inhabitants of the kingdom of his presence. P!
- 21 They heard the melodies of greatness from behind the pavilions of the Unseen in the sublime sanctuary. P!
- 22 Guardian angels, return them to their places in the realm of humanity. P!
- 23 For they desired to fly into that heaven to which the wings of the dove never attained. P!
- 24 Nor will the ships of mere conjecture or the hearts of those endowed with intellect ever stir therein. P!
- 25 Behold, the houri of the spirit looked out from the most exalted chamber. P!
- 26 She arched her eyebrow toward the concourse of holiness. P!
- 27 The lights of her forehead shone from the earth to the sky. P!
- 28,29 The radiance of her beauty fell upon the people of the earth and clay. Then, suddenly, the bodies of being shuddered forth from the graves of annihilation. P!
- 30 Then she called out with a melody that the ear of hearing had never experienced from pre-existent eternity. P!
- 31 She said, "By God, those who do not have in their hearts the breezes of love that waft from the radiant 'Iraqi youth" P!
- 32 "shall never be able to ascend to the heights of the unknowable essence in this remotest realm." P!
- 33 Behold, she commanded one of her most beautiful slave girls P!
- 34 saying, "Descend from the palaces of immortality in the form of a sun in this void" P!
- 35 "then turn your attention to them, insofar as they have imprisoned him within their hidden, inmost souls" P!
- 36 "and if you smell the fragrance of the coat of the youth who was concealed within pavilions of light by the wicked" P!
- 37 "then cry out within yourself so that all the embodiments of wealth who inhabit the chambers of paradise may be informed thereof." P!
- 38 "Thus might all of them descend from the chambers of immortality" P!
- 39 "and kiss their hands and feet insofar as these had soared into the heavens of faithfulness." P!
- 40 "Perhaps you will discover the scent of the beloved on their shirts." P!
- 41 Then the houri of nearness dawned from the horizon of the chambers, just as the visage of the youth rises above his robe. P!
- 42 She descended with an ornament that illumined the heavens and all that is in them. P!
- 43 Then she moved in the air so that she perfumed all things in the lands of holiness and sublimity. P!
- 44 When she arrived at that station, she arose like the meridian along the pole of creation. P!
- 45 She inhaled their scent at that time when there was neither beginning nor end. P!
- 46 She did not discover in them what she desired, and this is an amazing tale! P!
- 47 Then she shrieked, and wailed, and returned to her place in her crimson palace. P!
- 48 Then she spoke a secret word beneath her spiritual breath. P!
- 49 She called out among the celestial concourse and the houris of eternity. P!
- 50 By God, she did not perceive from those idle claimants the breezes of fidelity. P!
- 51 By God, the youth remained in the land of exile, single and alone in the hands of the godless.
- 51p *Praised be my Lord in the divine realm of sorrow.*
- 52 Thereafter she wailed within herself in a lamentation that shook the concourse on high and set them to shrieking.
- 52p *Praised be my Lord, who clad himself in vestments of black.*
- 53,54 She fell upon the earth and died, as though she had been called, and had answered the one who called her in the divine realm beyond all knowing. Praised be the one who created her from the essence of chaste modesty.
- 54p *Praised be my Lord, the most glorious.*
- 55 Then suddenly those houris came outside, who had never been glimpsed by anyone from among the people of the sublime garden.
- 55p *Praised be my Lord, the most glorious.*
- 56 They gathered around her, discovering her body outstretched upon the dust.
- 56p *Praised be our Lord, the most high.*
- 57 When they witnessed her condition and learned a single letter of the tales of the youth, they bared their heads, rent their veils, slapped their own faces, put away all frivolity, wept with their eyes, and struck their cheeks with their hands. These are among the secret and most hidden calamities.
- 57p *Praised be our Lord, the exalted, the most high.*

Tablet of the Holy Mariner

Persian Version by Bahá'u'lláh

provisional translation by Mehran Ghasempour

He is the Ajami,^[2] the Persian, the 'Iráqí!^[3]

Whilst the dwellers in the divine Ark,^[4] by the permission of the Holy Mariner, held fast unto one name amongst all names in the ancient Ark^[5] and sailed upon the ocean of names, they passed the grades of worldly limitation^[6] that perchance, through the felicity^[7] and lofty purpose of the Sovereign of Oneness, they mightest reach the shore of divine unity and quaff from the chalice of detachment.^[8]

That Ark of Eternity moved by divine assistance, and sailed upon the water of spiritual wisdom until the dwellers thereof reached a station whereat the Name which dwelt therein^[9] overtook their course and triumphed. Thence, that Spiritual Ark was stilled and forbidden to move. Whereupon, the firm decree of God descended from the heaven of imperishable holiness, and the Mariner of Eternity was commanded to impart one letter from the concealed Word unto the dwellers in the Ark, so that by the invisible assistance of God, they might traverse the valley of inner bewilderment, enter the delightful realm of divine unity, reach the Qá'f^[10] of everlasting life and attain unto the holy presence of the Well-Beloved.^[11]

Inasmuch as the dwellers in the Ark^[12] attained unto the Word of the mystic^[13] Friend, they forthwith stretched out the wings of their spirits^[14] and soared in the air of holiness. Through divine grace and blessing, they didst leave behind the pursuit of self and passion^[15] and heedless, blind understandings. Whereupon, the breezes of paradise from the realm^[16] of the All-Merciful wafted upon their spirits,^[17] and after soaring in the air of the nearness of God and traversing the mystical stations, they descended in a state of safety and security, unto the highest abodes of those who loveth Him. The inhabitants thereof thence arose in service and benevolence; the immortal youths^[18] and the holy cup-bearer^[19] proffered unto

them ruby wine. The intoxicating wine of divine knowledge and the cup of eternal wisdom caused such ecstasy and rapture^[20] that they transcended the existence of self and all beings and gave their hearts to the beauty of the Beloved.^[21]

For centuries and ages, with perfect joy and delight, they dwelt in that pleasant and spiritual realm and that sacred flower garden of the All-Merciful. Whereupon, the breezes and winds of divine tests and difficulties blew from the Sheba of the imperishable Cause. Thence, they busied themselves with the beauty of the cup-bearer and neglected the Immortal Countenance, inasmuch as they imagined the shadow to be the sun, and specters as light. They desired to rise to the exalted heights of the Greatest Name that they might soar in that realm and attain that seat and place. And as they rose, the divine assayers descended upon them with the sacred touchstone and the irresistible Command of God, and forbade admittance unto all, for they inhaled not the fragrance of the mystic Youth. Thus, that which was inscribed upon the Guarded Tablet^[22] didst come to pass.

Therefore, O ye that dwell in the domain of divine love and ye that drink the wine of everlasting mercy! Barter not nearness unto the beauty of the Friend for both worlds. Turn not thy gaze away from His Countenance towards the countenance of the cup-bearer, and cast not thy heart from the wine of His knowledge and wisdom unto the dregs of ignorance and heedlessness. The lips are for the mention of the Beloved; defile them not with foul water. The heart is the abode of the immortal mysteries; busy it not with attention unto ephemeral things. Seek not the water of life from the embodiments of satanic fancy, but from the Kawthar^[23] of the Beauty of the All-Glorious.

This lowly Youth, in the highest station of love, admonisheth the divine friends unto the wondrous verses of unity and the gems of wisdom of the Eternal King, that perhaps some soul, with courage and honor,^[24] mightest arise and emerge from the robe of heedlessness and worldly desire, and, even as the

beauty of the illumined Friend, become cleansed, resplendent and sanctified and wander in the land of love, detachment, affection, and loftiness. They should partake, at least, as much from the light of the resplendent brow and the advent of the manifest day so that they may become enabled to unite their outward and inward selves.

We traversed the loftiness of detachment,^[25] the exaltation of divine unity, the great purification, and the most great consecration. Now must they make eloquent effort and exalted endeavor that the inward mysteries not oppose the outward deeds, nor the outward deeds turn away from the inward mysteries.

We traversed, expending Our life in the path of the Well-Beloved. Arise ye with justice and equity for the sake of your inner selves. Do ye purpose, in the end, to prefer the garment of greed and selfish desires to the attire of divine consecration? Wilst ye exchange the melody of the Nightingale of Eternity with the dissenting sound of mortality from the people of iniquity and hatred?! Wretched is that which ye exchange!^[25]

“Verily, we are God’s, and to Him shall we all return.”^[26] God willing, We hope that the temples of immortal glory, adorned with the ornament of holiness and divine attributes, may become manifested as brilliant, ethereal, cleansed and pure as the everlasting sun. And verily, this is not difficult for God.^[27]

Notes

[2] “Ajami” is an Arabic expression which refers to a “non-Arab” person, specifically a Persian (MG’s note).
[3] “Iraqí” is also translated as “Arabian” in The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic) (MG’s note).
[4] “Fulk”; “ark, ship, vessel”; this word has no vowel points and I have translated it as the one with the same spelling and no vowel points in the Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic). However, it is spelled the same as another word (*FaLak*) only with different vowel points, which means; “heaven, sphere, firmament” as in the Persian Hidden Words, no. 8, The *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pp. 62 & 186, and *Chihár-Vádí* (The Four Valleys), p. 1. In fact, both *FaLak* and *Fulk* are used in p. 62 of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* but they are clearly marked with vowel points in the Persian print of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* to distinguish between “heaven” and “Ark”, respectively (MG’s note).

[5] “*sa’fínih*”; another word for “ark, ship, vessel” (MG’s note).
[6] “*maráhil-i-tahdíd*”; “*manazel at-tahdíd*”, “grades of worldly limitation”; The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic) (MG’s note).
[7] “*bih yomn-i*” “by the felicity of”, “by the blessing of” (MG’s note).
[8] “*tajríd*”; “detachment”; The *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 33 (MG’s note).
[9] “*sákin*”; “dweller, dwelling”; The *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 91. The understanding of this passage has been most difficult. Christopher Buck, in a recent article, has suggested that *ism-i-sákin*, translated here as “name that dwelt therein” should be rendered “Stagnant Name” and taken as a veiled allusion to Mírzá Yahyá. On this interpretation, Mírzá Yahyá seized control (*sabaqat girift*) of the Ark and diverted its course (*majrá*), and this action caused the vessel to be stilled. See Buck, Christopher. “A Symbolic Profile of the Bahá’í Faith”. *The Journal of Bahá’í Studies*, Vol. 8, no. 4 (Sept.-Dec., 1998) (MG’s note, expanded by MW)
[10] The actual word in the text is “*Qáf*”: which in Persian mythology, literature, and mysticism “*Kúh-i-Qáf*” (Mount Qáf) or simply “*Qáf*” is the abode of the immortal Simorgh (phoenix); Shoghi Effendi translated it as “mount” in the Persian hidden words no. 1 (MG’s note).
[11] “*jánán*”; “Well-Beloved”; Persian Hidden Words, no. 1 (MG’s note).
[12] “*kashí*”; “ark”; another word for “ship, ark, vessel” (MG’s note).
[13] “*manaví*”; “mystic”; Persian Hidden Words, no. 16 (MG’s note).
[14] “*par-i-maní goshodand*”; is a an expression. See *The Persian Hidden Words*, no. 79 (MG’s note).
[15] “*nafs va hawa*”; “self and passion”; The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic) (MG’s note).
[16] “*makman*”; “realm”; The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic).
[17] “*hayákil*”; “spirits”; The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic) (MG’s note).
[18] “*gholámán*”; “youths”; see “youth” in The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Arabic) (MG’s note).
[19] “*sághí*”; “Cupbearer”; Persian Hidden Words, no. 59 (MG’s note).
[20] “*Jazb va Valah*”; “ecstasy and rapture”; The *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 195 (MG’s note).
[21] “*jamál-i-Dust*”; “beauty of the Beloved”; Persian Hidden Words, no. 82 (MG’s note).
[22] “*Lawh-i-Mahfuz*”; “Guarded Tablet”; The *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, 79, 97. The *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 223 (MG’s note).
[23] “*Kawthar*”; The *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 27. Also “the river of everlasting life”; Persian Hidden Words, no. 37 (MG’s note).
[24] “*ghad-i-mard-i-va mardá negi alam nama’yad*”; Persian colloquialism which literally means to erect one’s posture as if to stand tall and show manliness (i.e. to arise and show courage and honor in the face of a challenge) (MG’s note).
[25] Compare to the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 116 (MG’s note).
[26] Qur’án: *Al-Baqarah*(2): 156 (2:151 in J.M. Rodwell translation) (MG’s note).
[27] Compare to Qur’án: *Ibrahim*(14): 20. (MG’s note)

Tablet of the Holy Mariner

*from the Arabic
"condensed & correlated"*

**i He is the Gracious, the Well-Beloved!
ii O Holy Mariner!**

**1 Bid thine ark of eternity appear before the
Celestial Concourse,
2 Launch it upon the ancient sea, in His Name,
the Most Wondrous,
3 And let the angelic spirits enter, in the Name
of God, the Most High.**

**4 Unmoor it, then, that it may sail upon the
ocean of glory,
5 Haply the dwellers therein may attain the
retreats of nearness in the everlasting realm.
6 Having reached the sacred strand, the shore
of the crimson seas,**

**7 Bid them issue forth and attain this ethereal
invisible station,**

=====
18a They passed the grades of worldly limitations
=====

12 Wherein the ark of the Cause remaineth motionless
even though to its dwellers be declared all divine
attributes.

13a O Mariner!

13b#1 Teach them that are within the ark that which
we have taught thee behind the mystic veil.

14 Perchance they may not tarry in the sacred snow-
white spot,

10 Around which the Glory of Moses doth circle with
the everlasting hosts;

8 A station wherein the Lord hath in the Flame of His
Beauty appeared within the deathless tree;

*13b#2 Teach them that are within the ark that which we
have taught thee behind the mystic veil.*

17 May know the mysteries hidden in the Seas of light.

15 But may soar upon the wings of the spirit unto that
station which the Lord hath exalted above all
mention in the worlds below,

9 Wherein the embodiments of His Cause cleansed
themselves of self and passion;

11 Wherein the Hand of God was drawn forth from
His bosom of Grandeur;

*25#1 Whereupon the maid of heaven looked out from her
exalted chamber,*

=====
16a May wing through space even as the favored birds
18b and reached that of the divine unity, the center of
heavenly guidance.

16b in the realm of eternal reunion;

=====
26#1 *And with her brow signed to the Celestial Concourse,*

38#1 *"That they may all come down from their everlasting
chambers and tremble,*

39#1 *"And kiss their hands and feet for having soared to the
heights of faithfulness;*

*27#1 Flooding with the light of her countenance the heaven
and the earth,*

=====
28#1 *And as the radiance of her beauty shone upon the
people of dust,*

=====
29#1 All beings were shaken in their mortal graves.

=====
19 They have desired to ascend unto that state
which the Lord hath ordained to be above
their stations.

20 Whereupon the burning meteor cast them
out from them that abide in the Kingdom of
His Presence,

21 And they heard the Voice of Grandeur
raised from behind the unseen pavilion
upon the Height of Glory:

22 "O guardian angels! Return them to their
abode in the world below,

23 "Inasmuch as they have purposed to rise to
that sphere which the wings of the celestial
dove have never attained;

24 "Whereupon the ship of fancy standeth still
which the minds of them that comprehend
cannot grasp."

*notes: to read the dominant storyline of the combined Tablet, follow the verses in bold
the letters after the verse number (a,b,c,d) means that verse was segmented for correlation
#1, #2, #3 denotes that a verse is repeated, verses in italics are secondary repetitions*

Tablet of the Holy Mariner

*Cole's provisional translation from the Persian
"correlated"*

i He is the Foreigner, the Persian, the Iraqi.
1b with the permission of the holy mariner

1c in the pre-existent vessel,

1d then did it set sail upon the sea of names.

1a When the passengers on the divine ark had clung to
one of the names,

4a#1,b Indeed, by the aid of the lord, that eternal ark set
sail upon and plied the spiritual waters of wisdom.

2b#1 so that they might make for the Yemen of the
powerful sovereign of oneness,

2c#1 arriving at the shore of divine unity.

=====
4a#2 *Indeed, by the aid of the lord,*
3 Thus might they drink from the chalice of
transcendence.

=====
2a They traversed the stations of limitation,
=====

5#1 Then they reached a place where the name, the
Still, became dominant over their course, so that
the ship of the spirit was becalmed, unable to
move.

6 At that moment, the impregnable command of the
lord descended from the holy and everlasting
heavens.

7 The mariner of eternity was ordered to teach a
single letter of the hidden word to the people of the
ark.

8a Thus did they, by the succor of the Unseen, pass
through the valley of psychological bewilderment

8b and arrive at the great court of spiritual unity,

8c attaining the Mount Qaf of eternal life and the
presence of the lord of souls.

9a When the people of the ship attained to the word
of the spiritual friend,

9b they were immediately filled with meaning

9c and soared into the sacred sky.

=====
10a By the divine grace and mercy, they passed
beyond the peaks of carnal desire

10b and the deepest levels of negligence and
blindness.

11 At that moment the breezes of paradise wafted
upon their bodies from the sanctuary of the All
Merciful.

=====
12a After they soared in the heavens of divine
nearness,

12b they traversed the spiritual stations in the place
of safety and security.

13 Finally, they halted at the homeland of lovers.

=====
14 *The inhabitants of this station arose to serve
them and show them kindness.*

15 *The immortal attendants and the holy servers
poured ruby wine liberally.*

16 Intoxication with the wine of divine knowledge,
and the cup of eternal wisdom induced such love
and distraction that they escaped from their own
being and that of existing things.

17 They gave their hearts to the beauty of the friend.

18 For ages and centuries they settled and dwelt in
that pleasant and spiritual station, in that divine
and holy rose garden, with perfect joy and
happiness.

19 Then the gales of divine tests and the winds of
lordly temptation blew from the Sheba of the
everlasting Cause.

20 They became distracted by the beauty of the wine
server and grew heedless of the immortal
countenance, to the extent that they imagined the
shadow to be the sun and phantoms to be light.

21#1 They set out for the ladders of the greatest name
so that they might scale those heavens and arrive at
that seat and place.

22a When they rose toward it, the divine assayers
descended upon them with the sacred touchstone,

22b by the irresistible decree of the lord.

=====
23abc#1 When these emissaries *did not perceive the
scent of the spiritual youth, they forbade entry to all.*

21#2 *They set out for the ladders of the greatest name so
that they might scale those heavens and arrive at that
seat and place.*

5#2 *Then they reached a place where the name, the Still,
became dominant over their course, so that the ship of
the spirit was becalmed, unable to move.*

continued correlation from the condensed Arabic Tablet

=====
25#2 Whereupon the maid of heaven looked
out from her exalted chamber,

26#2 And with her brow signed to the
Celestial Concourse,

27#2 Flooding with the light of her
countenance the heaven and the earth,

28#2 And as the radiance of her beauty shone
upon the people of dust,

29#2 All beings were shaken in their mortal
graves.

30 She then raised the call which no ear
through all eternity hath ever heard,

31 And thus proclaimed: "By the Lord! He
whose heart hath not the fragrance of the
love of the exalted and glorious Arabian
Youth,

32 "Can in no wise ascend unto the glory of the
highest heaven."

=====
34 And commanded her: "Descend into space
from the mansions of eternity,

35 "And turn thou unto that which they have
concealed in the inmost of their hearts.

=====
36 "Shouldst thou inhale the perfume of the
robe from the Youth that hath been hidden
within the tabernacle of light by reason of
that which the hands of the wicked have
wrought,

37 "Raise a cry within thyself, that all the
inmates of the chambers of Paradise, that
are the embodiments of the eternal wealth,
may understand and hearken;

=====
38 "That they may all come down from their
everlasting chambers and tremble,

39 "And kiss their hands and feet for having
soared to the heights of faithfulness;

40 "Perchance they may find from their robes
the fragrance of the Beloved One."

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

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

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

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

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

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

47 She then cried aloud, wailed and repaired to
her own station within her most lofty
mansion,

48 And then gave utterance to one mystic
word, whispered privily by her honeyed
tongue,

49 And raised the call amidst the Celestial
Concourse and the immortal maids of
heaven:

50 "By the Lord! I found not from these idle
claimants the breeze of Faithfulness!

=====
51 "By the Lord! The Youth hath remained
lone and forlorn in the land of exile in the
hands of the ungodly."

52 She then uttered within herself such a cry
that the Celestial Concourse did shriek and
tremble,

53 And she fell upon the dust and gave up the
spirit. It seemeth she was called and
hearkened unto Him that summoned her
unto the Realm on High.

54 Glorified be He that created her out of the
essence of love in the midmost heart of His
exalted paradise!

=====
55 Thereupon the maids of heaven hastened
forth from their chambers, upon whose
countenances the eye of no dweller in the
highest paradise had ever gazed.

56 They all gathered around her, and lo! they
found her body fallen upon the dust;

=====
57 And as they beheld her state and
comprehended a word of the tale told by the
Youth, they bared their heads, rent their
garments asunder, beat upon their faces,
forgot their joy, shed tears and smote with
their hands upon their cheeks, and this is
verily one of the mysterious grievous
afflictions

continued correlation from the Persian Tablet

=====
24ab#1 Afterwards, there occurred what is inscribed
upon the guarded tablet.

25a Then, you who dwell upon the plain of divine love
and drink the wine of unceasing forgiveness,

25b do not exchange nearness to the beauty of the
friend for both worlds.

26a Do not prefer the presence of the wine server to
meeting him,

26b and do not give your heart to the intoxicant of
ignorance and heedlessness in preference to his wine
of knowledge and wisdom.

27 Lips are for mentioning the beloved; do not defile
them with filthy water.

28 The heart is the home of everlasting mysteries, do
not busy it with perishable things.

29a Seek the water of life from the fountain of the
beauty of the All-Praised,

29b not from the manifestations of Satan.

=====
36a Now, they must put forth their utmost effort and
give their unswerving attention,

36b so that their inward secrets not be contrary to their
overt behavior, nor their outward deeds at variance
with their inner mysteries.

=====
23b#2 perceive the scent of the spiritual youth,

24b#2 inscribed upon the guarded tablet.

=====
30 Yes, this ephemeral youth here mentions the highest
station of the love of the divine friends.

31 He does so by reference to the wonders of the text of
divine unity and the gems of the wisdom of the self-
sufficient sovereign.

32a Thus, perhaps some might recognize the value of
courage and gallantry,

32b and put off the shirt of negligence and carnal
appetites.

23b#3 perceive the scent of the spiritual youth,

=====
34abc#1 Thus would they receive the lights dawning
from the morn of his brow and the effulgence of the
perspicuous day, to at least the extent that they would
be enabled to unite their inner and outer selves.

34a#2 Thus would they receive the lights

34c#2 and the effulgence of the perspicuous day,

=====
35a We have passed beyond the loftiness of
abstraction, the sublimity of divine oneness, .

35b the ultimate recognition that God is above all
attributes, and the most great sanctification.

=====
23a#2 When these emissaries

23b #4 did not perceive the scent of the spiritual youth,

=====
23c#2 they forbade entry to all.

37 We have traversed the stage of expending the self
for others.

38 Arise to expend justice and fairness upon the souls
that pertain to you.

=====
39 In the end, however, you prefer the cloak of carnal
longing and desire to the robe of divine benediction,
and you exchange the song of the nightingale of
immortality for the disagreeable croaking of death
that issues from the throats of the hateful and
rebellious.

40 How miserable a trade you make!

=====
33 Perhaps they will visit the illumined beauty of the
pure, radiant and sanctified friend in the land of love,
detachment, amiability and exaltation.

=====
41 We are from God and to him do we return.

=====
42b#1 the immortal temples of glory shall


42c#1 through the adornment of holiness and the divine
attributes,

=====
42a God willing, we maintain the hope that

42b#2 the immortal temples of glory shall

42d appear illumined, gentle, pure and undefiled like the
eternal sun.

=====
43 This is not difficult for God.

Realms of Paradise <i>text from Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of All Food (Lambden provisional translation) and The Seven Valleys</i>	Other qualities of the realms <i>Bau's interpretation - other authors have assigned some of these qualities to different realms; this defines each realm in unambiguous terms, but the reality may not be so distinct</i>	Ringstone Symbol  <i>by 'Abdu'l-Bahá</i>	Creation story from the Holy Bible (KJV) <i>#) of the Day of Creation from Genesis</i>	Evolution from modern science <i>#)'s in order of time – evolution and the origin of the universe are still under research</i>	Bible and science analogies for creation and evolution <i>evolution and the origin of the universe are still under research</i>	Bible and science analogies for the Bahá'í Era <i>#) of the Day of Creation from Genesis</i>	Bahá'u'lláh in the Tablet of the Holy Mariner
Háhút Heaven of God's Oneness Throne of God's Oneness Eternal Mystery Resplendent Selfhood	The Realm of God's Unknowable, Impenetrable Essence The Primal Point	The realm of God is depicted as the upper horizontal line	0) "In the beginning God."	0) The singularity before the big bang; the true nature of the singularity is not known	Primal Point as the unknowable singularity before the big bang God's love as the gravity which binds the point	0) Primal Point – the Báb	the Unknowable God: "our Lord, the Most High"
Láhút Heaven of Divine Eternity Throne of God enraptured servants on the Seat of Glory who recite verses of light in the Heaven of Manifest Justice "Snow-white light" "Heavenly Court"	Primal Will of Revelation & Creation God's Self and Perfections revealed Creator; Lord of Lords on His Throne, Hand of God, Tongue of Grandeur Heavenly Court- maidens with God's Perfections, illuminating the heavens and earth, singing praises Bahá'u'lláh as "He is God"	The connection between God and the Manifestations is depicted by the vertical line segment between the upper and middle horizontal lines	1) "Let there be light."	1) "Let there" Initiation of "be" the big bang "light" and the creation of light (photons) and elementary particles and fundamental forces, that eventually generate hydrogen and helium atoms	Primal Thought, Primal Will and Primal Action result in a release of God's love, which causes Creation; a release of gravity causes the big bang God's light as messages as photons with electro-magnetic forces and wave-particle duality	1) "Let there" Primal will "be" visitation by heavenly maiden at the Síyáh-Chál prison "light" Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration at Ridván	Bahá'u'lláh as "He is God" "He is the Gracious, the Well-Beloved" "my Lord, the Most Glorious"
Jabarút Heaven of Dominion Deep Realm of Divine Omnipotence Heaven of God's Unity servants in absolute submission and obedience to the will of God "Golden land" "Empyrean Heaven," the firmament	God as Almighty Lord and His Word Realm of God's command, authority Word of God, Most Exalted Pen Universal Laws, Guarded Tablet (fate) Realm of Divine Unity – unity in absolute submission and obedience Manifestations in unity Bahá'u'lláh as the "Ancient Beauty"	The realm of the Manifestations is depicted as the middle horizontal line	2) "Let there be a firmament [called Heaven]."	2) The space-time continuum – the big bang caused an expansion of the singularity; the inflation created space and time, which provides the structure of the known universe; early atoms and subatomic particles fill the universe in a gaseous state.	Word of God for the first four days of Creation as universal laws of physics; which causes the evolution of the universe leading to our galaxy, our solar system and our planet earth God's dominion and firmament as the universe and the space-time continuum	2) At Ridván 1863, Bahá'u'lláh states there will not be another Manifestation for over 1000 years (time) Bahá'u'lláh's proclamation to rulers spreads His message throughout the world (space). His spiritual teachings renew the firmament for humanity	Bahá'u'lláh as: in unity with all other Manifestations "the Holy Mariner" who launches a new religion in the "ethereal invisible station... wherein [appear] ... the Flame... Glory of Moses... Hand of God"
Malakút Heaven of Justice Boundless "Kingdom of God" servants are "companions of the light" and enter "with the permission of God" "Verdant land" "Kingdom of the Angels"	God as Lord of Hosts Realm of Distinction for the individual Manifestations, who address their eras "Kingdom of angels" – angels are souls who are "firm in the covenant" Concourse of angels in serried ranks Realm of human souls	The connection between the Manifestations and the human realm is depicted by the vertical line segment between the middle and lower horizontal lines	4) "Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide day from night."	3) Stars –the early atoms gather into massive clouds which eventually collapse from gravity until the atoms are under so much pressure they ignite and explode with a nuclear fusion chain reaction (H ₂ >He), the birth of a star; the nuclear reactions continue to create light over the life of the star	God created messengers to distribute His Word; stars form (mini big bangs) which spread light and other particles "day from night" as divine justice as every action has an equal and opposite reaction days of creation as evolution as expansion and consolidation	4) "stars" Letters of the Living, Hands of the Cause of God, Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh; also the "Faithful" and "true believers" of Bahá'u'lláh and God; saints and martyrs The renewed Covenant has the authority to expel Covenant-breakers (day from night)	Bahá'u'lláh as: the "Mariner" whose teachings from behind the "mystic veil" are shared with the Bahá'ís; His new Covenant has eternal truths and revised religious and social laws for His dispensation
Nasút Paradise of Bounty "Point of the human realm" "Crimson land" "Golden Secret" "Snow-white mystery" "the mortal world"	Realm of Divine Bounty - to evolve complex God-like humans. Bounty of: the human brain for abstract thought the heart to love and appreciate human hands to create "free will" to choose to know, love and worship God	The realm of humanity is depicted by the lower horizontal line which includes Nasút and the physical side of humans	6) "Let us make man in our image."	6) evolution to modern humans and beyond	"man in our image" as the human capacity to recognize God, reflect godliness and form our own creations Word of God; "He is God," unity in diversity, divine justice, an ever advancing civilization	6) Bahá'u'lláh and His teachings attract Bahá'ís, but everyone is under the influence of the updated Covenant: evolution of a higher potential station for "true believers" with both inner and outer godly qualities	Bahá'u'lláh as: the human Bahá'u'lláh / Mírzá Husayn-'Alí with human feelings and thoughts; God reveals the meteor story to relieve His distress over Mírzá Yahyá
The physical world animal, plant and mineral kingdoms: the world of dust	Realm of the mortal, physical world realm of the human body the animal kingdom the plant kingdom the mineral kingdom		3) "Let the dry land appear ... Let the earth bring forth grass" 5) "God createth...every living creature that moveth"	4) Novas- stars burn out and explode, creating heavier atoms, these combine to make molecules, dust, rocks, planets, galaxies, new stars, and proto-life chemicals 5) Life is sparked into proto-life chemicals which evolve into cells to plants to animals	mineral kingdom diversifies; bigger atoms evolve from the novas (evolved mini big bangs) Word of God for the plant, animal & human kingdoms as life & evolution– to grow and diversify (big bangs of life, sentience & abstract thought)	3) Bahá'u'lláh's social teachings provide a new foundation for humanity to advance in this age (land, earth) 5) the plants and animals of the world are all affected by the updated Covenant through human progress	The human body of Bahá'u'lláh/ Mírzá Husayn-'Alí

Realms of Paradise <i>text from Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of All Food (Lambden translation) and The Seven Valleys</i>	Bahá'u'lláh in the Tablet of the Holy Mariner	The Seven Valleys and stations from Gems of Divine Mysteries <i>by Bahá'u'lláh - the stages vary in Bahá'u'lláh's writings depending on the recipient; text from "Gems" in italics</i>	Travelers' journey from the Arabic and Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner <i>#)'s in the text order; Persian Tablet's text in italics</i>	Nine orders of angels <i>from Christian Catholic theologians – these are not well defined in the Bible, there are other versions of this order</i>	Meteor story characters from the Arabic and Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner <i>text from the Persian Tablet in italics</i>	Maid of heaven story characters from the Arabic and Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner <i>text from the Persian Tablet in italics</i>
Háhút - Heaven of God's Oneness Throne of God's Oneness, Eternal Mystery, Resplendent Selfhood	The unknowable God: “our Lord, the Most High”				a station inaccessible to human souls and above “the celestial dove” (above Bahá'u'lláh)	
Láhút Heaven of Divine Eternity Throne of God enraptured servants on the Seat of Glory who recite verses of light in the Heaven of Manifest Justice “Snow-white light” “Heavenly Court”	Bahá'u'lláh as “He is God” “He is the Gracious, the Well-Beloved” “my Lord, the Most Glorious”	“Heavenly Court” <i>“City that bath no name or description” revolves around the Seat of Eternity</i> <i>“City of Immortality”</i> <i>“City of the All-Merciful” and “Garden of the All-Glorious”</i>	----- 8) “retreats of nearness in the everlasting realm,” “this ethereal invisible station,” station “exalted above all mention in the worlds below,” “Seas of light,” “divine unity, center of heavenly guidance”; <i>“soared into the sacred sky,” “soared in the heavens of divine nearness,” “place of safety and security”</i>	First sphere of angels: servants of God who praise and support Him Seraphim- attendants of God's Throne, continuous praise Cherubim- guardians; they expelled Adam and Eve from Paradise Thrones- wheel shaped, bearers of God's justice and authority	“Voice of Grandeur” from “Height of Glory” as God's voice from above His Throne “Guardian angels” as cherubim “Burning meteor” as a cherub or throne angel <i>“divine assayers” and “touchstone” as cherubim and a throne angel</i>	“our Lord, the Most High” as God who is worshipped on His Throne maiden's spirit to “Realm on High” <i>“beyond the loftiness of abstraction, the sublimity of divine oneness...”</i> Maid of Heaven as “hour of the spirit,” “Wisdom” behind the “mystic veil” maids in the Heavenly Court “my Lord, the Most Glorious”
Jabarút Heaven of Dominion Deep Realm of Divine Omnipotence Heaven of God's Unity servants in absolute submission and obedience to the will of God “Golden land” “Empyrean Heaven,” the firmament	Bahá'u'lláh as: in unity with all other Manifestations “the Holy Mariner” who launches a new religion in the “ethereal invisible station...wherein [appear] ...the Flame...Glory of Moses...Hand of God”	“Empyrean Heaven,” the firmament <i>“Garden of Wonderment” (this is a different placement than the Valley of Wonderment)</i> “Valley of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness” <i>“City of Absolute Nothingness”</i>	----- 11) <i>“escaped from their own beings,”</i> 7) <i>“great court of spiritual unity,” “Mt. Qaf of eternal life and presence of the lord of souls,” “the Yemen of the powerful sovereign of oneness”</i>	Second sphere of angels: governors of the universe Dominions- the Lords and commanders to the lower ranks Virtues- enforcers of God's natural law, agents of miracles Powers – defenders from evil	desired rank that God “ordained to be above their stations,” <i>“the seat and place” of “the greatest name”</i> sought after by Mírzá Yahyá is that of Bahá'u'lláh's Dominion and Power, not of Servitude or Holiness	This realm enforces the test of the updated Covenant; <i>the “guarded tablet”</i> Maid of Heaven as “Law of God” illuminating heaven and earth, with the decree of the “test of faith” handmaiden as the Bábi Faith's enforcer, the “hour of nearness” handmaidens as enforcers of other “churches,” <i>emissaries</i>
Malakút Heaven of Justice Boundless “Kingdom of God” servants are “companions of the light” and enter “with the permission of God” “Verdant land” “Kingdom of the Angels”	Bahá'u'lláh as: the “Mariner” whose teachings from behind the “mystic veil” are shared with His followers, the Bahá'is, in the ark; His new Covenant has eternal truths and revised religious and social laws for His dispensation	“Kingdom of the Angels” “Valley of Wonderment” “Valley of Contentment” <i>“Journey of Contentment”</i> <i>“Journey of Resignation”</i> “Valley of Unity” <i>“City of Divine Unity,” “garden of oneness,” “court of detachment,” “the believers”</i>	----- 10) <i>“wine of divine knowledge,” “love and distraction”</i> 6) <i>past the “valley of psychological bewilderment”</i> 12) “realm of eternal reunion,” <i>“perfect joy and happiness”</i> 9) <i>“homeland of lovers”</i> 5) “sacred strand, shore of the crimson seas,” “the sacred snow white spot”; <i>“shore of divine unity”</i> 4) “grades of worldly limitations”; <i>“stations of limitation”</i> ----- 3) motionless “ark of the Cause,” “shore of the crimson seas”; <i>“ship was...unable to move”</i>	Third sphere of angels: intercessors to humanity Archangels- messengers and heralds to the holy ones Principalities – overseers to groups; nations, cities, churches Angels – messengers to humans	“abide in the Kingdom of His Presence” and <i>“Sheba of the everlasting Cause”</i> refer to Mírzá Yahyá's close access to Bahá'u'lláh <i>“wine server”</i> as Mírzá Yahyá <i>“forbade entry to all”</i> as Bahá'u'lláh's withdrawal from the community during the “Most Great Separation”	This realm undergoes the “test of faith” Maid of Heaven as “Cause of God” overseer of all “churches” handmaiden as Bábi Faith's overseer handmaidens oversee “churches” Supreme Concourse for souls of prophets, saints, martyrs, and “true believers” in the Bahá'í dispensation Celestial Concourse of “angelic spirits” as the living and departed “Faithful” “dwellers of the chambers of Paradise”; Abhá Kingdom; souls in the valleys <i>bouris who serve the “Faithful”</i>
Nasút Paradise of Bounty “Point of the human realm” “Crimson land” “Golden Secret” “Snow-white mystery” “the mortal world”	Bahá'u'lláh as: the human Bahá'u'lláh / Mírzá Husayn-‘Alí with human feelings and thoughts; God reveals the meteor story to relieve His distress over Mírzá Yahyá	----- “the mortal world” “Valley of Knowledge” <i>“City/Life of Knowledge,” “people of truth,” “realm of guidance,” “kingdom of virtue”</i> “Valley of Love” <i>“City of Love and Rapture”</i> “Valley of Search” <i>“Garden of Search” “the seeker”</i>	----- 2) “ancient sea,” “ocean of glory,” “crimson seas”; <i>“sea of names,” “spiritual waters of wisdom”</i> 1) “Celestial Concourse,” “angelic spirits” in the “ark of eternity”; <i>“passengers on the divine ark”</i> ; enter in His “Name”		“burning meteor” as Mírzá Yahyá falling to “the world below” falling stars as the divines who don't accept Bahá'u'lláh “ship of fancy” (Bábi Faith after the Most Great Separation) can't rise above Nasút	Humanity is searched for the “Faithful” humanity's “inmost hearts”, “the tabernacle of light” <i>“the divine friends,” the “inner selves”</i>
The physical world animal, plant and mineral kingdoms: the world of dust	The physical body of Bahá'u'lláh/ Mírzá Husayn-‘Alí	----- “abode of dust,” <i>earth of “divine bounty,” “city of error,” “the heedless,” “the deniers”</i>	“self and passion”; <i>“carnal desire,” “negligence and blindness”</i>			“people of the dust,” “mortal graves,” “claimants,” “ungodly,” <i>“outer selves”</i>