

Bahá'í Feast Book

Quotes for 19 Bahá'í Feasts

This Feast Book contains 9 quotes for each of the 19 Bahá'í months, for presentation with prayers at the spiritual portion of the Feast. Since communities are free to choose any Bahá'í Writings & other Scripture, this compilation should not be viewed as “officially sanctioned” readings. It is just a tool prepared for busy community members to conserve time by not having to select quotes prior to every feast. Where possible, the Writings were chosen to reflect the Feast Name or selected on related sub-themes, as presented in the index below.

With their own copy of this compilation, individual Bahá'ís will be able to read directly as the quotes are presented during the spiritual portion of the Feast and prepare for the upcoming Feast by deepening during the Bahá'í month. Repeating the same selections over the years will also foster individual knowledge & provide continuity among communities regionally.

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Feast of Bahá (Splendour)—March 21

Reading 1

Call out to Zion, O Carmel, and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come! His all-conquering sovereignty is manifest; His all-encompassing **splendour** is revealed. Beware lest thou hesitate or halt. Hasten forth and circumambulate the City of God that hath descended from heaven, the celestial Kaaba round which have circled in adoration the favoured of God, the pure in heart, and the company of the most exalted angels. O how I long to announce unto every spot on the surface of the earth, and to carry to each one of its cities, the glad-tidings of this Revelation - a Revelation to which the heart of Sinai hath been attracted, and in whose name the Burning Bush is calling: `Unto God, the Lord of Lords, belong the kingdoms of earth and heaven.' Verily this is the Day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the Day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Baha who have been mentioned in the Book of Names. (Bahá'u'lláh: Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 89)

Reading 2

Say: God hath made My hidden love the key to the Treasure; would that ye might perceive it! But for the key, the Treasure would to all eternity have remained concealed; would that ye might believe it! Say: This is the Source of Revelation, the Dawning-place of **Splendour**, Whose brightness hath illumined the horizons of the world. Would that ye might understand! This is, verily, that fixed Decree through which every irrevocable decree hath been established. (Bahá'u'lláh—The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Page: 24)

Reading 3

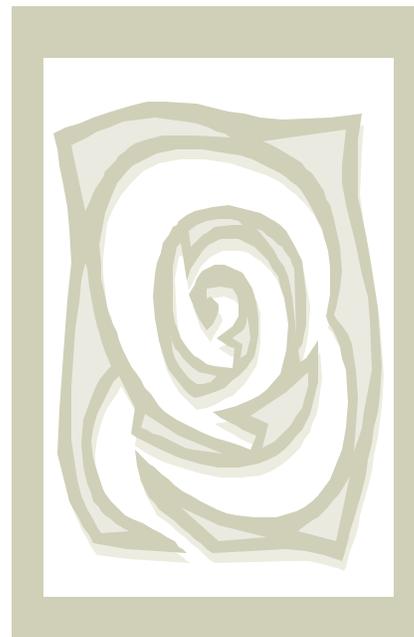
Rejoice with great joy, for God hath made thee "the Dayspring of His light", inasmuch as within thee was born the Manifestation of His Glory. Be thou glad for this name that hath been conferred upon thee - a name through which the Day-Star of grace hath shed its **splendour**, through which both earth and heaven have been illumined. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Pages: 53-54)

Feast of Bahá (Splendour)—March 21

Reading 4

We have demonstrated that all things are the recipients and revealers of the **splendours** of that ideal King, and that the signs of the revelation of that Sun, the Source of all **splendour**, exist and are manifest in the mirrors of beings. Nay, were man to gaze with the eye of divine and spiritual discernment, he will readily recognize that nothing whatsoever can exist without the revelation of the **splendour** of God, the ideal King. Consider how all created things eloquently testify to the revelation of that inner Light within them. Behold how within all things the portals of the Ridvan of God are opened, that seekers may attain the cities of understanding and wisdom, and enter the gardens of knowledge and power. Within every garden they will behold the mystic bride of inner meaning enshrined within the chambers of utterance in the utmost grace and fullest adornment.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Iqan, Page: 140)



Reading 5

These Suns of Truth are the universal Manifestations of God in the worlds of His attributes and names, even as the visible sun that assisteth, as decreed by God, the true One, the Adored, in the development of all earthly things, such as the trees, the fruits, and colours thereof, the minerals of the earth, and all that may be witnessed in the world of creation, so do the divine Luminaries, by their loving care and educative influence, cause the trees of divine unity, the fruits of His oneness, the leaves of detachment, the blossoms of knowledge and certitude, and the myrtles of wisdom and utterance, to exist and be made manifest. Thus it is that through the rise of these Luminaries of God the world is made new, the waters of everlasting life stream forth, the billows of loving-kindness surge, the clouds of grace are gathered, and the breeze of bounty bloweth upon all created things. It is the warmth that these Luminaries of God generate, and the undying fires they kindle, which cause the light of the love of God to burn fiercely in the heart of humanity. It is through the abundant grace of these Symbols of Detachment that the Spirit of life everlasting is breathed into the bodies of the dead. Assuredly the visible sun is but a sign of the **splendour** of that Day-star of Truth, that Sun Which can never have a peer, a likeness, or rival. Through Him all things live, move, and have their being. Through His grace they are made manifest, and unto Him they all return. From Him all things have sprung, and unto the treasuries of His revelation they all have repaired. From Him all created things did proceed, and to the depositories of His law they did revert.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Iqan, Pages: 33-34)

Feast of Bahá (Splendour)—March 21

Reading 6

O friend of mine! The Word of God is the king of words and its pervasive influence is incalculable. It hath ever dominated and will continue to dominate the realm of being. The Great Being saith: The Word is the master key for the whole world, inasmuch as through its potency the doors of the hearts of men, which in reality are the doors of heaven, are unlocked. No sooner had but a glimmer of its effulgent **splendour** shone forth upon the **mirror** of love than the blessed word 'I am the Best-Beloved' was reflected therein. It is an ocean inexhaustible in riches, comprehending all things. Every thing which can be perceived is but an emanation therefrom. High, immeasurably high is this sublime station, in whose shadow moveth the essence of loftiness and splendour, wrapt in praise and adoration.

Methinks people's sense of taste hath, alas, been sorely affected by the fever of negligence and folly, for they are found to be wholly unconscious and deprived of the sweetness of His utterance. How regrettable indeed that man should debar himself from the fruits of the tree of wisdom while his days and hours pass swiftly away. Please God, the hand of divine power may safeguard all mankind and direct their steps towards the horizon of true understanding.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Pages: 173-174)

Reading 7



The One true God may be compared unto the sun and the believer unto a mirror. No sooner is the mirror placed before the sun than it reflects its light. The unbeliever may be likened unto a stone. No matter how long it is exposed to the sunshine, it cannot reflect the sun. Thus the former layeth down his life as a sacrifice, while the latter doeth against God what he committeth. Indeed, if God willeth, He is potent to turn the stone into a mirror, but the person himself remaineth reconciled to his state. Had he wished to become a crystal, God would have made him to assume crystal form. For on that Day whatever cause prompteth the believer to believe in Him, the same will also be available to the unbeliever. But when the latter suffereth himself to be wrapt in veils, the same cause shutteth him out as by a veil. Thus, as is clearly evident today, those who have set their faces toward God, the True One, have believed in Him because of the Bayan, while such as are veiled have been deprived because of it.

(The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Page: 103)

Feast of Bahá (Splendour)—March 21

Reading 8

These energies with which the Day Star of Divine bounty and Source of heavenly guidance hath endowed the reality of man lie, however, latent within him, even as the flame is hidden within the candle and the rays of light are potentially present in the lamp. The radiance of these energies may be obscured by worldly desires even as the light of the sun can be concealed beneath the dust and dross which cover the mirror. Neither the candle nor the lamp can be lighted through their own unaided efforts, nor can it ever be possible for the mirror to free itself from its dross. It is clear and evident that until a fire is kindled the lamp will never be ignited, and unless the dross is blotted out from the face of the mirror it can never represent the image of the sun nor reflect its light and glory.

A pure and stainless Soul be made manifest in the kingdoms of earth and heaven... Led by the light of unfailing guidance, and invested with supreme sovereignty, They are commissioned to use the inspiration of Their words, the effusions of Their infallible grace and the sanctifying breeze of Their Revelation for the cleansing of every longing heart and receptive spirit from the dross and dust of earthly cares and limitations. Then, and only then, will the Trust of God, latent in the reality of man, emerge, as resplendent as the rising Orb of Divine Revelation, from behind the veil of concealment, and implant the ensign of its revealed glory upon the summits of men's hearts. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 66-67)

Reading 9

Now amidst all the peoples of the world must the beloved arise, with a heart even as the day-star, a strong inward urge, a shining brow, a musk-scented breath, a tongue speaking ever of God, an exposition crystal-clear, a high resolve, a power born of heaven, a spiritual character, a confirmation nothing short of the divine. Let them one and all become as a **splendour** on the horizon of heaven, and in the skies of the world a dazzling star. Let them be fruitful trees in the celestial bowers, sweet-scented blooms in the divine gardens; let them be verses of perfection on the page of the universe, words of oneness in the Book of Life. This is the first age, and the early beginnings of the dispensation of the Most Great Light, wherefore, within this century, virtues must be acquired, goodly qualities must be perfected within this span of time. In these very days the Abha Paradise must pitch its pavilions on the plains of the world. The lights of reality must now be revealed, and the secrets of God's bestowals must now be made known, and now must the olden grace shine forth and this world change into the pleasure-ground of heaven, the garden of God. And out of pure hearts, and through heavenly bounties, all the perfections, qualities and attributes of the divine must now be made manifest.

(Abdu'l-Bahá: Selections From the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá , Page: 232)



Feast of Jalál (Glory) April 9

Reading 1

Wayfarer in the path of God! Take thou thy portion of the ocean of His **grace**, and deprive not thyself of the things that lie hidden in its depths. Be thou of them that have partaken of its treasures. A dewdrop out of this ocean would, if shed upon all that are in the heavens and on the earth, suffice to enrich them with the bounty of God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. With the hands of renunciation draw forth from its life-giving waters, and sprinkle therewith all created things, that they may be cleansed from all man-made limitations and may approach the mighty seat of God, this hallowed and resplendent Spot.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages 279-280)

Reading 2

The whole duty of man in this Day is to attain that share of the flood of **grace** which God poureth forth for him. Let none, therefore, consider the largeness or smallness of the receptacle. The portion of some might lie in the palm of a man's hand, the portion of others might fill a cup, and of others even a gallon-measure. (Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, page 8)

True reliance is for the servant to pursue his profession and calling in this world, to hold fast unto the Lord, to seek naught but His **grace**, inasmuch as in His Hands is the destiny of all His servants. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 155)

Reading 3

These gifts are inherent in man himself. That which is preeminent above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, is the gift of Divine Revelation. Every bounty conferred by the Creator upon man, be it material or spiritual, is subservient unto this. It is, in its essence, and will ever so remain, the Bread which cometh down from Heaven. It is God's supreme testimony, the clearest evidence of His truth, the sign of His consummate bounty, the token of His all-encompassing mercy, the proof of His most loving providence, the symbol of His most perfect **grace**. He hath, indeed, partaken of this highest gift of God who hath recognized His Manifestation in this Day. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 195)

Feast of Jalál (Glory) April 9

Reading 4



O thou handmaid of God! In this day, to thank God for His bounties consisteth in possessing a radiant heart, and a soul open to the promptings of the spirit. This is the essence of thanksgiving. ... Regarding one's lack of capacity and one's undeserving on the Day of Resurrection, this does not cause one to be shut out from gifts and bounties; for this is not the Day of Justice but the Day of **Grace**, while justice is allotting to each whatever is his due. Then look thou not at the degree of thy capacity, look thou at the boundless favour of Baha'u'llah; all-encompassing is His bounty, and consummate His **grace**.

(Abdu'l-Bahá: Selections From the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 179)

Reading 5

Wherefore, be thankful to God, for having strengthened thee to aid His Cause, for having made the flowers of knowledge and understanding to spring forth in the garden of thine heart. Thus hath His **grace** encompassed thee, and encompassed the whole of creation. Beware, lest thou allow anything whatsoever to grieve thee. Rid thyself of all attachment to the vain allusions of men, and cast behind thy back the idle and subtle disputations of them that are veiled from God. Proclaim, then, that which the Most Great Spirit will inspire thee to utter in the service of the Cause of thy Lord, that thou mayest stir up the souls of all men and incline their hearts unto this most blessed and all-glorious Court...

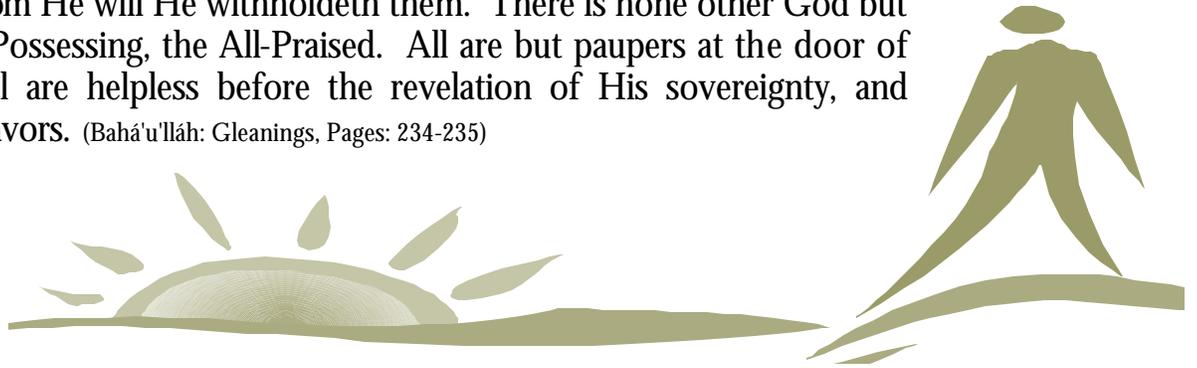
(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 303)



Feast of Jalál (Glory) April 9

Reading 6

Place not thy reliance on thy treasures. Put thy whole confidence in the **grace** of God, thy Lord. Let Him be thy trust in whatever thou doest, and be of them that have submitted themselves to His Will. Let Him be thy helper and enrich thyself with His treasures, for with Him are the treasures of the heavens and of the earth. He bestoweth them upon whom He will, and from whom He will He withholdeth them. There is none other God but Him, the All-Possessing, the All-Praised. All are but paupers at the door of His mercy; all are helpless before the revelation of His sovereignty, and beseech His favors. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 234-235)



Reading 7

That which hath been in existence had existed before, but not in the form thou seest today. The world of existence came into being through the heat generated from the interaction between the active force and that which is its recipient. These two are the same, yet they are different. Thus doth the Great Announcement inform thee about this glorious structure. Such as communicate the generating influence and such as receive its impact are indeed created through the irresistible Word of God which is the Cause of the entire creation, while all else besides His Word are but the creatures and the effects thereof. Verily thy Lord is the Expounder, the All-Wise.

Know thou, moreover, that the Word of God - exalted be His glory - is higher and far superior to that which the senses can perceive, for it is sanctified from any property or substance. It transcendeth the limitations of known elements and is exalted above all the essential and recognized substances. It became manifest without any syllable or sound and is none but the Command of God which pervadeth all created things. It hath never been withheld from the world of being. It is God's all-pervasive **grace**, from which all grace doth emanate. It is an entity far removed above all that hath been and shall be.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Pages 140-141)

Feast of Jalál (Glory) April 9

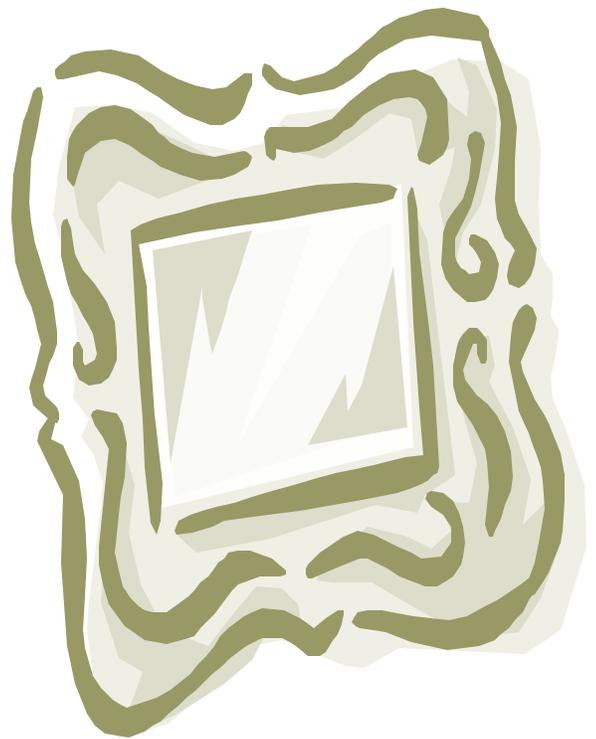
Reading 8

Think ye at all times of rendering some service to every member of the human race. Pay ye no heed to aversion and rejection, to disdain, hostility, injustice; act ye in the opposite way. Be ye sincerely kind, not in appearance only. Let each one of God's loved ones centre his attention on this: to be the Lord's mercy to man; to be the Lord's **grace**. Let him do some good to every person whose path he crosseth, and be of some benefit to him. Let him improve the character of each and all, and reorient the minds of men. In this way, the light of divine guidance will shine forth, and the blessings of God will cradle all mankind: for love is light, no matter in what abode it dwelleth; and hate is darkness, no matter where it may make its nest. O friends of God! That the hidden Mystery may stand revealed, and the secret essence of all things may be disclosed, strive ye to banish that darkness for ever and ever.

(`Abdu'l-Bahá: Selections From the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá, Page 3)

Reading 9

These sanctified Mirrors, these Day Springs of ancient glory, are, one and all, the Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe, its Essence and ultimate Purpose. From Him proceed their knowledge and power; from Him is derived their sovereignty. The beauty of their countenance is but a reflection of His image, and their revelation a sign of His deathless glory. They are the Treasuries of Divine knowledge, and the Repositories of celestial wisdom. Through them is transmitted a **grace** that is infinite, and by them is revealed the Light that can never fade.... These Tabernacles of Holiness, these Primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles. By the revelation of these Gems of Divine virtue all the names and attributes of God, such as knowledge and power, sovereignty and dominion, mercy and wisdom, glory, bounty, and **grace**, are made manifest. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 47-48)



Feast of Jamál (Beauty)—April 28

Reading 1



O SON OF MAN! Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty. (Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 3)

Reading 2

Say: From My laws the sweet-smelling savour of My garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of Victory will be planted upon the highest peaks. The Tongue of My power hath, from the heaven of My omnipotent glory, addressed to My creation these words: "Observe My commandments, for the love of My beauty." Happy is the lover that hath inhaled the divine fragrance of his Best-Beloved from these words, laden with the perfume of a grace which no tongue can describe. By My life! He who hath drunk the choice wine of fairness from the hands of My bountiful favour will circle around My commandments that shine above the Dayspring of My creation.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Pages: 20-21)

Reading 3

Consider how the Bab endured difficulties and tribulations; how He gave His life in the Cause of God; how He was attracted to the love of the Blessed Beauty, Baha'u'llah; and how He announced the glad tidings of His manifestation. We must follow His heavenly example; we must be self-sacrificing and aglow with the fire of the love of God. We must partake of the bounty and grace of the Lord, for the Bab has admonished us to arise in service to the Cause of God, to be absolutely severed from all else save God during the day of the Blessed Perfection, Baha'u'llah, to be completely attracted by the love of Baha'u'llah, to love all humanity for His sake, to be lenient and merciful to all for Him and to upbuild the oneness of the world of humanity.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, Page: 139)

Feast of Jamál (Beauty)—April 28

Reading 4

The bounties of the Blessed Perfection are infinite. We must endeavor to increase our capacity daily, to strengthen and enlarge our capabilities for receiving them, to become as perfect mirrors. The more polished and clean the mirror, the more effulgent is its reflection of the lights of the Sun of Truth. Be like a well-cultivated garden wherein the roses and variegated flowers of heaven are growing in fragrance and **beauty**. It is my hope that your hearts may become as ready ground, carefully tilled and prepared, upon which the divine showers of the bounties of the Blessed Perfection may descend and the zephyrs of this divine springtime may blow with quickening breath. Then will the garden of your hearts bring forth its flowers of delightful fragrance to refresh the nostril of the heavenly Gardener. Let your hearts reflect the glories of the Sun of Truth in their many colors to gladden the eye of the divine Cultivator Who has nourished them. Day by day become more closely attracted in order that the love of God may illumine all those with whom you come in contact. Be as one spirit, one soul, leaves of one tree, flowers of one garden, waves of one ocean.

(‘Abdu’l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, Page: 24)

Reading 5

O My servants! It behoveth you to refresh and revive your souls through the gracious favors which, in this Divine, this soul-stirring Springtime, are being showered upon you. The Day Star of His great glory hath shed its radiance upon you, and the clouds of His limitless grace have overshadowed you. How high the reward of him that hath not deprived himself of so great a bounty, nor failed to recognize the **beauty** of his Best-Beloved in this, His new attire.

Say: O people! The Lamp of God is burning; take heed, lest the fierce winds of your disobedience extinguish its light. Now is the time to arise and magnify the Lord, your God. Strive not after bodily comforts, and keep your heart pure and stainless. The Evil One is lying in wait, ready to entrap you. Gird yourselves against his wicked devices, and, led by the light of the name of the one true God, deliver yourselves from the darkness that surroundeth you. Center your thoughts in the Well-Beloved, rather than in your own selves.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 167-168)

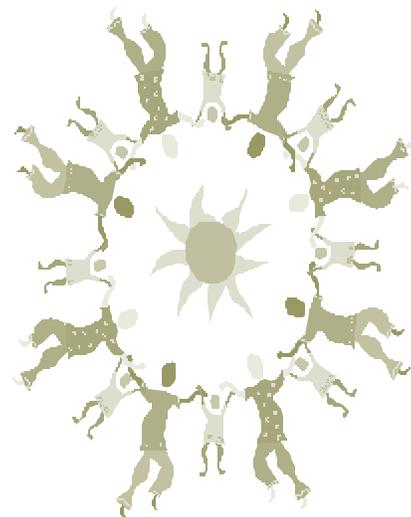
Feast of Jamál (Beauty)—April 28

Reading 6

O SON OF MAN!

Rejoice in the gladness of thine heart, that thou mayest be worthy to meet Me and to mirror forth My **beauty**.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 36)



Reading 7

The season of spring with its hosts of freshness and beauty spreads its tent on the plains and mountains with great pomp and magnificence. A second time the form of the creatures is renewed, and the creation of beings begins afresh; bodies grow and develop, the plains and wildernesses become green and fertile, trees bring forth blossoms, and the spring of last year returns in the utmost fullness and glory. Such is, and such ought to be, the cycle and succession of existence. Such is the cycle and revolution of the material world.

It is the same with the spiritual cycles of the Prophets - that is to say, the day of the appearance of the Holy Manifestations is the spiritual springtime; it is the divine splendor; it is the heavenly bounty, the breeze of life, the rising of the Sun of Reality. Spirits are quickened; hearts are refreshed and invigorated; souls become good; existence is set in motion; human realities are gladdened, and grow and develop in good qualities and perfections. General progress is achieved and revival takes place, for it is the day of resurrection, the time of excitement and ferment, and the season of bliss, of joy and of intense rapture.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Some Answered Questions, Page: 74)

Feast of Jamál (Beauty)—April 28

Reading 8

They that have hearts to understand, they that have quaffed the Wine of love, who have not for one moment gratified their selfish desires, will behold, resplendent as the sun in its noon-tide glory, those tokens, testimonies, and evidences that attest the truth of this wondrous Revelation, this transcendent and divine Faith. Reflect, how the people have rejected the **Beauty** of God, and have clung unto their covetous desires. Notwithstanding all these consummate verses, these unmistakable allusions, which have been revealed in the "Most weighty Revelation," the Trust of God amongst men, and despite these evident traditions, each more manifest than the most explicit utterance, the people have ignored and repudiated their truth, and have held fast to the letter of certain traditions which, according to their understanding, they have found inconsistent with their expectations, and the meaning of which they have failed to grasp. They have thus shattered every hope, and deprived themselves of the pure wine of the All-Glorious, and the clear and incorruptible waters of the immortal Beauty.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Iqan, Pages: 252-253)

Reading 9

Say: O people, praise ye God, for its Manifestation, for verily it is the most great favor upon you and the most perfect blessing upon you; and through Him every moldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to Him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away from Him hath turned away from My **beauty**, denied My proof and is of those who transgress. Verily, He is the remembrance of God amongst you and His trust within you, and His manifestation unto you and His appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereunto testifieth God, then His angels, then His messengers, and then His holy servants.

Inhale the fragrances of the Ridvan from His roses and be not of those who are deprived. Appreciate the bounty of God upon you and be not veiled therefrom - and, verily, We have sent Him forth in the temple of man. Thus praise ye the Lord, the Originator of whatsoever He willeth through His wise and inviolable Command!

(Bahá'u'lláh: Baha'i World Faith, Pages: 205-206)

Feast of 'Azamat (Grandeur)—May 17

Reading 1

O YE DWELLERS IN THE HIGHEST PARADISE!

Proclaim unto the children of assurance that within the realms of holiness, nigh unto the celestial paradise, a new garden hath appeared, round which circle the denizens of the realm on high and the immortal dwellers of the exalted paradise. Strive, then, that ye may attain that station, that ye may unravel the mysteries of **love** from its wind-flowers and learn the secret of divine and consummate wisdom from its eternal fruits. Solaced are the eyes of them that enter and abide therein! (Bahá'u'lláh: Hidden Words, Persian 18)

The journeys in the pathway of **love** are reckoned as four:

From the creatures to the True One;
from the True One to the creatures;
from the creatures to the creatures;
from the True One to the True One.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Seven Valleys, Page: 25)

Reading 2

O SON OF MAN! For everything there is a sign. The sign of **love** is fortitude under My decree and patience under My trials. (Bahá'u'lláh: Hidden Words, Arabic 48)

O SON OF MAN! Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My **love** for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty. (Bahá'u'lláh: Hidden Words, Arabic 3)

O SON OF BEING! **Love** Me, that I may **love** thee. If thou **lovest** Me not, My **love** can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant. (Bahá'u'lláh: Hidden Words, Arabic 5)

Reading 3

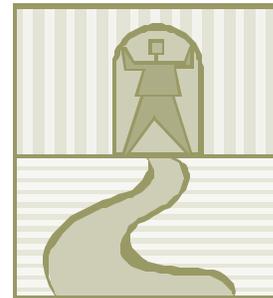
A twofold obligation resteth upon him who hath recognized the Day Spring of the Unity of God, and acknowledged the truth of Him Who is the Manifestation of His oneness.

- ? The first is steadfastness in His love, such steadfastness that neither the clamor of the enemy nor the claims of the idle pretender can deter him from cleaving unto Him Who is the Eternal Truth, a steadfastness that taketh no account of them whatever.
- ? The second is strict observance of the laws He hath prescribed - laws which He hath always ordained, and will continue to ordain, unto men, and through which the truth may be distinguished and separated from falsehood. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 289-290)

Feast of 'Azamat (Grandeur)—May 17

Reading 4

O My brother! When a true seeker determineth to take the step of search in the path leading unto the knowledge of the Ancient of Days, he must, before all else, cleanse his heart, which is the seat of the revelation of the inner mysteries of God, from the obscuring dust of all acquired knowledge, and the allusions of the embodiments of satanic fancy.



He must purge his breast, which is the sanctuary of the abiding **love** of the Beloved, of every defilement, and sanctify his soul from all that pertaineth to water and clay, from all shadowy and ephemeral attachments. He must so cleanse his heart that no remnant of either **love** or hate may linger therein, lest that **love** blindly incline him to error, or that hate repel him away from the truth. Even as thou dost witness in this Day how most of the people, because of such **love** and hate, are bereft of the immortal Face, have strayed far from the Embodiments of the Divine mysteries, and, shepherdless, are roaming through the wilderness of oblivion and error. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 264)

Reading 5

O My Well-Beloved!

Thou hast breathed Thy Breath into Me, and divorced Me from Mine own Self. Thou didst, subsequently, decree that no more than a faint reflection, a mere emblem of Thy Reality within Me be left among the perverse and envious. Behold, how, deluded by this emblem, they have risen against Me, and heaped upon Me their denials!

Uncover Thy Self, therefore, O My Best-Beloved, and deliver Me from My plight.

Thereupon a Voice replied:

"I **love**, I dearly cherish this emblem.

How can I consent that Mine eyes, alone, gaze upon this emblem, and that no heart except Mine heart recognize it?

By My Beauty, which is the same as Thy Beauty! My wish is to hide Thee from Mine own eyes: how much more from the eyes of men!"

I was preparing to make reply, when lo, the Tablet was suddenly ended, leaving My theme unfinished, and the pearl of Mine utterance unstrung.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 90)

Feast of 'Azamat (Grandeur)—May 17

Reading 6

The **love** which exists between the hearts of believers is prompted by the ideal of the unity of spirits.

This **love** is attained through the knowledge of God, so that men see the Divine **love** reflected in the heart. Each sees in the other the Beauty of God reflected in the soul, and finding this point of similarity, they are attracted to one another in **love**.

This **love** will make all men the waves of one sea,
this **love** will make them all

the stars of one heaven and
the fruits of one tree.

This **love** will bring the realization of true accord, the foundation of real unity.

But the **love** which sometimes exists between friends is not (true) **love**, because it is subject to transmutation; this is merely fascination. As the breeze blows, the slender trees yield. If the wind is in the East the tree leans to the West, and if the wind turns to the West the tree leans to the East. This kind of **love** is originated by the accidental conditions of life. This is not **love**, it is merely acquaintanceship; it is subject to change.

Today you will see two souls apparently in close friendship; tomorrow all this may be changed. Yesterday they were ready to die for one another, today they shun one another's society! This is not **love**; it is the yielding of the hearts to the accidents of life. When that which has caused this '**love**' to exist passes, the **love** passes also; this is not in reality **love**.

(`Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks*, Pages: 180-181)

Reading 7

Beware that Thou divest not Thyself, Thou Who art the Essence of Purity, of Thy robe of effulgent glory. Nay, enrich Thyself increasingly, in the kingdom of creation, with the incorruptible vestures of Thy God, that the beauteous image of the Almighty may be reflected through Thee in all created things and the grace of Thy Lord be infused in the plenitude of its power into the entire creation.

If Thou smellest from any one the smell of the **love** of Thy Lord, offer up Thyself for him, for We have created Thee to this end, and have covenanted with Thee, from time immemorial, and in the presence of the congregation of Our well-favored ones, for this very purpose. Be not impatient if the blind in heart hurl down the shafts of their idle fancies upon Thee. Leave them to themselves, for they follow the promptings of the evil ones.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 283-284)

Feast of 'Azamat (Grandeur)—May 17

Reading 8

By the righteousness of God! The world and its vanities, and its glory, and whatever delights it can offer, are all, in the sight of God, as worthless as, nay, even more contemptible than, dust and ashes. Would that the hearts of men could comprehend it! Cleanse yourselves thoroughly, O people of Baha, from the defilement of the world, and of all that pertaineth unto it.

God Himself beareth Me witness. The things of the earth ill beseem you. Cast them away unto such as may desire them, and fasten your eyes upon this most holy and effulgent Vision. That which beseemeth you is the **love** of God, and the **love** of Him Who is the Manifestation of His Essence, and the observance of whatsoever He chooseth to prescribe unto you, did ye but know it.

Say: Let truthfulness and courtesy be your adorning. Suffer not yourselves to be deprived of the robe of forbearance and justice, that the sweet savors of holiness may be wafted from your hearts upon all created things.

Say: Beware, O people of Baha, lest ye walk in the ways of them whose words differ from their deeds. Strive that ye may be enabled to manifest to the peoples of the earth the signs of God, and to mirror forth His commandments. Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind, for the professions of most men, be they high or low, differ from their conduct. It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth.

Happy is the man that heedeth My counsel, and keepeth the precepts prescribed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 304-305)

Reading 9

The Great Being saith: O ye children of men! The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of **love** and fellowship amongst men. Suffer it not to become a source of dissension and discord, of hate and enmity.

This is the straight Path, the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength, nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 215)

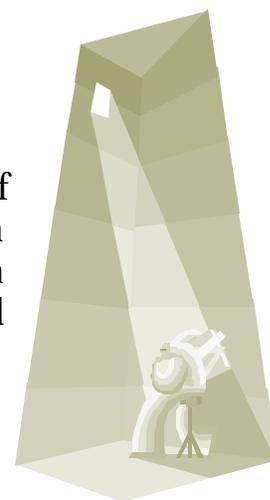


Feast of Núr (Light)—June 5

Reading 1

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: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 71)



Reading 2

Say: The Revelation sent down by God hath most surely been repeated, and the outstretched Hand of Our power hath overshadowed all that are in the heavens and all that are on the earth. We have, through the power of truth, the very truth, manifested an infinitesimal glimmer of Our impenetrable Mystery, and lo, they that have recognized the radiance of the Sinaic splendor expired, as they caught a lightening glimpse of this Crimson **Light** enveloping the Sinai of Our Revelation. Thus hath He Who is the Beauty of the All-Merciful come down in the clouds of His testimony, and the decree accomplished by virtue of the Will of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 282)

Reading 3

Seek with all your hearts this Heavenly **Light**, so that you may be enabled to understand the realities, that you may know the secret things of God, that the hidden ways may be made plain before your eyes.

This **light** may be likened unto a mirror, and as a mirror reflects all that is before it, so this Light shows to the eyes of our spirits all that exists in God's Kingdom and causes the realities of things to be made visible. By the help of this effulgent **Light** all the spiritual interpretation of the Holy Writings has been made plain, the hidden things of God's Universe have become manifest, and we have been enabled to comprehend the Divine purposes for man.

I pray that God in His mercy may illumine your hearts and souls with His glorious **Light**, then shall each one of you shine as a radiant star in the dark places of the world.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Paris Talks, Pages: 69-70)

Feast of Núr (Light)—June 5

Reading 4

Say: Step out of Thy holy chamber, O Maid of Heaven, inmate of the Exalted Paradise! Drape thyself in whatever manner pleaseth Thee in the silken Vesture of Immortality, and put on, in the name of the All-Glorious, the broidered Robe of **Light**. Hear, then, the sweet, the wondrous accent of the Voice that cometh from the Throne of Thy Lord, the Inaccessible, the Most High. Unveil Thy face, and manifest the beauty of the black-eyed Damsel, and suffer not the servants of God to be deprived of the **light** of Thy shining countenance. Grieve not if Thou hearest the sighs of the dwellers of the earth, or the voice of the lamentation of the denizens of heaven. Leave them to perish on the dust of extinction. Let them be reduced to nothingness, inasmuch as the flame of hatred hath been kindled within their breasts. Intone, then, before the face of the peoples of earth and heaven, and in a most melodious voice, the anthem of praise, for a remembrance of Him Who is the King of the names and attributes of God. Thus have We decreed Thy destiny. Well able are We to achieve Our purpose.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 283)

Reading 5

O PEOPLES of the earth!

Verily the resplendent **Light** of God hath appeared in your midst, invested with this unerring Book, that ye may be guided aright to the ways of peace and, by the leave of God, step out of the darkness into the light and onto this far-extended Path of Truth...

God hath, out of sheer nothingness and through the potency of His command, created the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them. He is single and peerless in His eternal unity with none to join partner with His holy Essence, nor is there any soul, except His Own Self, who can befittingly comprehend Him... (The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Pages: 61-62)

Feast of Núr (Light)—June 5

Reading 6

I swear by the Sun of Truth Which hath risen and shineth above the horizon of this Prison! The betterment of the world hath been the sole aim of this Wronged One. Unto this beareth witness every man of judgment, of discernment, of insight and understanding. Whilst afflicted with trials, He held fast unto the cord of patience and fortitude, and was satisfied with the things which have befallen Him at the hands of His enemies, and was crying out: "I have renounced My desire for Thy desire, O my God, and My will for the revelation of Thy Will. By Thy glory! I desire neither Myself nor My life except for the purpose of serving Thy Cause, and I love not My being save that I may sacrifice it in Thy path. Thou seest and knowest, O my Lord, that those whom We asked to be fair and just, have, unjustly and cruelly, risen up against Us. Openly they were with Me, yet secretly they assisted My foes, who have arisen to dishonor Me. O God, my God! I testify that Thou hast created Thy servants to aid Thy Cause and exalt Thy Word, and yet they have helped Thine enemies. I beseech Thee, by Thy Cause that hath encompassed the world of being, and by Thy Name wherewith Thou hast subjected the seen and unseen, to adorn the peoples of the earth with the **light** of Thy justice, and to illuminate their hearts with the brightness of Thy knowledge. I am, O my Lord, Thy servant and the son of Thy servant. I bear witness unto Thy unity, and Thy oneness, and to the sanctity of Thy self and the purity of Thine Essence. Thou beholdest, O my Lord, Thy trusted ones at the mercy of the treacherous among Thy creatures, and the calumniators amidst Thy people. Thou knowest what hath befallen Us at the hands of them whom Thou knowest better than we know them. They have committed what hath torn the veil from such of Thy creatures as are nigh unto Thee. I beseech Thee to assist them to obtain that which hath escaped them in the days of the Dawning-Place of Thy Revelation and the Dayspring of Thine Inspiration. Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee, and in Thy grasp are the reins of all that is in heaven and all that is on earth." (Bahá'u'lláh: Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Pages: 36-38)

Reading 7

O SON OF SPIRIT! My claim on thee is great, it cannot be forgotten. My grace to thee is plenteous, it cannot be veiled. My love has made in thee its home, it cannot be concealed. My **light** is manifest to thee, it cannot be obscured. (Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 20)



Feast of Núr (Light)—June 5

Reading 8

There are two kinds of **light**. There is the visible **light** of the sun, by whose aid we can discern the beauties of the world around us - without this we could see nothing.

Nevertheless, though it is the function of this **light** to make things visible to us, it cannot give us the power to see them or to understand what their various charms may be, for this **light** has no intelligence, no consciousness. It is the **light** of the intellect which gives us knowledge and understanding, and without this **light** the physical eyes would be useless. This **light** of the intellect is the highest **light** that exists, for it is born of the **Light** Divine.

The **light** of the intellect enables us to understand and realize all that exists, but it is only the Divine **Light** that can give us sight for the invisible things, and which enables us to see truths that will only be visible to the world thousands of years hence. It was the Divine **Light** which enabled the prophets to see two thousand years in advance what was going to take place and today we see the realization of their vision. Thus it is this **Light** which we must strive to seek, for it is greater than any other. (‘Abdu’l-Baha: Paris Talks*, Pages: 68-69)

Reading 9

Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess. Through a word proceeding out of the mouth of God he was called into being; by one word more he was guided to recognize the Source of his education; by yet another word his station and destiny were safeguarded. The Great Being saith: Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom. If any man were to meditate on that which the Scriptures, sent down from the heaven of God's holy Will, have revealed, he would readily recognize that their purpose is that all men shall be regarded as one soul, so that the seal bearing the words ‘The Kingdom shall be God's’ may be stamped on every heart, and the **light** of Divine bounty, of grace, and mercy may envelop all mankind. The One true God, exalted be His glory, hath wished nothing for Himself. The allegiance of mankind profiteth Him not, neither doth its perversity harm Him. The Bird of the Realm of Utterance voiceth continually this call: ‘All things have I willed for thee, and thee, too, for thine own sake.’ If the learned and worldly-wise men of this age were to allow mankind to inhale the fragrance of fellowship and love, every understanding heart would apprehend the meaning of true liberty, and discover the secret of undisturbed peace and absolute composure. Were the earth to attain this station and be illumined with its **light** it could then be truly said of it: ‘Thou shall see in it no hollows or rising hills.’ (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 161-162)

Feast of Rahmat (Mercy)—June 24

Reading 1

Unlock, O people, the gates of the hearts of men with the keys of the remembrance of Him Who is the Remembrance of God and the Source of wisdom amongst you. He hath chosen out of the whole world the hearts of His servants, and made them each a seat for the revelation of His glory. Wherefore, sanctify them from every defilement, that the things for which they were created may be engraven upon them. This indeed is a token of God's bountiful favor.

Beautify your tongues, O people, with truthfulness, and adorn your souls with the ornament of honesty. Beware, O people, that ye deal not treacherously with any one. Be ye the trustees of God amongst His creatures, and the emblems of His generosity amidst His people. They that follow their lusts and corrupt inclinations, have erred and dissipated their efforts. They, indeed, are of the lost. Strive, O people, that your eyes may be directed towards the **mercy** of God, that your hearts may be attuned to His wondrous remembrance, that your souls may rest confidently upon His grace and bounty, that your feet may tread the path of His good-pleasure. Such are the counsels which I bequeath unto you. Would that ye might follow My counsels! (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 296-297)

Reading 2

O SON OF MAN!

My calamity is My providence, outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and **mercy**. Hasten thereunto that thou mayest become an eternal light and an immortal spirit. This is My command unto thee, do thou observe it. (Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 51)

Reading 3

O ye peoples of the world! Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants, and the keys of My **mercy** for My creatures. Thus hath it been sent down from the heaven of the Will of your Lord, the Lord of Revelation. Were any man to taste the sweetness of the words which the lips of the All-**Merciful** have willed to utter, he would, though the treasures of the earth be in his possession, renounce them one and all, that he might vindicate the truth of even one of His commandments, shining above the Dayspring of His bountiful care and loving-kindness. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Page: 20)

Feast of Rahmat (Mercy)—June 24

Reading 4

Although in the past all the great Spiritual Teachers have arisen in the East, there are still many men there who are quite devoid of spirituality. With regard to the things of the spirit they are as lifeless as a stone; nor do they wish to be otherwise, for they consider that man is only a higher form of animal and that the things of God concern him not.

But man's ambition should soar above this - he should ever look higher than himself, ever upward and onward, until through the **Mercy** of God he may come to the Kingdom of Heaven. Again, there are men whose eyes are only open to physical progress and to the evolution in the world of matter. These men prefer to study the resemblance between their own physical body and that of the ape, rather than to contemplate the glorious affiliation between their spirit and that of God. This is indeed strange, for it is only physically that man resembles the lower creation, with regard to his intellect he is totally unlike it.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Paris Talks, Page: 71)

Reading 5

Consider the **mercy** of God and His gifts. He enjoineeth upon you that which shall profit you, though He Himself can well dispense with all creatures. Your evil doings can never harm Us, neither can your good works profit Us. We summon you wholly for the sake of God. To this every man of understanding and insight will testify. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Page: 40)



Feast of Rahmat (Mercy)—June 24

Reading 6

Praise be to God! You have heard the call of the Kingdom. Your eyes are opened; you have turned to God. Your purpose is the good pleasure of God, the understanding of the mysteries of the heart and investigation of the realities. Day and night you must strive that you may attain to the significances of the heavenly Kingdom, perceive the signs of Divinity, acquire certainty of knowledge and realize that this world has a Creator, a Vivifier, a Provider, an Architect - knowing this through proofs and evidences and not through susceptibilities, nay, rather, through decisive arguments and real vision - that is to say, visualizing it as clearly as the outer eye beholds the sun. In this way may you behold the presence of God and attain to the knowledge of the holy, divine Manifestations.

You must come into the knowledge of the divine Manifestations and Their teachings through proofs and evidences. You must unseal the mysteries of the supreme Kingdom and become capable of discovering the inner realities of things. Then shall you be the manifestations of the **mercy** of God and true believers, firm and steadfast in the Cause of God. (‘Abdu’l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Pages: 227-228)

Reading 7

As to the subject of babes and infants and weak ones who are afflicted by the hands of oppressors: This contains great wisdom and this subject is of paramount importance. In brief, for those souls there is a recompense in another world and many details are connected with this matter. For those souls that suffering is the greatest mercy of God. Verily that **mercy** of the Lord is far better and preferable to all the comfort of this world and the growth and development of this place of mortality. If it be the will of God, when thou shalt be present this will be explained in detail by word of mouth.

(‘Abdu’l-Baha: Bahá’í World Faith, Page: 372)



Feast of Rahmat (Mercy)—June 24

Reading 8

Remember not your own limitations; the help of God will come to you. Forget yourself. God's help will surely come! When you call on the **Mercy** of God waiting to reinforce you, your strength will be tenfold.

Look at me: I am so feeble, yet I have had the strength given me to come amongst you: a poor servant of God, who has been enabled to give you this message! I shall not be with you long! One must never consider one's own feebleness, it is the strength of the Holy Spirit of Love, which gives the power to teach. The thought of our own weakness could only bring despair. We must look higher than all earthly thoughts; detach ourselves from every material idea, crave for the things of the spirit; fix our eyes on the everlasting bountiful **Mercy** of the Almighty, who will fill our souls with the gladness of joyful service to His command 'Love One Another'. (Abdu'l-Baha: Paris Talks*, Pages: 38-39)

Reading 9

O ye people! Do ye flee from the **mercy** of God after it has encompassed the existent things created between the heavens and earths? Beware lest ye prefer your own selves before the **mercy** of God, and deprive not yourselves thereof! Verily, whosoever turneth away therefrom will be in great loss. Verily, mercy is like unto verses which have descended from the one heaven, and from them the monotheists drink the choice wine of life, whilst the polytheists drink from the fiery water; and when the verses of God are read unto them, the fire of hatred is enkindled within their breasts. Thus have they preferred their own selves before the **mercy** of God, and are of those who are heedless.

Enter, O people, beneath the shelter of the Word! Then drink therefrom the choice wine of inner significances and utterances; for therein is hidden the kawther of the glorious One - and it hath appeared from the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the merciful, with wonderful lights.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Baha'i World Faith, Page: 204)

Feast of Kalimát (Words)—July 13

Reading 1



In the Name of God, the Exalted, the Most High

The source of all good is trust in God, submission unto His command, and contentment with His holy will and pleasure.

The essence of wisdom is the fear of God, the dread of His scourge and punishment, and the apprehension of His justice and decree.

The essence of religion is to testify unto that which the Lord hath revealed, and follow that which He hath ordained in His mighty Book. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 155-157)

Reading 2

The source of all glory is acceptance of whatsoever the Lord hath bestowed, and contentment with that which God hath ordained.

The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

True remembrance is to make mention of the Lord, the All-Praised, and forget aught else beside Him.

True reliance is for the servant to pursue his profession and calling in this world, to hold fast unto the Lord, to seek naught but His grace, inasmuch as in His Hands is the destiny of all His servants. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 155-157)

Reading 3

The essence of detachment is for man to turn his face towards the courts of the Lord, to enter His Presence, behold His Countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

The essence of understanding is to testify to one's poverty, and submit to the Will of the Lord, the Sovereign, the Gracious, the All-Powerful.

The source of courage and power is the promotion of the Word of God, and steadfastness in His Love. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 155-157)

Feast of Kalimát (Words)—July 13

Reading 4

The essence of charity is for the servant to recount the blessings of his Lord, and to render thanks unto Him at all times and under all conditions.

The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds; he whose words exceed his deeds, know verily his death is better than his life.

The essence of true safety is to observe silence, to look at the end of things and to renounce the world.

The beginning of magnanimity is when man expendeth his wealth on himself, on his family and on the poor among his brethren in his Faith.

The essence of wealth is love for Me; whoso loveth Me is the possessor of all things, and he that loveth Me not is indeed of the poor and needy. This is that which the Finger of Glory and Splendour hath revealed. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 155-157)

Reading 5

The source of all evil is for man to turn away from his Lord and set his heart on things ungodly.

The most burning fire is to question the signs of God, to dispute idly that which He hath revealed, to deny Him and carry one's self proudly before Him.

The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His Glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 155-157)



Feast of Kalimát (Words)—July 13

Reading 6

The essence of abasement is to pass out from under the shadow of the Merciful and seek the shelter of the Evil One.

The source of error is to disbelieve in the One true God, rely upon aught else but Him, and flee from His Decree.

True loss is for him whose days have been spent in utter ignorance of his self.

The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, is for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork, and look into all things with a searching eye.

Thus have We instructed thee, manifested unto thee Words of Wisdom, that thou mayest be thankful unto the Lord, thy God, and glory therein amidst all peoples.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 155-157)

Reading 7

No man shall attain the shores of the ocean of true understanding except he be detached from all that is in heaven and on earth. Sanctify your souls, O ye peoples of the world, that haply ye may attain that station which God hath destined for you and enter thus the tabernacle which, according to the dispensations of Providence, hath been raised in the firmament of the Bayán.

THE essence of these words is this: they that tread the path of faith, they that thirst for the wine of certitude, must cleanse themselves of all that is earthly--their ears from idle talk, their minds from vain imaginings, their hearts from worldly affections, their eyes from that which perisheth. They should put their trust in God, and, holding fast unto Him, follow in His way. Then will they be made worthy of the effulgent glories of the sun of divine knowledge and understanding, and become the recipients of a grace that is infinite and unseen, inasmuch as man can never hope to attain unto the knowledge of the All-Glorious, can never quaff from the stream of divine knowledge and wisdom, can never enter the abode of immortality, nor partake of the cup of divine nearness and favour, unless and until he ceases to regard the words and deeds of mortal men as a standard for the true understanding and recognition of God and His Prophets. (Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 3)

Feast of Kalimát (Words)—July 13

Reading 8

Awake ye to the realization of this heavenly opportunity. Strive with all the power of your souls, your deeds, actions and words to assist the spread of these glad tidings and the descent of this merciful bounty. You are the reality and expression of your deeds and actions. If you abide by the precepts and teachings of the Blessed Perfection, the heavenly world and ancient Kingdom will be yours--eternal happiness, love and everlasting life. The divine bounties are flowing. Each one of you has been given the opportunity of becoming a tree yielding abundant fruits. This is the springtime of Bahá'u'lláh. The verdure and foliage of spiritual growth are appearing in great abundance in the gardens of human hearts. Know ye the value of these passing days and vanishing nights. Strive to attain a station of absolute love one toward another. By the absence of love, enmity increases. By the exercise of love, love strengthens and enmities dwindle away.

(‘Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 9)

Reading 9



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

(Bahá'u'lláh: Persian Hidden Words, Page: 19)

Feast of Kamál (Perfection)—August 1

Reading 1

Know thou that when the Son of Man yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh **capacity** was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed in all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee. The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive, and resplendent Spirit.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, pages 85-86)

Reading 2

Know thou that every created thing is a sign of the revelation of God. Each, according to its **capacity**, is, and will ever remain, a token of the Almighty. Inasmuch as He, the sovereign Lord of all, hath willed to reveal His sovereignty in the kingdom of names and attributes, each and every created thing hath, through the act of the Divine Will, been made a sign of His glory. So pervasive and general is this revelation that nothing whatsoever in the whole universe can be discovered that doth not reflect His splendor. Under such conditions every consideration of proximity and remoteness is obliterated.... (Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, page 184)

Reading 3

From the exalted source, and out of the essence of His favor and bounty He hath entrusted every created thing with a sign of His knowledge, so that none of His creatures may be deprived of its share in expressing, each according to its **capacity** and rank, this knowledge. This sign is the mirror of His beauty in the world of creation. The greater the effort exerted for the refinement of this sublime and noble mirror, the more faithfully will it be made to reflect the glory of the names and attributes of God, and reveal the wonders of His signs and knowledge. Every created thing will be enabled, so great is this reflecting power, to reveal the potentialities of its pre-ordained station, will recognize its **capacity** and limitations, and will testify to the truth that "He, verily, is God; there is none other God besides Him." ...

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, pages 261-262)

Feast of Kamál (Perfection)—August 1

Reading 4

As difference in degree of **capacity** exists among human souls, as difference in capability is found, therefore, individualities will differ one from another. But in reality this is a reason for unity and not for discord and enmity. If the flowers of a garden were all of one color, the effect would be monotonous to the eye; but if the colors are variegated, it is most pleasing and wonderful. The difference in adornment of color and **capacity** of reflection among the flowers gives the garden its beauty and charm. Therefore, although we are of different individualities, different in ideas and of various fragrances, let us strive like flowers of the same divine garden to live together in harmony. Even though each soul has its own individual perfume and color, all are reflecting the same light, all contributing fragrance to the same breeze which blows through the garden, all continuing to grow in complete harmony and accord. Become as waves of one sea, trees of one forest, growing in the utmost love, agreement and unity. (Abdu'l-Baha - Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pages 24-25)

Reading 5

Difference of **capacity** in human individuals is fundamental. It is impossible for all to be alike, all to be equal, all to be wise. Baha'u'llah has revealed principles and laws which will accomplish the adjustment of varying human capacities. He has said that whatsoever is possible of accomplishment in human government will be effected through these principles. When the laws He has instituted are carried out, there will be no millionaires possible in the community and likewise no extremely poor. This will be effected and regulated by adjusting the different degrees of human **capacity**. The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture, tillage of the soil. All must be producers. Each person in the community whose need is equal to his individual producing **capacity** shall be exempt from taxation. But if his income is greater than his needs, he must pay a tax until an adjustment is effected. That is to say, a man's **capacity** for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation. If his production exceeds, he will pay a tax; if his necessities exceed his production, he shall receive an amount sufficient to equalize or adjust. Therefore, taxation will be proportionate to **capacity** and production, and there will be no poor in the community.

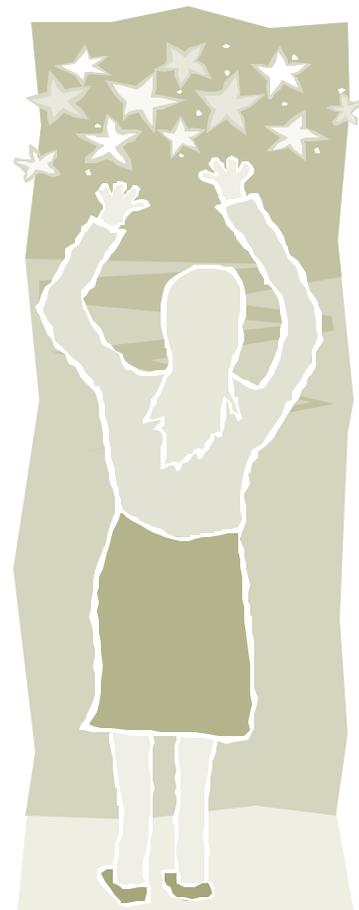
(Abdu'l-Baha - Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 217)



Feast of Kamál (Perfection)—August 1

Reading 6

But while this principle of equality is true, it is likewise true that woman must prove her **capacity** and aptitude, must show forth the evidences of equality. She must become proficient in the arts and sciences and prove by her accomplishments that her abilities and powers have merely been latent. Demonstrations of force, such as are now taking place in England, are neither becoming nor effective in the cause of womanhood and equality. Woman must especially devote her energies and abilities toward the industrial and agricultural sciences, seeking to assist mankind in that which is most needful. By this means she will demonstrate capability and ensure recognition of equality in the social and economic equation. Undoubtedly God will confirm her in her efforts and endeavors, for in this century of radiance Baha'u'llah has proclaimed the reality of the oneness of the world of humanity and announced that all nations, peoples and races are one. He has shown that although individuals may differ in development and **capacity**, they are essentially and intrinsically equal as human beings, just as the waves of the sea are innumerable and different, but the reality of the sea is one. (Abdu'l-Baha - Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pages 283-284)



Reading 7

But this is not so, for **capacity** is of two kinds: natural **capacity** and acquired **capacity**. The first, which is the creation of God, is purely good - in the creation of God there is no evil; but the acquired **capacity** has become the cause of the appearance of evil. For example, God has created all men in such a manner and has given them such a constitution and such capacities that they are benefited by sugar and honey and harmed and destroyed by poison. This nature and constitution is innate, and God has given it equally to all mankind. But man begins little by little to accustom himself to poison by taking a small quantity each day, and gradually increasing it, until he reaches such a point that he cannot live without a gram of opium every day. The natural capacities are thus completely perverted. Observe how much the natural **capacity** and constitution can be changed, until by different habits and training they become entirely perverted. One does not criticize vicious people because of their innate capacities and nature, but rather for their acquired capacities and nature. In creation there is no evil; all is good.

(Abdu'l-Baha - Some Answered Questions, pages 214-215)

Feast of Kamál (Perfection)—August 1

Reading 8

The people of Baha, who are the inmates of the Ark of God, are, one and all, well aware of one another's state and condition, and are united in the bonds of intimacy and fellowship. Such a state, however, must depend upon their faith and their conduct. They that are of the same grade and station are fully aware of one another's **capacity**, character, accomplishments and merits. They that are of a lower grade, however, are incapable of comprehending adequately the station, or of estimating the merits, of those that rank above them. Each shall receive his share from thy Lord. Blessed is the man that hath turned his face towards God, and walked steadfastly in His love, until his soul hath winged its flight unto God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Most Powerful, the Ever-Forgiving, the All-Merciful

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, page 170)

Reading 9

The Sun of Reality is shining upon you, the cloud of mercy is pouring down, and the breezes of providence are wafting through your souls. Although the bestowal is great and the grace is glorious, yet **capacity** and readiness are requisite. Without **capacity** and readiness the divine bounty will not become manifest and evident.

No matter how much the cloud may rain, the sun may shine and the breezes blow, the soil that is sterile will give no growth. The ground that is pure and free from thorns and thistles receives and produces through the rain of the cloud of mercy. No matter how much the sun shines, it will have no effect upon the black rock, but in a pure and polished mirror its lights become resplendent. Therefore, we must develop **capacity** in order that the signs of the mercy of the Lord may be revealed in us. We must endeavor to free the soil of the hearts from useless weeds and sanctify it from the thorns of worthless thoughts in order that the cloud of mercy of the Lord may be revealed in us.

The doors of God are open, but we must be ready and fitted to enter. The ocean of divine providence is surging, but we must be able to swim. The bestowals of the Almighty are descending from the heaven of grace, but **capacity** to receive them is essential. The foundation of divine generosity is gushing forth, but we must have thirst for the living waters...

Therefore, we must endeavor always, cry, supplicate and invoke the Kingdom of God to grant us full **capacity** in order that the bestowals of God may become revealed and manifest in us. And as we attain to these heavenly bounties, we shall offer thanks unto the threshold of oneness. Then shall we rejoice in the Lord that in this wonderful century and glorious age, under the shelter of the Kingdom of God we have enjoyed these bestowals and will arise in praise and thanksgiving. (Abdu'l-Baha - Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 195)

Feast of Asmá' (Names)—August 20

Reading 1

The Prophets and Messengers of God have been sent down for the sole purpose of guiding mankind to the straight Path of Truth. The purpose underlying Their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute **detachment**, to the throne of the Most High. The light which these souls radiate is responsible for the progress of the world and the advancement of its peoples. They are like unto leaven which leaveneth the world of being, and constitute the animating force through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest. Through them the clouds rain their bounty upon men, and the earth bringeth forth its fruits. All things must needs have a cause, a motive power, an animating principle. These souls and symbols of **detachment** have provided, and will continue to provide, the supreme moving impulse in the world of being

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 156-157)

Reading 2

The essence of **detachment** is for man to turn his face towards the courts of the Lord, to enter His Presence, behold His Countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 155)

Reading 3

Please God, that we avoid the land of denial, and advance into the ocean of acceptance, so that we may perceive, with an eye purged from all conflicting elements, the worlds of unity and diversity, of variation and oneness, of limitation and **detachment**, and wing our flight unto the highest and innermost sanctuary of the inner meaning of the Word of God.

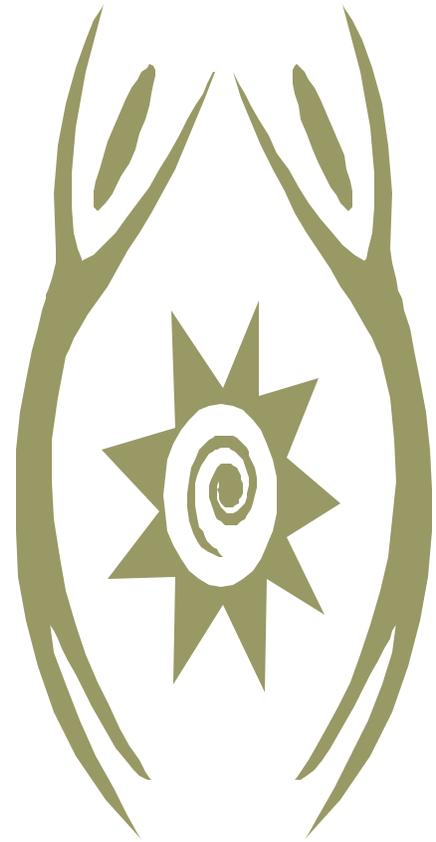
(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Iqan, Page: 160)

Feast of Asmá' (Names)—August 20

Reading 4

God grant that, in these days of heavenly delight, ye may not deprive yourselves of the sweet savors of the All-Glorious God, and may partake, in this spiritual Springtime, of the outpourings of His grace. Arise in the name of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge, and, with absolute **detachment** from the learning of men, lift up your voices and proclaim His Cause. I swear by the Day Star of Divine Revelation! The very moment ye arise, ye will witness how a flood of Divine knowledge will gush out of your hearts, and will behold the wonders of His heavenly wisdom manifested in all their glory before you. Were ye to taste of the sweetness of the sayings of the All-Merciful, ye would unhesitatingly forsake your selves, and would lay down your lives for the Well-Beloved.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 84-85)



Reading 5

Should any man, in this Day, arise and, with absolute **detachment** from all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, set his affections on Him Who is the Day Spring of God's holy Revelation, he will, verily, be empowered to subdue all created things, through the potency of one of the **Names of the Lord**, his God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Know thou of a certainty that the Day Star of Truth hath, in this Day, shed upon the world a radiance, the like of which bygone ages have never witnessed. Let the light of His glory, O people, shine upon you, and be not of the negligent.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 319)

Feast of Asmá' (Names)—August 20

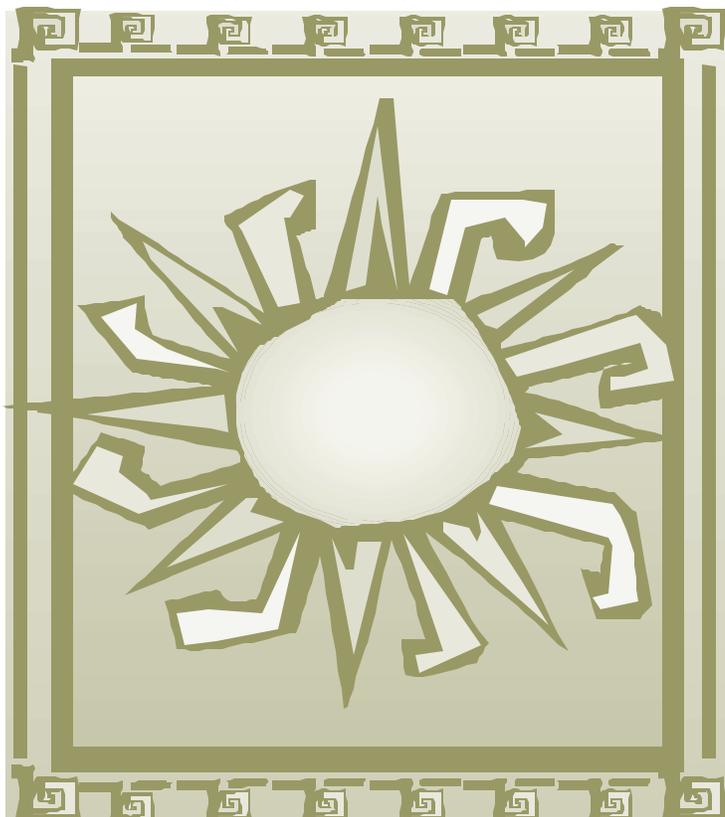
Reading 6

Until a being setteth his foot in the plane of sacrifice, he is bereft of every favour and grace; and this plane of sacrifice is the realm of dying to the self, that the radiance of the living God may then shine forth. The martyr's field is the place of **detachment** from self, that the anthems of eternity may be upraised. Do all ye can to become wholly weary of self, and bind yourselves to that Countenance of Splendours; and once ye have reached such heights of servitude, ye will find, gathered within your shadow, all created things. This is boundless grace; this is the highest sovereignty; this is the life that dieth not. All else save this is at the last but manifest perdition and great loss.

Praise be to God, the gate of boundless grace is opened wide, the heavenly table is set, the servants of the Merciful and His handmaids are present at the feast. Strive ye to receive your share of this eternal food, so that ye shall be loved and cherished in this world and the next.

(`Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 76-77)

Reading 7



Our greatest efforts must be directed towards **detachment** from the things of the world; we must strive to become more spiritual, more luminous, to follow the counsel of the Divine Teaching, to serve the cause of unity and true equality, to be merciful, to reflect the love of the Highest on all men, so that the light of the Spirit shall be apparent in all our deeds, to the end that all humanity shall be united, the stormy sea thereof calmed, and all rough waves disappear from off the surface of life's ocean henceforth unruffled and peaceful. Then will the New Jerusalem be seen by mankind, who will enter through its gates and receive the Divine Bounty.

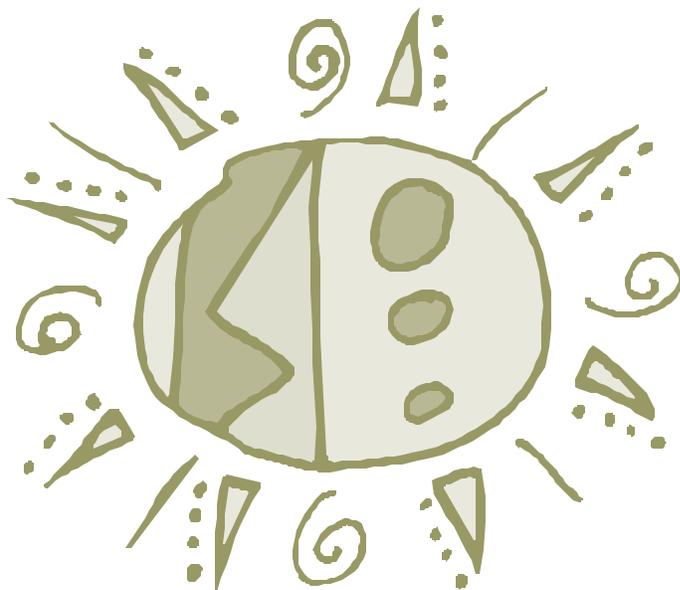
(`Abdu'l-Baha: Paris Talks*, Page: 87)

Feast of Asmá' (Names)—August 20

Reading 8

At one time this sublime Word was heard from the Tongue of Him Who is the Possessor of all being and the Lord of the throne on high and of earth below - exalted is the glory of His utterance - : Piety and **detachment** are even as two most great luminaries of the heaven of teaching. Blessed the one who hath attained unto this supreme station, this habitation of transcendent holiness and sublimity.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 253)



Reading 9

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 68)

Feast of Ízzat (Might)—September 8

Reading 1

In pursuance, however, of the principle that for every thing a time hath been fixed, and for every fruit a season hath been ordained, the latent energies of such a bounty can best be released, and the vernal glory of such a gift can only be manifested, in the Days of God. Invested though each day may be with its pre-ordained share of God's wondrous grace, the Days immediately associated with the Manifestation of God possess a unique distinction and occupy a **station** which no mind can ever comprehend. Such is the virtue infused into them that if the hearts of all that dwell in the heavens and the earth were, in those days of everlasting delight, to be brought face to face with that Day Star of unfading glory and attuned to His Will, each would find itself exalted above all earthly things, radiant with His light, and sanctified through His grace. All hail to this grace which no blessing, however great, can excel, and all honor to such a loving-kindness the like of which the eye of creation hath not seen! Exalted is He above that which they attribute unto Him or recount about Him!

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 262-263)

Reading 2

How great the blessedness that awaiteth the king who will arise to aid My Cause in My kingdom, who will detach himself from all else but Me! Such a king is numbered with the companions of the Crimson Ark - the Ark which God hath prepared for the people of Baha. All must glorify his name, must reverence his **station**, and aid him to unlock the cities with the keys of My Name, the omnipotent Protector of all that inhabit the visible and invisible kingdoms. Such a king is the very eye of mankind, the luminous ornament on the brow of creation, the fountainhead of blessings unto the whole world. Offer up, O people of Baha, your substance, nay your very lives, for his assistance. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Page: 50)

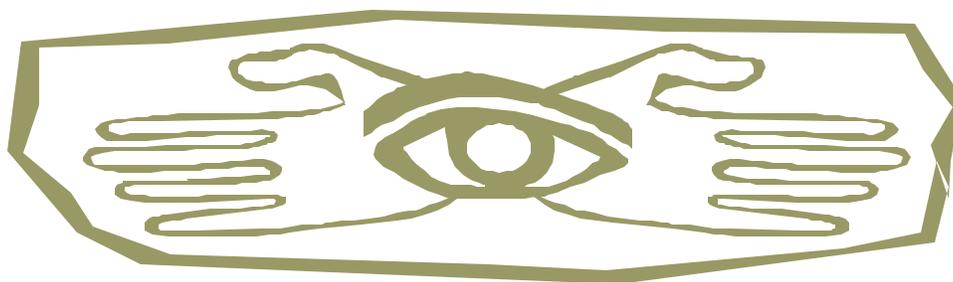
Reading 3

Every fair-minded person testifieth and every man of insight is well aware that the One true God - exalted be His glory - hath unceasingly set forth and expounded that which will elevate the station and will exalt the rank of the children of men. The people of Baha burn brightly amidst the gatherings even as a candle and hold fast unto that which God hath purposed. This **station** standeth supreme above all stations. Well is it with him who hath cast away the things that the people of the world possess, yearning for that which pertaineth unto God, the Sovereign Lord of eternity. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 58-59)

Feast of Ízzat (Might)—September 8

Reading 4

The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. It behoveth everyone who reacheth this most sublime **station**, this summit of transcendent glory, to observe every ordinance of Him Who is the Desire of the world. These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is acceptable without the other. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Source of Divine inspiration. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Page: 19)



Reading 5

Say: O ye lovers of the One true God! Strive, that ye may truly recognize and know Him, and observe befittingly His precepts. This is a Revelation, under which, if a man shed for its sake one drop of blood, myriads of oceans will be his recompense. Take heed, O friends, that ye forfeit not so inestimable a benefit, or disregard its transcendent station. Consider the multitude of lives that have been, and are still being, sacrificed in a world deluded by a mere phantom which the vain imaginations of its peoples have conceived. Render thanks unto God, inasmuch as ye have attained unto your heart's Desire, and been united to Him Who is the Promise of all nations. Guard ye, with the aid of the one true God - exalted be His glory - the integrity of the **station** which ye have attained, and cleave to that which shall promote His Cause. He, verily, enjoineeth on you what is right and conducive to the exaltation of man's station. Glorified be the All-Merciful, the Revealer of this wondrous Tablet. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 5-6)

Feast of Ízzat (Might)—September 8

Reading 6

In this consisteth the complete surrender of one's will to the Will of God. Meditate on this, that thou mayest drink in the waters of everlasting life which flow through the words of the Lord of all mankind, and mayest testify that the one true God hath ever been immeasurably exalted above His creatures. He, verily, is the Incomparable, the Ever-Abiding, the Omniscient, the All-Wise. The station of absolute self-surrender transcendeth, and will ever remain exalted above, every other **station**. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 337-338)

Reading 7

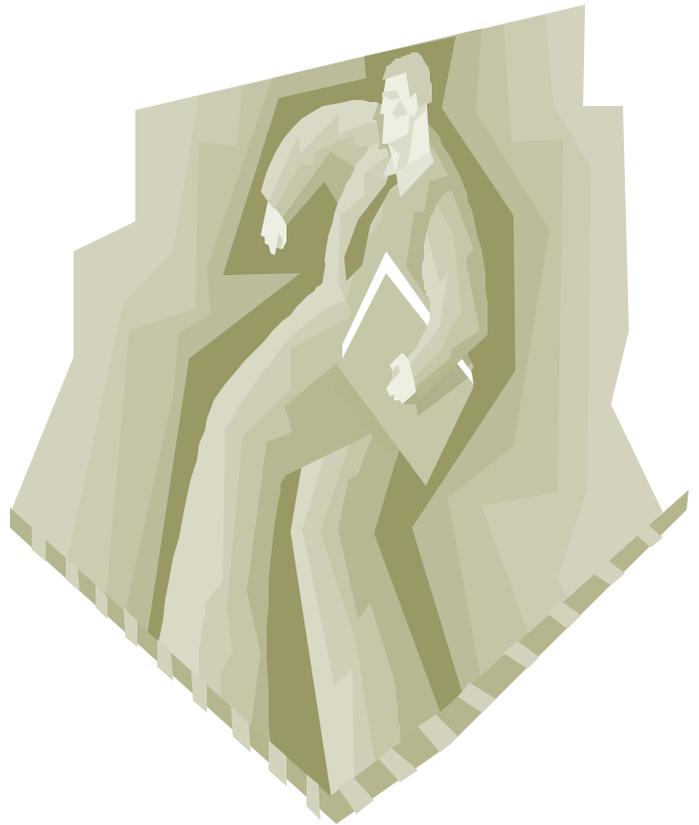
Thou hast, moreover, asked Me concerning the state of the soul after its separation from the body. Know thou, of a truth, that if the soul of man hath walked in the ways of God, it will, assuredly, return and be gathered to the glory of the Beloved. By the righteousness of God! It shall attain a **station** such as no pen can depict, or tongue describe. The soul that hath remained faithful to the Cause of God, and stood unwaveringly firm in His Path shall, after his ascension, be possessed of such power that all the worlds which the Almighty hath created can benefit through him. Such a soul provideth, at the bidding of the Ideal King and Divine Educator, the pure leaven that leaveneth the world of being, and furnisheth the power through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest. Consider how meal needeth leaven to be leavened with. Those souls that are the symbols of detachment are the leaven of the world. Meditate on this, and be of the thankful. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 161)

Feast of Ízzat (Might)—September 8

Reading 8

The people of Baha, who are the inmates of the Ark of God, are, one and all, well aware of one another's state and condition, and are united in the bonds of intimacy and fellowship. Such a state, however, must depend upon their faith and their conduct. They that are of the same grade and **station** are fully aware of one another's capacity, character, accomplishments and merits. They that are of a lower grade, however, are incapable of comprehending adequately the station, or of estimating the merits, of those that rank above them. Each shall receive his share from thy Lord. Blessed is the man that hath turned his face towards God, and walked steadfastly in His love, until his soul hath winged its flight unto God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Most Powerful, the Ever-Forgiving, the All-Merciful.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 170)



Reading 9

O YE DWELLERS IN THE HIGHEST PARADISE! Proclaim unto the children of assurance that within the realms of holiness, nigh unto the celestial paradise, a new garden hath appeared, round which circle the denizens of the realm on high and the immortal dwellers of the exalted paradise. Strive, then, that ye may attain that **station**, that ye may unravel the mysteries of love from its wind-flowers and learn the secret of divine and consummate wisdom from its eternal fruits. Solaced are the eyes of them that enter and abide therein!

(Bahá'u'lláh: Persian Hidden Words, Page: 18)

Feast of Mashíyyat (Will)—September 27

Reading 1

Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. Nature is God's **Will** and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise. Were anyone to affirm that it is the **Will** of God as manifested in the world of being, no one should question this assertion. It is endowed with a power whose reality men of learning fail to grasp. Indeed a man of insight can perceive naught therein save the effulgent splendour of Our Name, the Creator. Say: This is an existence which knoweth no decay, and Nature itself is lost in bewilderment before its revelations, its compelling evidences and its effulgent glory which have encompassed the universe. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 142)

Reading 2

O SON OF MAN!

Humble thyself before Me, that I may graciously visit thee. Arise for the triumph of My cause, that while yet on earth thou mayest obtain the victory.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Pages: 42)

Reading 3

True liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His **Will** that pervadeth all created things. Say: The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in complete servitude unto God, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven.

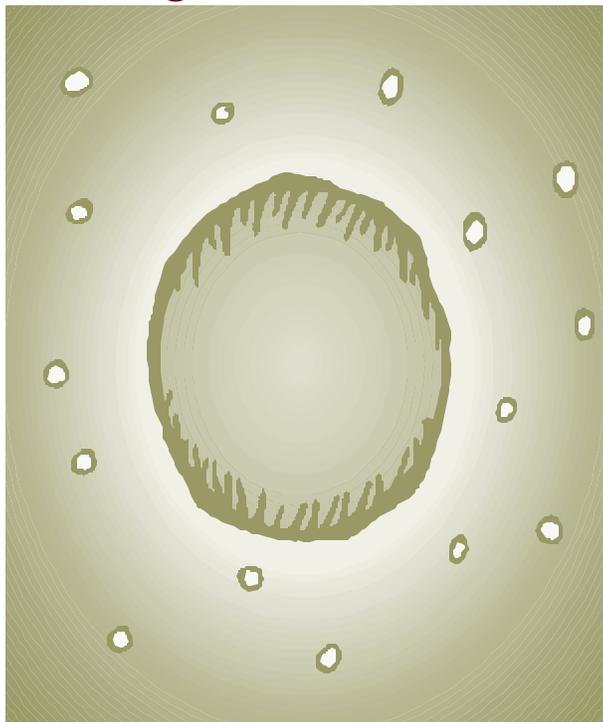
(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Pages: 63-64)

Feast of Mashíyyat (Will)—September 27

Reading 4

O ye peoples of the world! Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants, and the keys of My mercy for My creatures. Thus hath it been sent down from the heaven of the **Will** of your Lord, the Lord of Revelation. Were any man to taste the sweetness of the words which the lips of the All-Merciful have willed to utter, he would, though the treasures of the earth be in his possession, renounce them one and all, that he might vindicate the truth of even one of His commandments, shining above the Dayspring of His bountiful care and loving-kindness. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Page: 20)

Reading 5



Out of utter nothingness, O great and omnipotent Master, Thou hast, through the celestial potency of Thy might, brought me forth and raised me up to proclaim this Revelation. I have made none other but Thee my trust; I have clung to no **will** but Thy **Will**. Thou art, in truth, the All-Sufficing and behind Thee standeth the true God, He Who overshadoweth all things. Indeed sufficient unto Me is God, the Exalted, the Powerful, the Sustainer.

O THOU Remnant of God! I have sacrificed myself wholly for Thee; I have accepted curses for Thy sake, and have yearned for naught but martyrdom in the path of Thy love. Sufficient witness unto me is God, the Exalted, the Protector, the Ancient of Days.

(The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Page: 59)

Feast of Mashíyyat (Will)—September 27

Reading 6

By Him Who hath My being between His hands! notwithstanding these showers of afflictions and unceasing calamities, Our soul was wrapt in blissful joy, and Our whole being evinced an ineffable gladness. For in Our solitude We were unaware of the harm or benefit, the health or ailment, of any soul. Alone, We communed with Our spirit, oblivious of the world and all that is therein. We knew not, however, that the mesh of divine destiny exceedeth the vastest of mortal conceptions, and the dart of His decree transcendeth the boldest of human designs. None can escape the snares He setteth, and no soul can find release except through submission to His **will**. By the righteousness of God! Our withdrawal contemplated no return, and Our separation hoped for no reunion. The one object of Our retirement was to avoid becoming a subject of discord among the faithful, a source of disturbance unto Our companions, the means of injury to any soul, or the cause of sorrow to any heart. Beyond these, We cherished no other intention, and apart from them, We had no end in view. And yet, each person schemed after his own desire, and pursued his own idle fancy, until the hour when, from the Mystic Source, there came the summons bidding Us return whence We came. Surrendering Our **will** to His, We submitted to His injunction. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Iqán, Pages: 250-251)

Reading 7



There is no God but Thee, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. There is no God but Thee, the Ordainer, both in the beginning and in the end. O God, my God! Thy forgiveness hath emboldened me, and Thy mercy hath strengthened me, and Thy call hath awakened me, and Thy grace hath raised me up and led me unto Thee. Who, otherwise, am I that I should dare to stand at the gate of the city of Thy nearness, or set my face toward the lights that are shining from the heaven of Thy **will**? Thou seest, O my Lord, this wretched creature knocking at the door of Thy grace, and this evanescent soul seeking the river of everlasting life from the hands of Thy bounty. Thine is the command at all times, O Thou Who art the Lord of all names; and mine is resignation and willing submission to Thy **will**, O Creator of the heavens!

(Bahá'u'lláh: Aqdas: Other Sections, Page: 95)

Feast of Mashíyyat (Will)—September 27

Reading 8

Briefly, it is said that the "Dayspring of Revelation" is the manifestation of these words, "He doeth whatsoever He **willeth**"; this condition is peculiar to that Holy Being, and others have no share of this essential perfection. That is to say, that as the supreme Manifestations certainly possess essential infallibility, therefore whatever emanates from Them is identical with the truth, and conformable to reality. They are not under the shadow of the former laws. Whatever They say is the word of God, and whatever They perform is an upright action. No believer has any right to criticize; his condition must be one of absolute submission, for the Manifestation arises with perfect wisdom - so that whatever the supreme Manifestation says and does is absolute wisdom, and is in accordance with reality.

If some people do not understand the hidden secret of one of His commands and actions, they ought not to oppose it, for the supreme Manifestation does what He wishes. How often it has occurred, when an act has been performed by a wise, perfect, intelligent man, that others incapable of comprehending its wisdom have objected to it and been amazed that this wise man could say or do such a thing. This opposition comes from their ignorance, and the wisdom of the sage is pure and exempt from error. In the same way, the skilled doctor in treating the patient does what he wishes, and the patient has no right to object; whatever the doctor says and does is right; all ought to consider him the manifestation of these words, "He doeth whatsoever He **willeth**, and commandeth whatever He desireth." It is certain that the doctor **will** use some medicine contrary to the ideas of other people; now opposition is not permitted to those who have not the advantage of science and the medical art. No, in the name of God! on the contrary, all ought to be submissive and to perform whatever the skilled doctor says. Therefore, the skilled doctor does what he wishes, and the patients have no share in this right. The skill of the doctor must be first ascertained; but when the skill of the doctor is once established, he does what he wishes. (‘Abdu'l-Baha: Some Answered Questions, Pages: 173-174)

Reading 9

O thou who art turning thy face towards God! Close thine eyes to all things else, and open them to the realm of the All-Glorious. Ask whatsoever thou wishest of Him alone; seek whatsoever thou seekest from Him alone. With a look He granteth a hundred thousand hopes, with a glance He healeth a hundred thousand incurable ills, with a nod He layeth balm on every wound, with a glimpse He freeth the hearts from the shackles of grief. He doeth as He doeth, and what recourse have we? He carrieth out His **Will**, He ordaineth what He pleaseth. Then better for thee to bow down thy head in submission, and put thy trust in the All-Merciful Lord.

(‘Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... ‘Abdu'l-Baha, Page: 51)

Feast of Ilm (Knowledge)—October 16

Reading 1

We have decreed, O people, that the highest and last end of all learning be the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all **knowledge**; and yet, behold how ye have allowed your learning to shut you out, as by a veil, from Him Who is the Dayspring of this Light, through Whom every hidden thing hath been revealed. Could ye but discover the source whence the splendour of this utterance is diffused, ye would cast away the peoples of the world and all that they possess, and would draw nigh unto this most blessed Seat of glory.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Page: 57)

Reading 2

O SON OF SPIRIT!

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own **knowledge** and not through the knowledge of thy neighbor. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 2)

Reading 3

God hath in truth testified in His Book and so also have testified the company of His angels, His Messengers and those endued with divine **knowledge**, that thou hast believed in God and in His signs and that everyone is guided aright by virtue of thy guidance. This is indeed a boundless grace which God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, hath graciously conferred upon thee aforetime and will confer hereafter. And since thou didst believe in God before the creation, He hath in truth, at His own behest, raised thee up in every Revelation. There is no God but Him, the Sovereign Protector, the All-Glorious.

It behooveth you to proclaim the Cause of God unto all created things as a token of grace from His presence; no God is there but Him, the Most Generous, the All-Compelling.

(The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Pages: 9-10)

Feast of Ilm (Knowledge)—October 16

Reading 4

In the treasures of the knowledge of God there lieth concealed a **knowledge** which, when applied, will largely, though not wholly, eliminate fear. This **knowledge**, however, should be taught from childhood, as it will greatly aid in its elimination. Whatever decreaseth fear increaseth courage. Should the Will of God assist Us, there would flow out from the Pen of the Divine Expounder a lengthy exposition of that which hath been mentioned, and there would be revealed, in the field of arts and sciences, what would renew the world and the nations. A word hath, likewise, been written down and recorded by the Pen of the Most High in the Crimson Book which is capable of fully disclosing that force which is hid in men, nay of redoubling its potency. We implore God - exalted and glorified be He - to graciously assist His servants to do that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Him.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Page: 32)



Reading 5



And if, confirmed by the Creator, the lover escapes from the claws of the eagle of love, he will enter **THE VALLEY OF KNOWLEDGE** and come out of doubt into certitude, and turn from the darkness of illusion to the guiding light of the fear of God. His inner eyes will open and he will privily converse with his Beloved; he will set ajar the gate of truth and piety, and shut the doors of vain imaginings. He in this station is content with the decree of God, and seeth war as peace, and findeth in death the secrets of everlasting life. With inward and outward eyes he witnesseth the mysteries of resurrection in the realms of creation and the souls of men, and with a pure heart apprehendeth the divine wisdom in the endless Manifestations of God. In the ocean he findeth a drop, in a drop he beholdeth the secrets of the sea.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Seven Valleys and Four Valleys, Pages: 11-12)

Feast of Ilm (Knowledge)—October 16

Reading 6

Thou hast asked concerning the fundamentals of religion and its ordinances: Know thou that first and foremost in religion is the knowledge of God. This attaineth its consummation in the recognition of His divine unity, which in turn reacheth its fulfilment in acclaiming that His hallowed and exalted Sanctuary, the Seat of His transcendent majesty, is sanctified from all attributes. And know thou that in this world of being the **knowledge** of God can never be attained save through the **knowledge** of Him Who is the Dayspring of divine Reality.

(The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Page: 117)

Reading 7

How great the multitude of truths which the garment of words can never contain! How vast the number of such verities as no expression can adequately describe, whose significance can never be unfolded, and to which not even the remotest allusions can be made! How manifold are the truths which must remain unuttered until the appointed time is come! Even as it hath been said: "Not everything that a man knoweth can be disclosed, nor can everything that he can disclose be regarded as timely, nor can every timely utterance be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it."

Of these truths some can be disclosed only to the extent of the capacity of the repositories of the light of Our **knowledge**, and the recipients of Our hidden grace. We beseech God to strengthen thee with His power, and enable thee to recognize Him Who is the Source of all **knowledge**, that thou mayest detach thyself from all human learning, for, "what would it profit any man to strive after learning when he hath already found and recognized Him Who is the Object of all **knowledge**?" Cleave to the Root of **Knowledge**, and to Him Who is the Fountain thereof, that thou mayest find thyself independent of all who claim to be well versed in human learning, and whose claim no clear proof, nor the testimony of any enlightening book, can support. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 175-177)

Feast of Ilm (Knowledge)—October 16

Reading 8



O SON OF SPIRIT! I created thee rich, why dost thou bring thyself down to poverty? Noble I made thee, wherewith dost thou abase thyself? Out of the essence of **knowledge** I gave thee being, why seekest thou enlightenment from anyone beside Me? Out of the clay of love I molded thee, how dost thou busy thyself with another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Arabic Hidden Words, Page: 13)

Reading 9

This is that hidden **knowledge** which shall never change, since its beginning is with nine, the symbol that betokeneth the concealed and manifest, the inviolable and unapproachably exalted Name. As for what We have appropriated to the children, this is a bounty conferred on them by God, that they may render thanks unto their Lord, the Compassionate, the Merciful. These, verily, are the Laws of God; transgress them not at the prompting of your base and selfish desires. Observe ye the injunctions laid upon you by Him Who is the Dawning-place of Utterance. The sincere among His servants will regard the precepts set forth by God as the Water of Life to the followers of every faith, and the Lamp of wisdom and loving providence to all the denizens of earth and heaven.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Pages: 28-29)

Feast of Qudrat (Power)—November 4

Reading 1

Consider the rational faculty with which God hath endowed the essence of man. Examine thine own self, and behold how thy motion and stillness, thy will and purpose, thy sight and hearing, thy sense of smell and power of speech, and whatever else is related to, or transcendeth, thy physical senses or spiritual perceptions, all proceed from, and owe their existence to, this same faculty. So closely are they related unto it, that if in less than the twinkling of an eye its relationship to the human body be severed, each and every one of these senses will cease immediately to exercise its function, and will be deprived of the **power** to manifest the evidences of its activity. It is indubitably clear and evident that each of these afore-mentioned instruments has depended, and will ever continue to depend, for its proper functioning on this rational faculty, which should be regarded as a sign of the revelation of Him Who is the sovereign Lord of all. Through its manifestation all these names and attributes have been revealed, and by the suspension of its action they are all destroyed and perish. It would be wholly untrue to maintain that this faculty is the same as the power of vision, inasmuch as the power of vision is derived from it and acteth in dependence upon it.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 164)

Reading 2

Now is the moment in which to cleanse thyself with the waters of detachment that have flowed out from the Supreme Pen, and to ponder, wholly for the sake of God, those things which, time and again, have been sent down or manifested, and then to strive, as much as lieth in thee, to quench, through the **power** of wisdom and the force of thy utterance, the fire of enmity and hatred which smouldereth in the hearts of the peoples of the world.

(Baha'u'llah: Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Page: 12)

Reading 3

Unto the emblems of justice and the exponents of equity it is indubitably clear and evident that this Wronged One, strengthened by the transcendent **power** of the Kingdom, is seeking to efface from among the peoples and kindreds of the earth every evidence of disorder, discord, dissension, differences or divisions; and it is for no other reason but this great, this momentous object that He hath again and again been cast into prison and many a day and a night hath been subjected to chains and fetters. Blessed are they that judge this impregnable Cause, this glorious Announcement, with fairness and equity. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 260)

Feast of Qudrat (Power)—November 4

Reading 4

After passing through the Valley of knowledge, which is the last plane of limitation, the wayfarer cometh to THE VALLEY OF UNITY and drinketh from the cup of the Absolute, and gazeth on the Manifestations of Oneness. In this station he pierceth the veils of plurality, fleeth from the worlds of the flesh, and ascendeth into the heaven of singleness. With the ear of God he heareth, with the eye of God he beholdeth the mysteries of divine creation. He steppeth into the sanctuary of the Friend, and shareth as an intimate the pavilion of the Loved One. He stretcheth out the hand of truth from the sleeve of the Absolute; he revealeth the secrets of **power**. He seeth in himself neither name nor fame nor rank, but findeth his own praise in praising God. He beholdeth in his own name the name of God; to him, "all songs are from the King," and every melody from Him. He sitteth on the throne of "Say, all is from God," and taketh his rest on the carpet of "There is no **power** or might but in God." He looketh on all things with the eye of oneness, and seeth the brilliant rays of the divine sun shining from the dawning-point of Essence alike on all created things, and the lights of singleness reflected over all creation. (Bahá'u'lláh: Seven Valleys and Four Valleys, Pages: 17-18)

Reading 5

In this wonderful age the East is enlightened, the West is fragrant, and everywhere the soul inhales the holy perfume. The sea of the unity of mankind is lifting up its waves with joy, for there is real communication between the hearts and minds of men. The banner of the Holy Spirit is uplifted, and men see it, and are assured with the knowledge that this is a new day.

This is a new cycle of human **power**. All the horizons of the world are luminous, and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men and of the drawing together of all races and all classes. You are loosed from ancient superstitions which have kept men ignorant, destroying the foundation of true humanity.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Abdu'l-Baha in London, Pages: 19-20)



Feast of Qudrat (Power)—November 4

Reading 6

Arise to further My Cause, and to exalt My Word amongst men. We are with you at all times, and shall strengthen you through the **power** of truth. We are truly almighty. Whoso hath recognized Me will arise and serve Me with such determination that the powers of earth and heaven shall be unable to defeat his purpose. (Baha'u'llah: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Pages: 32-33)

Arise and, armed with the **power** of faith, shatter to pieces the gods of your vain imaginings, the sowers of dissension amongst you. Cleave unto that which draweth you together and uniteth you. (Baha'u'llah: Gleanings, Page: 217)

And now, concerning His words: "And He shall send His angels...." 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: The Kitab-i-Iqan, Pages: 78-79)



Reading 7

First and foremost among these favors, which the Almighty hath conferred upon man, is the gift of understanding. His purpose in conferring such a gift is none other except to enable His creature to know and recognize the one true God - exalted be His glory. This gift giveth man the **power** to discern the truth in all things, leadeth him to that which is right, and helpeth him to discover the secrets of creation. Next in rank, is the **power** of vision, the chief instrument whereby his understanding can function. The senses of hearing, of the heart, and the like, are similarly to be reckoned among the gifts with which the human body is endowed. Immeasurably exalted is the Almighty Who hath created these **power**, and revealed them in the body of man. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 194)

Feast of Qudrat (Power)—November 4

Reading 8

...reflect how the elevated heavens of the Dispensations of the past have, in the right hand of **power**, been folded together, how the heavens of divine Revelation have been raised by the command of God, and been adorned by the sun, the moon, and stars of His wondrous commandments. Such are the mysteries of the Word of God, which have been unveiled and made manifest, that haply thou mayest apprehend the morning light of divine guidance, mayest quench, by the **power** of reliance and renunciation, the lamp of idle fancy, of vain imaginings, of hesitation, and doubt, and mayest kindle, in the inmost chamber of thine heart, the new-born light of divine knowledge and certitude.

(Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Iqan, Pages: 48-49)



Reading 9

He Who leadeth to true victory is come. By the righteousness of God! He is fully capable of revolutionizing the world through the **power** of a single Word. Having enjoined upon all men to observe wisdom, He Himself hath adhered to the cord of patience and resignation.

(Baha'u'llah: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 259-260)

The Books, the Scriptures and Holy Writings of previous ages have all proclaimed the joyful tidings that the purpose underlying this most mighty Revelation is none other than the rehabilitation of the world and its nations: that perchance the **power** of utterance may prevail over the power of arms, and the world's affairs be administered through the potency of love. We ask God, the True One, to invest all with the mantle of trustworthiness, for that is the world's comeliest garment.

(Baha'u'llah: Trustworthiness, Page: 332)

O people of Baha! The source of crafts, sciences and arts is the **power** of reflection. Make ye every effort that out of this ideal mine there may gleam forth such pearls of wisdom and utterance as will promote the well-being and harmony of all the kindreds of the earth.

(Baha'u'llah: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 72)

Through the strengthening **power** of My Name seize ye the chalice of knowledge, drink then your fill in defiance of the people of the world who have broken the Covenant of God and His Testament, rejected His proofs and clear tokens, and cavilled at His signs which have pervaded all that are in heaven and on earth.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 79)

Feast of Qwal (Speech)—November 23

Reading 1

Teach thou the Cause of God with an utterance which will cause the bushes to be enkindled, and the call 'Verily, there is no God but Me, the Almighty, the Unconstrained' to be raised therefrom. Say: Human **utterance** is an essence which aspireth to exert its influence and needeth moderation. As to its influence, this is conditional upon refinement which in turn is dependent upon hearts which are detached and pure. As to its moderation, this hath to be combined with tact and wisdom as prescribed in the Holy Scriptures and Tablets. Meditate upon that which hath streamed forth from the heaven of the Will of thy Lord, He Who is the Source of all grace, that thou mayest grasp the intended meaning which is enshrined in the sacred depths of the Holy Writings. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 143)

Reading 2

Follow thou the way of thy Lord, and say not that which the ears cannot bear to hear, for such speech is like luscious food given to small children. However palatable, rare and rich the food may be, it cannot be assimilated by the digestive organs of a suckling child. Therefore unto every one who hath a right, let his settled measure be given.

'Not everything that a man knoweth can be disclosed, nor can everything that he can disclose be regarded as timely, nor can every timely **utterance** be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it.' Such is the consummate wisdom to be observed in thy pursuits. Be not oblivious thereof, if thou wishest to be a man of action under all conditions. First diagnose the disease and identify the malady, then prescribe the remedy, for such is the perfect method of the skilful physician. (Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 268-269)

Reading 3

From the beginning of time the light of unity hath shed its divine radiance upon the world, and the greatest means for the promotion of that unity is for the peoples of the world to understand one another's writing and **speech**. In former Epistles We have enjoined upon the Trustees of the House of Justice either to choose one language from among those now existing or to adopt a new one, and in like manner to select a common script, both of which should be taught in all the schools of the world. Thus will the earth be regarded as one country and one home. The most glorious fruit of the tree of knowledge is this exalted word: Of one tree are all ye the fruit, and of one bough the leaves. Let not man glory in this that he loveth his country, let him rather glory in this that he loveth his kind. Concerning this We have previously revealed that which is the means of the reconstruction of the world and the unity of nations. Blessed are they that attain thereunto. Blessed are they that act accordingly.

(Bahá'u'lláh: -- Tablets of Baha'u'llah Revealed p127-28)

Feast of Qwal (Speech)—November 23

Reading 4

The Pen of the Most High hath decreed and imposed upon every one the obligation to teach this Cause.... God will, no doubt, inspire whosoever detacheth himself from all else but Him, and will cause the pure waters of wisdom and **utterance** to gush out and flow copiously from his heart. Verily, thy Lord, the All-Merciful, is powerful to do as He willeth, and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.

Wert thou to consider this world, and realize how fleeting are the things that pertain unto it, thou wouldst choose to tread no path except the path of service to the Cause of thy Lord. None would have the power to deter thee from celebrating His praise, though all men should arise to oppose thee.

Go thou straight on and persevere in His service. Say: O people! The Day, promised unto you in all the Scriptures, is now come. Fear ye God, and withhold not yourselves from recognizing the One Who is the Object of your creation. Hasten ye unto Him. Better is this for you than the world and all that is therein. Would that ye could perceive it!

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 314)

Reading 5

O handmaid of the Lord! **Speak** thou no word of politics; thy task concerneth the life of the soul, for this verily leadeth to man's joy in the world of God. Except to speak well of them, make thou no mention of the earth's kings, and the worldly governments thereof. Rather, confine thine utterance to spreading the blissful tidings of the Kingdom of God, and demonstrating the influence of the Word of God, and the holiness of the Cause of God. Tell thou of abiding joy and spiritual delights, and godlike qualities, and of how the Sun of Truth hath risen above the earth's horizons: tell of the blowing of the spirit of life into the body of the world.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 92-93)

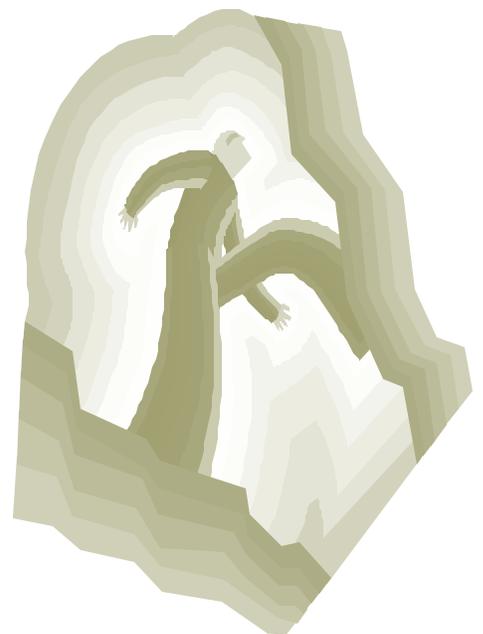


Feast of Qwal (Speech)—November 23

Reading 6

The teacher, when teaching, must be himself fully enkindled, so that his **utterance**, like unto a flame of fire, may exert influence and consume the veil of self and passion. He must also be utterly humble and lowly so that others may be edified, and be totally self-effaced and evanescent so that he may teach with the melody of the Concourse on high - otherwise his teaching will have no effect.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Page: 270)



Reading 7

Another of His signs is the marvel of His discourse, the eloquence of His **utterance**, the rapidity with which His Writings were revealed, His words of wisdom, His verses, His epistles, His communes, His unfolding of the Qur'an, both the abstruse verses thereof and the clear. By thy very life! This thing is plain as day to whoever will regard it with the eye of justice.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 15)

Feast of Qwal (Speech)—November 23

Reading 8

Great is thy blessedness, inasmuch as thou hast been journeying throughout the lands of God, and been the embodiment of joy and assurance for the people of Baha who have renounced all else but Him, and set their hearts towards this Court which hath shed its radiance upon all realms, and sprinkled them with the surging waters of this Ocean wherewith thou thyself hast been sprinkled - an Ocean which hath encompassed all created things.

Indeed thou didst grasp the significance of rendering assistance unto God and didst arise to achieve this through the power of wisdom and utterance. Say: To assist Me is to teach My Cause. This is a theme with which whole Tablets are laden. This is the changeless commandment of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Comprehend this, O ye men of insight. They that have passed beyond the bounds of wisdom fail to understand the meaning of assisting God as set forth in the Book. Say: Fear ye God and sow not the seeds of dissension amongst men. Observe ye that which hath been enjoined upon you by your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Knowing. He knoweth the reality of victory and hath taught it to you with an utterance that the vain imaginings of them that rove distraught in the wilderness of doubt can never corrupt. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 196)

Reading 9

O My Name! The Day-Star of utterance, shining resplendent from the dayspring of divine Revelation, hath so illumined the Scrolls and Tablets that the kingdom of **utterance** and the exalted dominion of understanding vibrate with joy and ecstasy and shine forth with the splendour of His light, yet the generality of mankind comprehend not.

The reason why the subject of aid and assistance hath time and again streamed and will continue to stream from the Pen of Providence is to warn the friends of God lest they engage in activities that would give rise to strife and turmoil. It is incumbent upon them, one and all, to diligently seek ways to help the Cause of God in such manner as We have explained. This is but a token of His grace especially conferred upon His loved ones that every one of them may attain the station characterized by the words: 'Whoso quickeneth a soul hath verily quickened all mankind.' (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 199)

Feast of Masá'il (Questions)—December 12

Reading 1

Every man of discernment, while walking upon the earth, feeleth indeed abashed, inasmuch as he is fully aware that the thing which is the source of his prosperity, his **wealth**, his might, his exaltation, his advancement and power is, as ordained by God, the very earth which is trodden beneath the feet of all men. There can be no doubt that whoever is cognizant of this truth, is cleansed and sanctified from all pride, arrogance, and vainglory.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Page: 44)

Reading 2

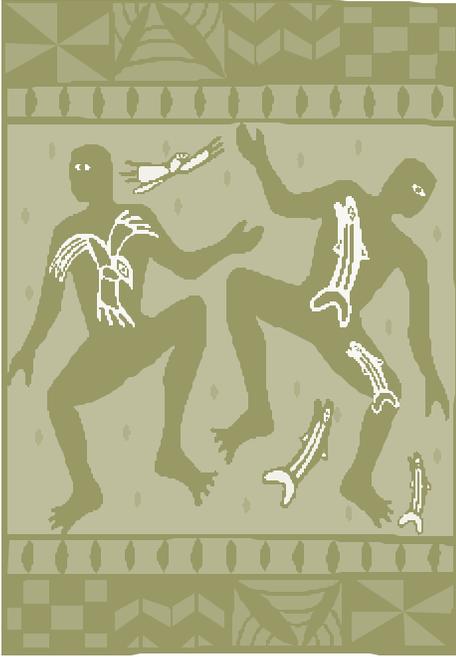
He is not to be numbered with the people of Baha who followeth his mundane desires, or fixeth his heart on things of the earth. He is My true follower who, if he come to a valley of pure gold, will pass straight through it aloof as a cloud, and will neither turn back, nor pause. Such a man is, assuredly, of Me. From his garment the Concourse on high can inhale the fragrance of sanctity.... And if he met the fairest and most comely of women, he would not feel his heart seduced by the least shadow of desire for her beauty. Such an one, indeed, is the creation of spotless chastity. Thus instructeth you the Pen of the Ancient of Days, as bidden by your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 118)

Reading 3

How great the number of people who deck themselves with robes of silk all their lives, while clad in the garb of fire, inasmuch as they have divested themselves of the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness; and how numerous are those who wear clothes made of cotton or coarse wool throughout their lives, and yet by reason of their being endowed with the vesture of divine guidance and righteousness, are truly attired with the raiment of Paradise and take delight in the good-pleasure of God. Indeed it would be better in the sight of God were ye to combine the two, adorning yourselves with the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness and wearing exquisite silk, if ye can afford to do so. If not, at least act ye not unrighteously, but rather observe piety and virtue... (The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Page: 149)

Feast of Masá'il (Questions)—December 12

Reading 4



O MY SERVANTS! Ye are the trees of My garden; ye must give forth goodly and wondrous fruits, that ye yourselves and others may profit therefrom. Thus it is incumbent on every one to engage in crafts and professions, for therein lies the secret of **wealth**, O men of understanding! For results depend upon means, and the grace of God shall be all-sufficient unto you. Trees that yield no fruit have been and will ever be for the fire. (Bahá'u'lláh: Persian Hidden Words, Page: 80)

Reading 5

...man should know his own self and recognize that which leadeth unto loftiness or lowliness, glory or abasement, **wealth** or poverty. Having attained the stage of fulfilment and reached his maturity, man standeth in need of **wealth**, and such **wealth** as he acquireth through crafts or professions is commendable and praiseworthy in the estimation of men of wisdom, and especially in the eyes of servants who dedicate themselves to the education of the world and to the edification of its peoples. They are, in truth, cup-bearers of the life-giving water of knowledge and guides unto the ideal way. They direct the peoples of the world to the straight path and acquaint them with that which is conducive to human upliftment and exaltation. The straight path is the one which guideth man to the dayspring of perception and to the dawning-place of true understanding and leadeth him to that which will redound to glory, honour and greatness.

We cherish the hope that through the loving-kindness of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, obscuring dust may be dispelled and the power of perception enhanced, that the people may discover the purpose for which they have been called into being. In this Day whatsoever serveth to reduce blindness and to increase vision is worthy of consideration. This vision acteth as the agent and guide for true knowledge. Indeed in the estimation of men of wisdom keenness of understanding is due to keenness of vision. The people of Baha must under all circumstances observe that which is meet and seemly and exhort the people accordingly.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 35)

Feast of Masá'il (Questions)—December 12

Reading 6



The beginning of magnanimity is when man expendeth his **wealth** on himself, on his family and on the poor among his brethren in his Faith. The essence of **wealth** is love for Me; whoso loveth Me is the possessor of all things, and he that loveth Me not is indeed of the poor and needy. This is that which the Finger of Glory and Splendour hath revealed.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 156)

Reading 7

O YE THAT PRIDE YOURSELVES ON MORTAL RICHES! Know ye in truth that wealth is a mighty barrier between the seeker and his desire, the lover and his beloved. The rich, but for a few, shall in no wise attain the court of His presence nor enter the city of content and resignation. Well is it then with him, who, being rich, is not hindered by his riches from the eternal kingdom, nor deprived by them of imperishable dominion. By the Most Great Name! The splendor of such a **wealthy** man shall illuminate the dwellers of heaven even as the sun enlightens the people of the earth!

(Bahá'u'lláh: Persian Hidden Words, Page: 53)

Feast of Masá'il (Questions)—December 12

Reading 8

Say: Rejoice not in the things ye possess; tonight they are yours, tomorrow others will possess them....Happy the days that have been consecrated to the remembrance of God, and blessed the hours which have been spent in praise of Him Who is the All-Wise. By My life! Neither the pomp of the mighty, nor the wealth of the rich, nor even the ascendancy of the ungodly will endure. All will perish, at a word from Him. He, verily, is the All-Powerful, the All-Compelling, the Almighty. What advantage is there in the earthly things which men possess? That which shall profit them, they have utterly neglected. Erelong, they will awake from their slumber, and find themselves unable to obtain that which hath escaped them in the days of their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Did they but know it, they would renounce their all, that their names may be mentioned before His throne. They, verily, are accounted among the dead. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Pages: 33-34)

Reading 9

They who are possessed of riches, however, must have the utmost regard for the poor, for great is the honor destined by God for those poor who are steadfast in patience. By My life! There is no honor, except what God may please to bestow, that can compare to this honor. Great is the blessedness awaiting the poor that endure patiently and conceal their sufferings, and well is it with the rich who bestow their riches on the needy and prefer them before themselves.

Please God, the poor may exert themselves and strive to earn the means of livelihood. This is a duty which, in this most great Revelation, hath been prescribed unto every one, and is accounted in the sight of God as a goodly deed. Whoso observeth this duty, the help of the invisible One shall most certainly aid him. He can enrich, through His grace, whomsoever He pleaseth. He, verily, hath power over all things.... (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 202-203)

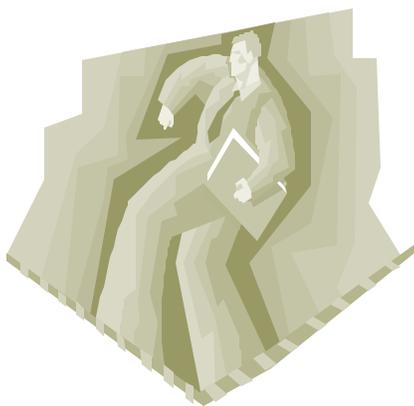
Feast of Sharaf (Honour)—December 31

Reading 1

Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely-chosen expending of one's substance, leadeth to society's comfort and peace. It lighteth up the world; it bestoweth **honour** upon humankind.

(`Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Page: 115)

Reading 2



This Wronged One hath invariably treated the wise with affection. By the wise is meant men whose knowledge is not confined to mere words and whose lives have been fruitful and have produced enduring results. It is incumbent upon everyone to **honour** these blessed souls. Happy are they that observe God's precepts; happy are they that have recognized the Truth; happy are they that judge with fairness in all matters and hold fast to the Cord of My inviolable Justice. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 62)

Reading 3

In every nation thou beholdest unnumbered spiritual leaders who are bereft of true discernment, and among every people thou dost encounter myriads of adherents who are devoid of the same characteristic. Ponder for a while in thy heart, have pity on thyself and turn not aside thine attention from proofs and evidences. However, seek not proofs and evidences after thine idle fancy; but rather base thy proofs upon what God hath appointed. Moreover, know thou that neither being a man of learning nor being a follower is in itself a source of glory. If thou art a man of learning, thy knowledge becometh an **honour**, and if thou art a follower, thine adherence unto leadership becometh an **honour**, only when these conform to the good-pleasure of God. And beware lest thou regard as an idle fancy the good-pleasure of God; it is the same as the good-pleasure of His Messenger. Consider the followers of Jesus. They were eagerly seeking the good-pleasure of God, yet none of them attained the good-pleasure of His Apostle which is identical with God's good-pleasure, except such as embraced His Faith. (The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Page: 124)

Feast of Sharaf (Honour)—December 31

Reading 4

Thou art God's shadow on earth. Strive, therefore, to act in such a manner as becometh so eminent, so august a station. If thou dost depart from following the things We have caused to descend upon thee and taught thee, thou wilt, assuredly, be derogating from that great and priceless **honour**. Return, then, and cleave wholly unto God, and cleanse thine heart from the world and all its vanities, and suffer not the love of any stranger to enter and dwell therein. Not until thou dost purify thine heart from every trace of such love can the brightness of the light of God shed its radiance upon it, for to none hath God given more than one heart. This, verily, hath been decreed and written down in His ancient Book. And as the human heart, as fashioned by God, is one and undivided, it behoveth thee to take heed that its affections be, also, one and undivided. Cleave thou, therefore, with the whole affection of thine heart, unto His love, and withdraw it from the love of any one besides Him, that He may aid thee to immerse thyself in the ocean of His unity, and enable thee to become a true upholder of His oneness. God is My witness. My sole purpose in revealing to thee these words is to sanctify thee from the transitory things of the earth, and aid thee to enter the realm of everlasting glory, that thou mayest, by the leave of God, be of them that abide and rule therein....

(Bahá'u'lláh: Proclamation of Baha'u'llah, Page: 52)

Reading 5

Ye have, one and all, been called into being to seek His presence and to attain that exalted and glorious station. Indeed, He will send down from the heaven of His mercy that which will benefit you, and whatever is graciously vouchsafed by Him shall enable you to dispense with all mankind. Verily on that Day the learning of the learned shall prove of no avail, neither the accomplishments of the exponents of knowledge, nor the pomp of the highly **honoured**, nor the power of the mighty, nor the remembrance of the devout, nor the deeds of the righteous, nor the genuflection of the kneeling worshipper, nor his prostration or turning towards the Qiblih, nor the **honour** of the **honoured**, nor the kinship of the highly born, nor the nobility of those of noble descent, nor the discourse of the eloquent, nor the titles of the prominent - none of these shall be of any avail unto them - inasmuch as all these and whatever else ye have known or comprehended were created by His word of command 'Be' and it is. Indeed if it be His Will He can assuredly bring about the resurrection of all created things through a word from Himself. He is, in truth, over and above all this, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Omnipotent.

(The Bab: Selections from the Bab, Pages: 165-166)

Feast of Sharaf (Honour)—December 31

Reading 6

Amongst the people is he who seateth himself amid the sandals by the door whilst coveting in his heart the seat of **honour**. Say: What manner of man art thou, O vain and heedless one, who wouldst appear as other than thou art? And among the people is he who layeth claim to inner knowledge, and still deeper knowledge concealed within this knowledge. Say: Thou speakest false! By God! What thou dost possess is naught but husks which We have left to thee as bones are left to dogs. By the righteousness of the one true God! Were anyone to wash the feet of all mankind, and were he to worship God in the forests, valleys, and mountains, upon high hills and lofty peaks, to leave no rock or tree, no clod of earth, but was a witness to his worship - yet, should the fragrance of My good pleasure not be inhaled from him, his works would never be acceptable unto God. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Lord of all. How many a man hath secluded himself in the climes of India, denied himself the things that God hath decreed as lawful, imposed upon himself austerities and mortifications, and hath not been remembered by God, the Revealer of Verses. Make not your deeds as snares wherewith to entrap the object of your aspiration, and deprive not yourselves of this Ultimate Objective for which have ever yearned all such as have drawn nigh unto God. Say: The very life of all deeds is My good pleasure, and all things depend upon Mine acceptance. Read ye the Tablets that ye may know what hath been purposed in the Books of God, the All-Glorious, the Ever-Bounteous. He who attaineth to My love hath title to a throne of gold, to sit thereon in honour over all the world; he who is deprived thereof, though he sit upon the dust, that dust would seek refuge with God, the Lord of all Religions. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Pages: 31-32)

Reading 7

O army of God! Praise be to God, Baha'u'llah hath lifted the chains from off the necks of humankind, and hath set man free from all that trammelled him, and told him: Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch; be ye compassionate and kind to all the human race. Deal ye with strangers the same as with friends, cherish ye others just as ye would your own. See foes as friends; see demons as angels; give to the tyrant the same great love ye show the loyal and true, and even as gazelles from the scented cities of Khata and Khutan offer up sweet musk to the ravening wolf. Be ye a refuge to the fearful; bring ye rest and peace to the disturbed; make ye a provision for the destitute; be a treasury of riches for the poor; be a healing medicine for those who suffer pain; be ye doctor and nurse to the ailing; promote ye friendship, and **honour**, and conciliation, and devotion to God, in this world of non-existence.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Page: 72)

Feast of Sharaf (Honour)—December 31

Reading 8

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

Were He to decree as lawful the thing which from time immemorial had been forbidden, and forbid that which had, at all times, been regarded as lawful, to none is given the right to question His authority. Whoso will hesitate, though it be for less than a moment, should be regarded as a transgressor.

Whoso hath not recognized this sublime and fundamental verity, and hath failed to attain this most exalted station, the winds of doubt will agitate him, and the sayings of the infidels will distract his soul. He that hath acknowledged this principle will be endowed with the most perfect constancy. All **honor** to this all-glorious station, the remembrance of which adorneth every exalted Tablet. Such is the teaching which God bestoweth on you, a teaching that will deliver you from all manner of doubt and perplexity, and enable you to attain unto salvation in both this world and in the next. He, verily, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful.

(Baha'u'llah: Gleanings, Pages: 86-87)

Reading 9

Note thou carefully that in this world of being, all things must ever be made new. Look at the material world about thee, see how it hath now been renewed. The thoughts have changed, the ways of life have been revised, the sciences and arts show a new vigour, discoveries and inventions are new, perceptions are new. How then could such a vital power as religion - the guarantor of mankind's great advances, the very means of attaining everlasting life, the fosterer of infinite excellence, the light of both worlds - not be made new? This would be incompatible with the grace and loving-kindness of the Lord.

Religion, moreover, is not a series of beliefs, a set of customs; religion is the teachings of the Lord God, teachings which constitute the very life of humankind, which urge high thoughts upon the mind, refine the character, and lay the groundwork for man's everlasting **honour**.

(`Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 52-53)

Feast of Sultán (Sovereignty)—January 19

Reading 1



...man should know his own **self** and recognize that which leadeth unto loftiness or lowliness, glory or abasement, wealth or poverty. Having attained the stage of fulfilment and reached his maturity, man standeth in need of wealth, and such wealth as he acquireth through crafts or professions is commendable and praiseworthy in the estimation of men of wisdom, and especially in the eyes of servants who dedicate themselves to the education of the world and to the edification of its peoples. They are, in truth, cup-bearers of the life-giving water of knowledge and guides unto the ideal way. They direct the peoples of the world to the straight path and acquaint them with that which is conducive to human upliftment and exaltation. The straight path is the one which guideth man to the dayspring of perception and to the dawning-place of true understanding and leadeth him to that which will redound to glory, honour and greatness. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 35)

Reading 2

Whoso ariseth among you to teach the Cause of his Lord, let him, before all else, teach his own **self**, that his speech may attract the hearts of them that hear him. Unless he teacheth his own self, the words of his mouth will not influence the heart of the seeker. Take heed, O people, lest ye be of them that give good counsel to others but forget to follow it themselves. The words of such as these, and beyond the words the realities of all things, and beyond these realities the angels that are nigh unto God, bring against them the accusation of falsehood.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Page: 277)

Reading 3

O BEFRIENDED STRANGER! The candle of thine heart is lighted by the hand of My power, quench it not with the contrary winds of **self** and passion. The healer of all thine ills is remembrance of Me, forget it not. Make My love thy treasure and cherish it even as thy very sight and life. (Bahá'u'lláh: Persian Hidden Words, Page: 32)

Feast of Sultán (Sovereignty)—January 19

Reading 4

O My servants! Could ye apprehend with what wonders of My munificence and bounty I have willed to entrust your souls, ye would, of a truth, rid yourselves of attachment to all created things, and would gain a true knowledge of your own **selves** - a knowledge which is the same as the comprehension of Mine own Being. Ye would find yourselves independent of all else but Me, and would perceive, with your inner and outer eye, and as manifest as the revelation of My effulgent Name, the seas of My loving-kindness and bounty moving within you. Suffer not your idle fancies, your evil passions, your insincerity and blindness of heart to dim the luster, or stain the sanctity, of so lofty a station. Ye are even as the bird which soareth, with the full force of its mighty wings and with complete and joyous confidence, through the immensity of the heavens, until, impelled to satisfy its hunger, it turneth longingly to the water and clay of the earth below it, and, having been entrapped in the mesh of its desire, findeth itself impotent to resume its flight to the realms whence it came. Powerless to shake off the burden weighing on its sullied wings, that bird, hitherto an inmate of the heavens, is now forced to seek a dwelling-place upon the dust. Wherefore, O My servants, defile not your wings with the clay of waywardness and vain desires, and suffer them not to be stained with the dust of envy and hate, that ye may not be hindered from soaring in the heavens of My divine knowledge. (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 326-327)

Reading 5

O friends! It behoveth you to refresh and revive your souls through the gracious favours which in this Divine, this soul-stirring Springtime are being showered upon you. The Day-Star of His great glory hath shed its radiance upon you, and the clouds of His limitless grace have overshadowed you. How high the reward of him that hath not deprived himself of so great a bounty, nor failed to recognize the beauty of his Best-Beloved in this, His new attire. Watch over yourselves, for the Evil One is lying in wait, ready to entrap you. Gird yourselves against his wicked devices, and, led by the light of the name of the All-Seeing God, make your escape from the darkness that surroundeth you. Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own **self**. The Evil One is he that hindereth the rise and obstructeth the spiritual progress of the children of men. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 86-87)

Feast of Sultán (Sovereignty)—January 19

Reading 6

That the heart is the throne, in which the Revelation of God the All-Merciful is centered, is attested by the holy utterances which We have formerly revealed.

Among them is this saying: "Earth and heaven cannot contain Me; what can alone contain Me is the heart of him that believeth in Me, and is faithful to My Cause." How often hath the human heart, which is the recipient of the light of God and the seat of the revelation of the All-Merciful, erred from Him Who is the Source of that light and the Well Spring of that revelation. It is the waywardness of the heart that removeth it far from God, and condemneth it to remoteness from Him. Those hearts, however, that are aware of His Presence, are close to Him, and are to be regarded as having drawn nigh unto His throne.

Consider, moreover, how frequently doth man become forgetful of his own **self**, whilst God remaineth, through His all-encompassing knowledge, aware of His creature, and continueth to shed upon him the manifest radiance of His glory. It is evident, therefore, that, in such circumstances, He is closer to him than his own **self**. He will, indeed, so remain for ever, for, whereas the one true God knoweth all things, perceiveth all things, and comprehendeth all things, mortal man is prone to err, and is ignorant of the mysteries that lie enfolded within him.... (Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 185-186)

Reading 7

O SON OF DESIRE! The learned and the wise have for long years striven and failed to attain the presence of the All-Glorious; they have spent their lives in search of Him, yet did not behold the beauty of His countenance. Thou without the least effort didst attain thy goal, and without search hast obtained the object of thy quest. Yet, notwithstanding, thou didst remain so wrapt in the veil of **self**, that thine eyes beheld not the beauty of the Beloved, nor did thy hand touch the hem of His robe. Ye that have eyes, behold and wonder.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Persian Hidden Words, Page: 22)



Feast of Sultán (Sovereignty)—January 19

Reading 8

Thine eye is My trust, suffer not the dust of vain desires to becloud its luster. Thine ear is a sign of My bounty, let not the tumult of unseemly motives turn it away from My Word that encompasseth all creation. Thine heart is My treasury, allow not the treacherous hand of **self** to rob thee of the pearls which I have treasured therein. Thine hand is a symbol of My loving-kindness, hinder it not from holding fast unto My guarded and hidden Tablets.... Unasked, I have showered upon thee My grace. Unpetitioned, I have fulfilled thy wish. In spite of thy undeserving, I have singled thee out for My richest, My incalculable favors.... O My servants! Be as resigned and submissive as the earth, that from the soil of your being there may blossom the fragrant, the holy and multicolored hyacinths of My knowledge. Be ablaze as the fire, that ye may burn away the veils of heedlessness and set aglow, through the quickening energies of the love of God, the chilled and wayward heart. Be light and untrammelled as the breeze, that ye may obtain admittance into the precincts of My court, My inviolable Sanctuary.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, Pages: 322-323)

Reading 9

They are all the manifestation of the "Beginning" and the "End," the "First" and the "Last," the "Seen" and "Hidden" - all of which pertain to Him Who is the innermost Spirit of Spirits and eternal Essence of Essences. And were they to say: "We are the servants of God," this also is a manifest and indisputable fact. For they have been made manifest in the uttermost state of servitude, a servitude the like of which no man can possibly attain. Thus in moments in which these Essences of being were deeply immersed beneath the oceans of ancient and everlasting holiness, or when they soared to the loftiest summits of divine mysteries, they claimed their utterance to be the Voice of divinity, the Call of God Himself. Were the eye of discernment to be opened, it would recognize that in this very state, they have considered themselves utterly effaced and non-existent in the face of Him Who is the All-Pervading, the Incorruptible. Methinks, they have regarded themselves as utter nothingness, and deemed their mention in that Court an act of blasphemy. For the slightest whispering of **self**, within such a Court, is an evidence of self-assertion and independent existence. In the eyes of them that have attained unto that Court, such a suggestion is itself a grievous transgression. How much more grievous would it be, were aught else to be mentioned in that Presence, were man's heart, his tongue, his mind, or his soul, to be busied with anyone but the Well-Beloved, were his eyes to behold any countenance other than His beauty, were his ear to be inclined to any melody but His voice, and were his feet to tread any way but His way. In this day the breeze of God is wafted, and His Spirit hath pervaded all things. Such is the outpouring of His grace that the pen is stilled and the tongue is speechless. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Iqán, Pages: 179-181)

Feast of Mulk (Dominion) February 7

Reading 1

Say: **Nature** in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. **Nature** is God's Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise. Were anyone to affirm that it is the Will of God as manifested in the world of being, no one should question this assertion. It is endowed with a power whose reality men of learning fail to grasp. Indeed a man of insight can perceive naught therein save the effulgent splendour of Our Name, the Creator. Say: This is an existence which knoweth no decay, and **Nature** itself is lost in bewilderment before its revelations, its compelling evidences and its effulgent glory which have encompassed the universe. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 142)

Reading 2

It is evident, therefore, that man is ruler over **nature's** sphere and province. **Nature** is inert; man is progressive. **Nature** has no consciousness; man is endowed with it. **Nature** is without volition and acts perforce, whereas man possesses a mighty will. **Nature** is incapable of discovering mysteries or realities, whereas man is especially fitted to do so. **Nature** is not in touch with the realm of God; man is attuned to its evidences. **Nature** is uninformed of God; man is conscious of Him. Man acquires divine virtues; nature is denied them. Man can voluntarily discontinue vices; **nature** has no power to modify the influence of its instincts. Altogether it is evident that man is more noble and superior, that in him there is an ideal power surpassing nature. He has consciousness, volition, memory, intelligent power, divine attributes and virtues of which nature is completely deprived and bereft; therefore, man is higher and nobler by reason of the ideal and heavenly force latent and manifest in him. (Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Page: 178)

Reading 3

That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. In another passage He hath proclaimed: It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 167)

Feast of Mulk (Dominion) February 7

Reading 4

However, until material achievements, physical accomplishments and human virtues are reinforced by spiritual perfections, luminous qualities and characteristics of mercy, no fruit or result shall issue therefrom, nor will the happiness of the world of humanity, which is the ultimate aim, be attained. For although, on the one hand, material achievements and the development of the physical world produce prosperity, which exquisitely manifests its intended aims, on the other hand dangers, severe calamities and violent afflictions are imminent.

Consequently, when thou lookest at the orderly pattern of kingdoms, cities and villages, with the attractiveness of their adornments, the freshness of their natural resources, the refinement of their appliances, the ease of their means of travel, the extent of knowledge available about the world of **nature**, the great inventions, the colossal enterprises, the noble discoveries and scientific researches, thou wouldst conclude that civilization conduceth to the happiness and the progress of the human world. Yet shouldst thou turn thine eye to the discovery of destructive and infernal machines, to the development of forces of demolition and the invention of fiery implements, which uproot the tree of life, it would become evident and manifest unto thee that civilization is conjoined with barbarism. Progress and barbarism go hand in hand, unless material civilization be confirmed by Divine Guidance, by the revelations of the All-Merciful and by godly virtues, and be reinforced by spiritual conduct, by the ideals of the Kingdom and by the outpourings of the Realm of Might. (Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 283-284)

Reading 5

The spirit of man is a circumambient power that encompasseth the realities of all things. Whatsoever thou dost see about thee - wondrous products of human workmanship, inventions, discoveries and like evidences - each one of these was once a secret hidden away in the realm of the unknown. The human spirit laid that secret bare, and drew it forth from the unseen into the visible world. There is, for example, the power of steam, and photography and the phonograph, and wireless telegraphy, and advances in mathematics: each and every one of these was once a mystery, a closely guarded secret, yet the human spirit unravelled these secrets and brought them out of the invisible into the light of day. Thus is it clear that the human spirit is an all-encompassing power that exerteth its dominion over the inner essences of all created things, uncovering the well kept mysteries of the phenomenal world.

(Abdu'l-Baha: Selections ... `Abdu'l-Baha, Pages: 169-170)



Feast of Mulk (Dominion) February 7

Reading 6

Were one to observe with an eye that discovereth the realities of all things, it would become clear that the greatest relationship that bindeth the world of being together lieth in the range of created things themselves, and that co-operation, mutual aid and reciprocity are essential characteristics in the unified body of the world of being, inasmuch as all created things are closely related together and each is influenced by the other or deriveth benefit therefrom, either directly or indirectly.

Consider for instance how one group of created things constituteth the vegetable kingdom, and another the animal kingdom. Each of these two maketh use of certain elements in the air on which its own life dependeth, while each increaseth the quantity of such elements as are essential for the life of the other. In other words, the growth and development of the vegetable world is impossible without the existence of the animal kingdom, and the maintenance of animal life is inconceivable without the co-operation of the vegetable kingdom. Of like kind are the relationships that exist among all created things. Hence it was stated that co-operation and reciprocity are essential properties which are inherent in the unified system of the world of existence, and without which the entire creation would be reduced to nothingness.

(`Abdu'l-Baha: Huququ'llah, Page: 509)

Reading 7

The earth is in motion and growth; the mountains, hills and prairies are green and pleasant; the bounty is overflowing; the mercy universal; the rain is descending from the cloud of mercy; the brilliant Sun is shining; the full moon is ornamenting the horizon of ether; the great ocean-tide is flooding every little stream; the gifts are successive; the favors consecutive; and the refreshing breeze is blowing, wafting the fragrant perfume of the blossoms. Boundless treasure is in the hand of the King of Kings! Lift the hem of thy garment in order to receive it.

(`Abdu'l-Baha: Baha'i World Faith*, Page: 351)



Feast of Mulk (Dominion) February 7

Reading 8

The purpose and object of schools, colleges and universities is to educate man and thereby rescue and redeem him from the exigencies and defects of **nature** and to awaken within him the capability of controlling and appropriating **nature's** bounties. If we should relegate this plot of ground to its natural state, allow it to return to its original condition, it would become a field of thorns and useless weeds, but by cultivation it will become fertile soil, yielding a harvest. Deprived of cultivation, the mountain slopes would be jungles and forests without fruitful trees. The gardens bring forth fruits and flowers in proportion to the care and tillage bestowed upon them by the gardener. Therefore, it is not intended that the world of humanity should be left to its natural state. It is in need of the education divinely provided for it. The holy, heavenly Manifestations of God have been the Teachers. They are the divine Gardeners Who transform the jungles of human nature into fruitful orchards and make the thorny places blossom as the rose. It is evident, then, that the intended and especial function of man is to rescue and redeem himself from the inherent defects of nature and become qualified with the ideal virtues of Divinity. (‘Abdu’l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, Page: 353)

Reading 9

Every man of discernment, while walking upon the earth, feeleth indeed abashed, inasmuch as he is fully aware that the thing which is the source of his prosperity, his wealth, his might, his exaltation, his advancement and power is, as ordained by God, the very earth which is trodden beneath the feet of all men. There can be no doubt that whoever is cognizant of this truth, is cleansed and sanctified from all pride, arrogance, and vainglory. Whatever hath been said hath come from God. Unto this, He, verily, hath borne, and beareth now, witness, and He, in truth, is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. (Bahá'u'lláh: Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Page: 44)

Feast of 'Alá (Loftiness)—March 2

Reading 1

Adorn your heads with the garlands of **trustworthiness** and fidelity, your hearts with the attire of the fear of God, your tongues with absolute truthfulness, your bodies with the vesture of courtesy. These are in truth seemly adornings unto the temple of man, if ye be of them that reflect. Cling, O ye people of Baha, to the cord of servitude unto God, the True One, for thereby your stations shall be made manifest, your names written and preserved, your ranks raised and your memory exalted in the Preserved Tablet. Beware lest the dwellers on earth hinder you from this glorious and exalted station. Thus have We exhorted you in most of Our Epistles and now in this, Our Holy Tablet, above which hath beamed the Day-Star of the Laws of the Lord, your God, the Powerful, the All-Wise. (Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, Pages: 62-63)

Reading 2



The fourth Taraz concerneth **trustworthiness**. Verily it is the door of security for all that dwell on earth and a token of glory on the part of the All-Merciful. He who partaketh thereof hath indeed partaken of the treasures of wealth and prosperity. Trustworthiness is the greatest portal leading unto the tranquillity and security of the people. In truth the stability of every affair hath depended and doth depend upon it. All the domains of power, of grandeur and of wealth are illumined by its light. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Page: 37)

Reading 3

Were a man in this day to adorn himself with the raiment of **trustworthiness** it were better for him in the sight of God than that he should journey on foot towards the holy court and be blessed with meeting the Adored One and standing before His Seat of Glory. Trustworthiness is as a stronghold to the city of humanity, and as eyes to the human temple. Whosoever remaineth deprived thereof shall, before His Throne, be reckoned as one bereft of vision.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Trustworthiness, Pages: 329-330)

Feast of 'Alá (Loftiness)—March 2

Reading 4

We will now mention unto thee **Trustworthiness** and the station thereof in the estimation of God, thy Lord, the Lord of the Mighty Throne. One day of days We repaired unto Our Green Island. Upon Our arrival, We beheld its streams flowing, and its trees luxuriant, and the sunlight playing in their midst. Turning Our face to the right, We beheld what the pen is powerless to describe; nor can it set forth that which the eye of the Lord of Mankind witnessed in that most sanctified, that most sublime, that blest, and most exalted Spot. Turning, then, to the left We gazed on one of the Beauties of the Most Sublime Paradise, standing on a pillar of light, and calling aloud saying: `O inmates of earth and heaven! Behold ye My beauty, and My radiance, and My revelation, and My effulgence. By God, the True One! I am Trustworthiness and the revelation thereof, and the beauty thereof. I will recompense whosoever will cleave unto Me, and recognize My rank and station, and hold fast unto My hem. I am the most great ornament of the people of Baha, and the vesture of glory unto all who are in the kingdom of creation. I am the supreme instrument for the prosperity of the world, and the horizon of assurance unto all beings.' Thus have We sent down for thee that which will draw men nigh unto the Lord of creation. (Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Pages: 121-122)

Reading 5

You have written on the question of how the friends should proceed in their business dealings with one another. This is a question of the greatest importance and a matter that deserveth the liveliest concern. In relations of this kind, the friends of God should act with the utmost trustworthiness and integrity. To be remiss in this area would be to turn one's face away from the counsels of the Blessed Beauty and the holy precepts of God. If a man in his own home doth not treat his relations and friends with entire **trustworthiness** and integrity, his dealings with the outside world - no matter how much **trustworthiness** and honesty he may bring to them - will prove barren and unproductive. First one should order one's own domestic affairs, then attend to one's business with the public. One should certainly not argue that the friends need not be treated with undue care, or that it is unnecessary for them to attach too great importance to the practice of trustworthiness in their dealings with one another, but that it is in their relations with strangers that correct behaviour is essential. Talk like this is sheer fantasy and will lead to detriment and loss. Blessed be the soul that shineth with the light of trustworthiness among the people and becometh a sign of perfection amidst all men.

(`Abdu'l-Baha: Trustworthiness, Page: 340)

Feast of 'Alá (Loftiness)—March 2

Reading 6

Ye who are the sincere well-wishers of the state, who are the dutiful and compliant subjects of the government, should occupy yourselves in constant service. Anyone who enterest the employ of the government should show forth in all his deeds and actions the highest degree of rectitude and honesty, of temperance and self-discipline, of purity and sanctity, of justice and equity. If, God forbid, he should be guilty of the least breach of trust, or approach his duties in a slack or desultory fashion, or extort so much as a farthing from the populace, or seek to further his own selfish interests and personal gain - then it is certain that he shall be deprived of the outpourings of God's grace.

In discharging the functions of the office to which thou has been appointed, thy conduct and actions should attest to the highest standard of trustworthiness and honesty, to a degree of sincerity that is altogether above suspicion, and to an integrity that is immune to the promptings of self-interest. Thus shall all know that the Baha'is are the embodiments of probity, and the very essence of spotless virtue. If they accept office, their motive is to render service to the whole of humanity, not to seek their own self-interest; and their object is to vindicate the cause of truth, not to give themselves over to self-indulgence and base ingratitude.

As for those who are engaged in government service, they should perform their duties with the utmost fidelity, trustworthiness, rectitude, uprightness, integrity and high-mindedness. Let them not tarnish their good repute by pursuing personal interests, nor, for the sake of transient worldly benefits, make themselves objects of public odium and outcasts of the Threshold of Grandeur. (‘Abdu'l-Baha: Trustworthiness, Pages: 341-342)

Reading 7

Your criterion should be to pursue your commercial activities with such fairness and equity as to be a cause of guidance to others. The friends of God should, through the instrumentality of their business, lead the people to God's path, and make them so astonished as to exclaim: "How great is their truthfulness, how high their trustworthiness, and how true is their good will!"

Every business company should be established on divine principles. Its foundations should be **trustworthiness**, piety and truthfulness in order to protect the rights of the people.

Commerce, agriculture and industry should not, in truth, be a bar to service of the one true God. Indeed, such occupations are most potent instruments and clear proofs for the manifestation of the evidences of one's piety, of one's trustworthiness and of the virtues of the All-Merciful Lord. (‘Abdu'l-Baha: Trustworthiness, Pages: 341-342)

Feast of 'Alá (Loftiness)—March 2

Reading 8

The primary characteristic of true believers is **trustworthiness** whereas the primary characteristic of the rebellious is faithlessness.

If a man were to perform every good work, yet fail in the least scruple to be entirely trustworthy and honest, his good works would become as dry tinder and his failure as a soul-consuming fire. If, on the other hand, he should fall short in all his affairs, yet act with trustworthiness and honesty, all his defects would ultimately be righted, all injuries remedied, and all infirmities healed. Our meaning is that, in the sight of God, **trustworthiness** is the bedrock of His Faith and the foundation of all virtues and perfections. A man deprived of this quality is destitute of everything. What shall faith and piety avail if **trustworthiness** be lacking? Of what consequence can they be? What benefit or advantage can they confer? Wherefore Abdu'l-Baha counselleth the friends - nay, rather, fervently imploreth them - so vigilantly to guard the sanctity of the Cause of God and preserve their own dignity as individuals that all nations shall come to know and honour them for their **trustworthiness** and integrity. They can render no greater service than this today. To act otherwise would be to take an axe to the root of the Cause of God - we take refuge with God from this heinous transgression and pray that He will protect His loved ones from committing so flagrant a wrong.

Reading 9

We have enjoined upon all to become engaged in some trade or profession, and have accounted such occupation to be an act of worship. Before all else, however, thou shouldst receive, as a sign of God's acceptance, the mantle of **trustworthiness** from the hands of divine favour; for trustworthiness is the chief means of attracting confirmation and prosperity. We entreat God to make of it a radiant and mercifully showering rain-cloud that shall bring success and blessings to thy affairs. He of a truth is the All-Bountiful, the Gracious.

(Bahá'u'lláh: Trustworthiness, Page: 335)



Bringer of Joy



This Feast is a bringer of joy. It is the ground work of agreement and unity. It is the key to affection and fellowship. It diffuseth the oneness of mankind.

You must continue to keep the Nineteen Day Feast. It is very important; it is very good. But when you present yourselves in the meetings, before entering them, free yourselves from all that you have in your heart, free your thoughts and your minds from all else save God, and speak to your heart. That all may make this a gathering of love, make it the cause of illumination, make it a gathering of attraction of the hearts, surround this gathering with the Lights of the Supreme Concourse, so that you may be gathered together with the utmost love.

Concerning the Feast... established by His Holiness the Bab, (it) is, ... of the utmost importance... Let the beloved of God gather together and associate most lovingly and spiritually and happily with one another, conducting themselves with the greatest courtesy and self-restraint. Let them read the holy verses, as well as essays which are of benefit, and the letters of Abdu'l-Baha; encourage and inspire one another to love each and all; chant the prayers with serenity and joy; give eloquent talks, and praise the matchless Lord.

The host, with complete self-effacement, showing kindness to all, must be a comfort to each one, and serve the friends with his own hands. If the Feast is befittingly held, in the manner described, then this supper will verily be the Lord's Supper, for its fruits will be the very fruits of that Supper, and its influence the same.

Give ye great weight to the Nineteen Day gatherings, so that on these occasions the beloved of the Lord and the handmaids of the Merciful may turn their faces toward the Kingdom, chant the communes, beseech God's help, become joyfully enamoured each of the other, and grow in purity and holiness, and in the fear of God, and in resistance to passion and self. Thus will they separate themselves from this elemental world, and immerse themselves in the ardour's of the spirit. (Abdu'l-Baha: The Nineteen Day Feast, Pages: 425-429)

Quotes for 19 Bahá'í Feasts

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