# RITUALS IN BABISM AND BAHA'ISM

## Denis MacEoin

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## Foreword

This monograph was advertized at the time of the publication of the first volume of *Pembroke Papers*, in 1990, and it is a relief as well as a pleasure to see it finally in print. Although *Pembroke Papers* was originally conceived as an occasional series appearing at "irregular intervals", it was not intended to be quite so relaxed in its publishing schedule, and I would like to apologize both to the author of the present work and to the multitudes of expectant readers who have been eagerly awaiting its appearance. The delay is no one's fault more than mine, although new publishing arrangements, the complexity of the original typescript and numerous other commitments have all caused prolonged periods of inactivity and lack of progress.

The main text of this monograph has been kept as free of intimidating transliteration as possible, full macrons and diacritics being provided only on the first mention of a technical term or phrase, which thereafter is found simply in italics. All such terms are listed in the Index. For consistency, Persian text is transliterated as though it were Arabic, the language of the bulk of this literature (thus Persian  $\nu$  is always w, etc.). Only book titles are fully transliterated throughout; by contrast, personal names are given without macrons and diacritics, except in the Index. Authors' names are fully transliterated only as an integral part of a bibliographical reference. No doubt this produces some oddities, which I hope will be viewed indulgently.

I am grateful to Denis MacEoin for submitting his work for publication, both because a series is only a series when a second volume is envisaged, and because of its peculiar appropriateness for the *Pembroke Papers*. The importance of Pembroke's most distinguished Persianist, E. G. Browne, in the field of Babi and Baha'i studies certainly needs no elaboration, and from the material presented here — partly based on manuscripts collected by Browne and now housed in the University Library — it is not difficult to see why Browne's interest and enthusiasm were so aroused by this new religion taking shape before his very eyes.

My thanks also go to Iradj Bagherzade of I.B. Tauris, for his interest in the series and for rescuing it from its own efficiency; several more volumes are now being conceived and prepared and no doubt in future we shall be rather less occasional.

I am grateful to the Bahā'ī Publishing Trust for permission to reproduce the texts in Appendices VII, XI and XVI, and to Bahā'ī-Verlag for allowing the quotation of the opening verses of the Healing Prayer in Appendix XXI. Figures 1 and 2 are reproduced by kind permission from *Studia Iranica*, together with much of the text in the section on talismans; figures 3, 4 and 5 are reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library. I would also like to thank Joanne Bennett-Murray for her help in producing computer-enhanced images of the cryptic devices of "the greatest name".

Finally, it is my most pleasurable duty to acknowledge the continuing support of the Friends of the Persian Language Society and the Friends of Persian at Cambridge, whose generosity has made the publication of this volume possible. These friends are friends indeed.

Charles Melville Pembroke College, Cambridge March 1994

## **Preface**

Some 14 years ago, when teaching at the University of Fez, I found myself without access to the excellent library facilities I had enjoyed up until then in Cambridge. Nevertheless, I did have my own library, which included a substantial number of volumes on Babism, Baha'ism and Shaykhism, as well as a reasonable collection of more general Shi'i, Sufi and other Islamic texts. Eager to continue with some sort of research, I decided to undertake a project that could proceed well with such limited resources. The result was a lengthy paper on what I termed ritual and semi-ritual practices in Babism and Baha'ism.

When I learned a few years ago of Charles Melville's proposal to launch a series of monographs to be known as the *Pembroke Papers*, I thought again of my paper. It seemed the ideal series in which to publish it: after all, E. G. Browne, the greatest authority on the movements about which I had written, had studied and taught at Pembroke, and I had carried out my doctoral studies a few yards down the road. Charles welcomed the piece, and there then began a complicated process of updating and extending it.

This is not a penetrating anthropological study of the practices of two little-known religious groups. Babism all but died out well over a century ago, whereas Baha'ism was recently described as the second most widely distributed religion after Christianity. Of Babi ritual practice — if there ever was very much of it — we know next to nothing. And modern Baha'is outside the Middle East are restricted in both their knowledge of prescribed ritual and their implementation of it. This is a book mainly about prescriptive texts, and only secondarily concerned with praxis. But I think there may be some value in it for all that.

Interest in Baha'ism itself is growing rapidly as the religion continues to expand, particularly in the Third World. But as anyone who has studied the subject even briefly will know, Baha'ism as presented to Western and Third World audiences is a semi-rationalist movement that does not much emphasize public or private ritual. An examination of

the relevant texts, however, shows that there is enormous potential within the faith for practices of this kind, while recent internal developments (notably the first publication of a translated edition of the central book of Baha'i law, the *Kitāb al-aqdas*) suggest that ritual activities are likely to become more widespread in the next few decades.

Again, observers are often confused by the superficial Westernization of Baha'ism and its uncompromising break from Islam. It is proper to treat of Baha'is today, not as members of a Muslim sect, but as adherents of an independent religious movement; not a world faith, certainly, but without doubt a religion in its own right. This is important, but the historian and the Islamicist will want to understand better the Shi'i roots of the faith — something that a study of religious practice will reveal more readily than, say, social theory or community life in India or the United States. And there is, of course, a particular interest in all this for the Islamicist: very few movements in history have moved as far from Islam as Babism and Baha'ism, making a study of their religio-legal systems of considerable importance as a means of assessing the nature of Islamicity.

But I hope that the value of the book will not end with those few academics who may find the topic interesting or helpful to their wider studies. There are, I know, many adherents of the Baha'i religion who, though eager to know more of the ritual and legal dimensions of their faith, find themslves frustrated by their ignorance of Persian or Arabic and the dearth of translations from texts dealing with these matters. The recent publication of an English translation of the *Kitāb al-aqdas* will undoubtedly have whetted their appetite for fuller information, and it is my hope that the present work may supply it.

## RITUALS IN BABISM AND BAHA'ISM

## Chapter One

## Introduction

Taken together, Babism and Baha'ism¹ represent a textual and historical tradition of considerable range and complexity, yet the rich materials they offer for scholarship have largely been ignored in the modern period. This is in many ways understandable. Despite its extraordinary success as a millenarian movement during the first phase of its existence (1844–50),² Babism failed to preserve its initial momentum and, in the end, collapsed as a viable religious and political force following its military defeat by the Qajar state. Although the minority sect of the Azalis³ attempted to preserve the original laws and doctrines of the later Babi scriptures,⁴ they remained few in numbers, relatively lacking in organizational coherence, and unable to put into practice many of the observances detailed in the texts. Restricted to the sphere of the vestigial Azali community in Iran, Babism remained little more than a religion in potentia, fossilized in the memory of historical events and little-read texts.

The other sect to emerge out of Babism was that of the Baha'is,<sup>5</sup> whose leader, Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri Baha' Allah,<sup>6</sup> set himself the task of so modifying the original Babi message as to transform it into the basis for a fresh religious movement centred on his own person and drawing its inspiration primarily from his writings. Deradicalized and dedicated to a politically quietist programme of social and ethical reform, the Baha'i version of Babism spread in Iran less spectacularly than the original movement, but with more lasting results. The Iranian Baha'i community has always remained relatively small in terms of absolute numbers,<sup>7</sup> but it is generally reckoned to be the largest religious minority in the country, and has developed a way of life that, if not wholly distinctive, nevertheless possesses features of real interest to the scholar. Unfortunately, conditions in Iran have never been favourable for the serious study of Baha'ism, and, with few exceptions, scholars have not attempted to enter into close communication with

Baha'is or to engage in prolonged research into the life of their community or the history and doctrines of the sect.

Outside Iran and the Islamic world in general, Baha'ism was able to be more aggressive in its methods of proselytization, and, from the 1890s, small communities of converts grew up in Europe and North America.<sup>8</sup> These formed the springboard for later missionary enterprises which, by the 1950s, had succeeded in establishing Baha'i nuclei in almost every country. Since then, the prosecution of systematic, wellmanaged plans has resulted in the marked expansion of the movement in several key areas, principally in the Third World, and there is good reason to believe that it will continue to attract adherents on a wide scale for some time to come. The successes of recent decades have led to some reawakening of scholarly interest in the subject, and several important historical and sociological studies, mostly the work of adherents, have been produced in the past few years. Nevertheless, the distancing of Baha'ism from its Islamic origins and the missionary zeal with which it has been presented in the West since the early years of this century have tended to weaken the interest of scholars or even to alienate them, with the result that almost no attention has been paid to early scriptural material or to the cultus of the sect as it has developed since the 1860s.

One of the most notable features of Baha'ism in its present form is the manner in which it has been consciously constructed as an "independent religion" modelled on the Islamic pattern. The development of Baha'ism as a "world faith" owes most to the efforts of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani (1897–1957), the head of the movement from 1921, but it began with the formulation in the writings of Baha' Allah from the 1870s of a sharī'a, a code of Baha'i religious law and practice, based on that of Islam. The institution of a prescriptive shari'a had already been attempted by the Bab in the last two years of his life, but the system envisaged by him to replace the Islamic code was largely unworkable and stood in need of radical modification. In keeping with his general outlook, characterized by quietism, tolerance, and moderation, Husayn 'Ali provided his followers with a comprehensive but undemanding shari'a of his own.

The Islamic shari'a, in both its Sunni and Shi'i forms, is the result of a lengthy process of legal and theological thought and debate. The sanctification of the legal system by reference to the authority of Prophetic sayings (aḥādīth) was, as Goldziher, Schacht and others have shown, 11 a largely retrospective process, whereby the "living tradition" of the community became embodied in a canon that grew up in its wake. Islamic theory, of course, reverses the process, and holds that Quranic injunction or Prophetic dictum or action invariably preceded the

establishment of an agreed practice (sunna) and rendered it legally binding.

Both the Bab and Baha' Allah proceeded from this latter assumption and, in seeking to establish new religious dispensations abrogatory of Islam, felt it to be their primary responsibility to provide ready-made shari'as — or, at least, their core elements — for the communities each brought into existence. The Babi and Baha'i law-codes are, therefore, of considerable historical interest as the first conscious attempts to establish such a system on a prescriptive, "revealed" basis rather than through the gradual emergence of a communal consensus. Whereas early Muslim jurisprudents and theologians had, to some extent, been forced to grope in the dark after an acceptable system for a community still in a state of flux and self-realization, the founders of the Babi and Baha'i shari'as had in their minds exact pictures of what such a system should be like. Their codes were worked out in theory before any attempt was ever made to put them into practice, and handed to their communities as divinely revealed and perfect. This theoretical quality was much enhanced, first by the impossibility of putting either system into practice within the confines of the Islamic world, and secondly by the undesirability of revealing much of their contents to Western converts for whom the very concept of a shari'a would be alien and, in its details, possibly forbidding. It is remarkable that the integral text of the central scriptural work, the Kitāb al-aqdas, which contains the fundamentals of the shari'a, was not made available to adherents even in the original language until very recently.

Baha'i preoccupations with world-wide proselytization and the formulation of a rational social ethic, combined with a relative lack of concern for the development of a coherent internal spiritual tradition, have led to a corresponding impoverishment of what might best be described as "the religious life". This absence of a highly visible cultus has, at least in the West, been promoted as a positive feature of Baha'ism, which is described as a religion "free from any form of ecclesiasticism" and which possesses "neither priesthood nor rituals". 12 To the outside observer, this can take what seem to be rather bizarre forms of expression. A recent popular introduction to Baha'ism, for example, devotes only four very short paragraphs to the topics of prayer and fasting, while a chapter entitled "How the Baha'is live" is exclusively concerned with administrative matters, down to a description of the work of local Baha'i committees. 13 Rational management methods rather than essentially religious values would appear to dominate the lives of members of the sect.

This, however, is a somewhat misleading view. Whatever the preoccupations of the contemporary Baha'i leadership, it is clear that the majority of Baha'is are deeply religious people, with a serious commitment to spiritual and devotional values, and that Iranians, in particular, are often well aware of the richer dimensions of Baha'i religious observance. There is enormous potential for the development of both the private and the public cult, based on textual prescriptions, and, as the non-Iranian Baha'i communities move into their second and third generations, we may expect to see increased attention within the religion to those ritual and semi-ritual observances that have so far been largely neglected.

The present work attempts to provide a detailed outline of textually sanctioned Babi and Baha'i religious practices, ranging from acts of worship ('ibādāt) through to rites of passage, festivals and sumptuary regulations. It is supplemented by a body of texts illustrating or expanding on the information provided in the commentary, which it is hoped will form the basis for further studies of this neglected aspect of the Babi and Baha'i movements.

#### ISLAMIC RITUAL

Of the major world religions, Islam is undoubtedly the most notable for its lack of elaborate ceremonial. Nevertheless, it is, perhaps, more intensely ritualized than many religions with a high ceremonial content. 14 Most obvious is the ritual prayer or salāt, ideally performed five times per day, either alone or in congregation. The accompanying rituals of the call to prayer  $(adh\bar{a}n)$ , ablutions  $(wud\bar{u}')$ , and the Friday sermon (khutba) combine to make the salat a central formalizing feature in daily religious life. The obligatory pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca is high in ritual content, incorporating numerous elements of pre-Islamic practice, such as entry into a state of ritual purity (ihrām), the sevenfold running between Safa and Marwa, the casting of stones at three heaps of rocks (jamrāt) in the valley of Mina, and the sacrifice of sheep and goats on the tenth day of Dhu 'l-Hijja. In the course of time, much ritual has been elaborated for events such as birth, the circumcision of male children (and, in some areas, females), marriage and burial. Pre-Islamic custom is often preserved in these observances and in the ceremonies associated with the various religious holy days, with considerable regional variation. More generally, the nature of Islamic law and customary practice is such that daily life is, in traditional areas, hedged about with numerous quasi-ritual actions derived from the sunna, the unalterable practice of the Prophet and his Companions. Formulae exist for greetings, expressions of condolence or congratulation, or the commencement and completion of actions; there are rituals associated with sexual intercourse, menstruation and childbirth. Prescriptions even exist for dress, daily ablutions, the toilet and the consumption of food and drink. Only Judaism possesses a comparable code of everyday ritual.

Although Sunnism in general is free from complex ceremonial, the Sufi orders (tarīqāt), notably in Turkey and North Africa, have tended to elaborate their own ritual practices, particularly in respect of communal gatherings for the praise of God (dhikr Allāh or simply dhikr) or the performance of music and singing (samā'). The highly elaborate and intensely ritualized gatherings of the Mevlevi or "whirling" dervishes are, perhaps, the best examples of this tendency and certainly the most well-known. In North Africa particularly, saintworship in the form of maraboutism has given rise to a multifaceted cult centred on living holy men, pilgrimages to shrine centres, and celebrations of saints' birthdays. 15

Similarly, Shi'i Islam, particularly in Iran, with its theophanic doctrines and cult of saints, has given rise to numerous ritual and semi-ritual practices. Pilgrimages (ziyārāt) to the tombs of Imams or their descendants involve ritual circumambulation, the kissing of doors and grilles, the placing of petitions, the reading of "tablets of visitation" (ziyāratnāma) and other supererogatory prayers, and the lighting of candles. The ceremonies associated with the day of 'Ashura, the tenth day of Muharram, include ritual flagellation, religious processions, the performance of stylized mystery plays, and the formalized reading by specialized functionaries (rawda-khwān) of dirges on the sufferings of the Imams (rawda-khwani). In daily life, the use of charms and amulets (hirz, pl. ahrāz), clay tablets and rosaries from Karbala and other shrines, and foodstuffs endowed with heavenly potency (baraka) through being laid at the tombs of saints continues the round of semiritual practice. 16

Shi'ism, particularly in its sectarian forms, such as the Isma'iliyya, Hurufiyya, Nuqtawiyya, 'Alawiyya and others, displays a marked predilection for intricate doctrines based on various systems of letter-number relationship, as in the Jewish gematria. These doctrines, which find correspondence between the various elements of creation by means of numerological calculation, have had a wide popular expression in the preparation of magic squares, talismans, prayers (especially for healing) and other semi-ritual devices.

Popular Islam, both Sunni and Shi'i, is a mixture of folk custom, magic, astrology, numerology, and ecstatic ceremony expressed through the rituals of mystical brotherhoods, guilds, fraternities and sororities, as well as the activities of mendicants, fortune-tellers, the sellers of charms, and traditional medical practitioners. This folk religion is generally sharply demarcated from the High Islam of the 'ulamā', but the two do meet from time to time at a series of intersections. Babism is one of the best examples.<sup>17</sup>

## Chapter Two

## Babi Ritual Observances

#### EARLY BABI RITUAL

In its early phase (that is, from 1844 to about 1848), Babism was characterized by its insistence on the observance of Shi'i Islamic law and custom, to the extent that the movement may be defined at this period as an extreme example of Shi'i pietism. Thus, in the Qayyūm al-asmā', the Bab writes that "God has made the laws of Muhammad and his saints [awliyā', i.e. the Imams] binding in every book until the resurrection", and in another early work, the Ṣaḥīfa-yi 'adliyya, he states that "since no change may be decreed for [the faith of God], this blessed law (shari'a) shall never be abrogated. Nay, what Muhammad declared lawful (ḥalāl) shall remain lawful to the day of resurrection, and what he has declared unlawful (ḥarām) shall remain unlawful until the day of resurrection."

Beyond this, however, the Bab introduced a number of ordinances which extended and intensified the regulations of the Our'an and the sunna. In his early letters, he "put desirable matters (mustahabbāt) in the place of obligatory (wājibāt) and undesirable matters (makrūhāt) in the place of forbidden (muharramāt). [That is, matters which had formerly been regarded as merely recommended were to be considered as obligatory, while those which had been merely discouraged were now to be held forbidden.] Thus, for example, he regarded it as obligatory to have four tablets (muhr) of the soil (from the shrine) of the prince of martyrs [i.e. the grave of the Imam Husayn at Karbala] on which to place the hands, forehead, and nose during the prostration of ritual prayer (namāz — Persian for salat); he considered the pilgrimage of 'Ashura a duty; he laid down prayers (adī'a) and supererogatory observances (ta'qībāt); he proclaimed the obligation of Friday prayer (which the Shi'a regarded as suspended during the occultation of the Imam) . . . and he fashioned amulets (hayākil), charms (ahraz), and talismans

(tilismāt) such as are prepared among the people . . . All his com-

al princes

رې لوه عملې د د اوران کارې panions acted with the utmost circumspection according to the principles  $(us\bar{u}l)$  and secondary observances  $(fur\bar{u}')$  of Islam."

The early Babis were as noted for the strictness of their observance of Islamic law as they were later notorious for their abandonment of it. Mu'in al-Saltana Tabrizi quotes several individuals on the attitude of the Babis of this period to the Islamic legal code. Many, for example, performed a fast of three consecutive months during Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadan. Similarly, they would not wear black clothes because the Imams had forbidden this colour as being that of the 'Abbasid dynasty, which had persecuted them. For this same reason, even the writing of books in black ink was prohibited (red and gold normally being used instead); the Bab himself wrote in red ink before the composition of the Persian Bayān.<sup>4</sup>

One of the earliest works of the Bab is a collection of 14 prayers, entitled the Du'ā-yi şaḥīfa or al-Ṣaḥīfa al-makhzūna,5 apparently written shortly after the Qayyūm al-asmā'. The prayers in this work are intended for the use of the Bab's followers on various specific days or festivals, and may thus be regarded as the first major contribution to ritual observance in Babism. There are prayers here for the main Islamic festivals — the 'Id al-Ghadir, 'Id al-Fitr, 'Id al-Adha, 'Id al-Akbar, day of 'Arafa, and the night of 'Ashura — as well as for Friday (two prayers), the day of "moistening" (8 Dhu 'l-Hijja), following the day on which pilgrims leave Mecca, each day of the months of Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadan (which, as we have noted, were kept as a consecutive fast by the Babis), the night of 15 Sha'ban, the third part of every night, the night of the 23 Ramadan, and a prayer to be said on the completion of the Qur'an. None of these is particularly innovatory except in that the texts were supplied by the Bab himself — but there are two prayers, one designed to be said on "the night of 'declaration'" and 5 Jumada I, the other for the 'Id al-Ghadir, for Fridays, and also on 5 Jumada I. By thus providing prayers for the celebration of the day on which he declared himself the vice-regent of the Imam, the Bab introduced a wholly new observance into the Islamic calendar. But it was still the Islamic calendar, not the Babi.

Similar in many respects to the Ṣaḥīfa al-makhzūna is the Ṣaḥīfa (or Kitāb) a'māl al-sana, b which seems to have been written by the Bab in Bushire on his return from the hajj in 1845. It contains 14 chapters, interspersed with other pieces, basically dealing with the observances for various important dates throughout the Islamic year. The majority of the sections of this book deal with the acts and devotions to be performed during the months of Muharram, Safar, Rabi' I, Rabi' II, Jumada I, Jumada II, and Dhu 'l-Hijja (with some months having more than one section), while one section is designed to be read on the day of 'Arafa (9 Dhu 'l-Hijja), the day preceding, the day after, the day of

(5000)

11/6/2

Ghadir (17 Dhu 'l-Hijja), every Friday, the day of Bid' (?), and 24

Jumada II.

The Bab's views on certain aspects of Islamic ritual observance, principally on salat and purification, are to be found in two short works, the Risāla furū' al-'adliyya<sup>7</sup> (written in 1846) and the Kitāb al-ṭahāra (The Book of Purification) 8 In the salat and purification) (The Book of Purification).8 In these works, he provides detailed instructions as to the number and types of salat, the rules for ablutions, the number and form of prostrations, and so forth, but adds little in the way of innovation. Further details on the injunctions provided in these works on ritual purification will be provided in the section on that topic in the next part of this study.

Considerably more innovatory are the contents of a somewhat earlier work, the *Khaṣā'il-i sab'a*, written at some point during the Bab's hajj journey of 1844-5. Among the instructions gives followers in this work are the following:

- To read the Ziyāra al-jāmi'a al-kabīra (a "visitation tablet" for all the Imams) on Fridays, festivals, and holy nights, after the performance of ablutions and the purification of body and clothes with great care, in a spirit of sanctity.
- To perform the prostration of salat on the grave of the Imam Husayn in such a way that the nose of the worshipper touches the grave.
- To add the formula "I testify that 'Ali Muhammad [i.e. the Bab] is the servant of the remnant of God [i.e. the twelfth Imam]" to the call to 1 11/2 120 prayer.
- 4 Each believer to hang round his neck, reaching to his chest, a talismanic device (haykal) in the Bab's hand, containing various names of God and other mysterious symbols based on the divine names (for examples of these, see the section on talismans in the next section).

But, of all the Bab's early works, the most interesting in respect of ritual observance is the Sahīfa bayna 'l-haramayn,9 written between Mecca and Medina in the course of his pilgrimage in 1844-5. In this work, the Bab discusses the use of talismans, 10 provides prayers to be said at sunset, 11 after the noon and dawn prayers, 12 on the evening of Friday, 13 and at the beginning of every month, 14 and gives instructions for pilgrims to the shrine of Husayn. 15 Of particular interest is a lengthy passage in which the Bab sets out a strenuous daily routine for the seeker (sālik), with directions as to prayer, supererogatory devotions (nawāfil), fasting (which includes a fast of 10 days each month to the age of 30, of 15 days each month from 30 to 40, of three days from 40 to 50, and of Ramadan only from 50), the taking of gum mastic, water and milk, study (including that of figh — jurisprudence), sleep, and prayers during the night. 16 A translation of this passage is provided in Appendix I.

#### LATER BABI RITUAL

In 1848 the Bab proclaimed himself the Qa'im or re-appearance of the hidden Imam and instituted a period of "resurrection" (qiyāma), in which the laws and customs of Islam were abrogated by him and increasingly dispensed with by his followers. In their place, he set out detailed prescriptions for legal and ritual practice, principally in the Persian and Arabic Bayans, his two major works of the later period, and, to a lesser extent, in other works such as the Haykal al-dīn. 17 The regulations given in the Persian Bayan are generally of a highly original and idiosyncratic character, and those concerning ritual and semi-ritual observance are often markedly different from their Islamic counterparts; in many cases, there are no comparable observances in Islam at all. Not a few of these regulations are of additional importance in that they form the basis for later Baha'i observance. Perhaps the most significant single feature of the Persian Bayan and the books related to it is the attempt to bring into existence wholesale an entire system of law and customary observance without a basis in tradition. In Islam, the Qur'an itself contains a limited number of laws relating to marriage, criminal offences, and so forth, but the later development of Islamic legislation is based on other sources, including the recorded or supposed utterances of the Prophet. Ritual observances, such as those connected with the salat or the hajj, as well as customary practices relating to dress, toilet, eating and so on, are largely based on the recorded practice (sunna) of the Prophet and his Companions.

The early Babis, as we have seen, generally continued to observe Islamic law and practice, with the addition of a number of extra devotional exercises provided by the Bab. But when, in 1848, the Islamic shari'a was abrogated, the entire system of customary practice based on the sunna was regarded as abolished with it. In the absence of a Babi sunna, the Bab sought to supply the details of daily behaviour and ritual observance side by side with the legislation he provided on marriage, inheritance, taxation and suchlike, in an attempt to translate his followers from the fully elaborated system of 19th-century Shi'ism into an almost equally elaborate Babi system. To this end, the Bayān contains prescriptive statements on all manner of topics relating to individual and social behaviour. Thus, we find regulations relating to bathing, depilation, and even the use of mirrors, 18 to salutations, 19 the use of chairs, 20 the giving of replies either orally or in writing, 21 the provision of high doors for buildings, 22 the number of dishes which may be laid out at mealtimes, 3 marriage within the limits of social rank, 24 how to cook eggs, 25 and a great deal more of a similar nature. In some

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cases, as we shall see, these ordinances partake of a semi-ritual nature and it is sometimes difficult to make a precise division between simple prescriptions for daily routine and those which involve formalized words or actions akin to ritual observance. Nevertheless, let us attempt to summarize the more important regulations concerning devotional and quasi-devotional behaviour which contains a ritual element.

#### 1 Prayer (Salat)

The Bab seems not to have laid down specific directions concerning the form of salat, <sup>26</sup> but he does provide regulations in general for its performance and one or two more minute injunctions. Whereas in Islam there is a total of five salats per day, as well as particular salats in the event of earthquakes and so forth, the Bab abrogated all salats except one of 19  $rak'\bar{a}t$  (sing. rak'a — the act of bending the body at the waist, with the hands above the knees, followed by two prostrations), to be performed between noon and sunset ( $min\ zaw\bar{a}l\ il\bar{a}\ zaw\bar{a}l$ ). <sup>27</sup> The  $Haykal\ al\ d\bar{n}$  indicates that even this salat may not be obligatory if dhikr (ritual mention of God) be performed instead. <sup>28</sup> 75 17 19 19 19

The words to be used in the course of salat are nowhere given by the Bab, but he does provide an idea of the general content of the prayer. In the first three rak'at, the worshipper is to declare the unity of the divine essence (tawhīd-i dhāt), in the next four the unity of God's attributes (tawhīd-i ṣifāt), in the next six the unity of His actions (tawhīd-i af'āl), and, in the final six, the unity of His worship (tawhīd-i 'ibādāt).<sup>29</sup> In more general terms, it is stated that "the best loved salat is that which is performed in a spirit of joy and fragrance. It has not been and is not pleasing for it to be made unduly long: the more it is made simple and concentrated (mujarrad wa jawhartar — sic), the more it is loved of God."<sup>30</sup> The presumption is that the individual is free to use whatever verses, invocations or mentions of God he wishes, within the framework of the 19 prostrations and the themes outlined for each set of them.

Communal prayer (salāt al-jamā'a), the most important collective ritual in Islam (apart from the hajj), was abolished by the Bab, except in the case of the special prayer to be read at funerals. This prohibition of communal prayer also abolished the function of imam or prayer leader of the community.<sup>31</sup> Mosques, however, were to remain, for both private prayer and, as I shall mention later, Friday gatherings for the exposition of sermons. In particular, the Bab instructed his followers to erect "mosques of the living" (masājid al-ḥayy), possibly at the tombs of the 18 "Letters of the Living" (his first followers).<sup>32</sup> In the Arabic Bayān, believers are directed to make a "noble place" in their homes a private mosque, in the original sense of masjid as a place of prostration. It is, however, preferable to resort to the public mosques.<sup>33</sup>

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For the performance of salat, men are to wear an 'abā, but never a jubba (except in cases of necessity) and, during the prayer, the tips of the fingers only should be allowed to protrude outside the folds of the 'aba. 34 Women are to pray in their own clothing (i.e. they do not have to put on an 'aba), and it is permissible for them to reveal their hair or their bodies to their husbands while praying. 35 The prostration (sajda) is to be performed on a box (?) of crystal containing pieces of the dust of "the first and the last" (presumably the first and last Letters of the Living — Mulla Muhammad Husayn Bushru'i and Mulla Muhammad 'Ali Barfurushi: see also the regulations for burial). 36 What seems to be meant here is that, just as Shi'i Muslims place a small cake of baked earth from Karbala or another shrine beneath the forehead when they prostrate themselves in the salat, Babis are to use a box or block of crystal consecrated by this dust. 37

The qibla or direction to face in prayer is he whom God shall manifest, the messianic figure of the Bayan. 38 Directions exist for the call to prayer (adhan), in a form very different from that in Islam. For the purposes of the adhan, the day (of 24 hours) is to be divided into five sections, beginning at sunset. In each section, the adhan consists of the words "there is no god but God", followed by a phrase which changes from section to section, also to be repeated 19 times. Thus, in the first section it is "God is the All-Rich", in the second, "God is the All-Knowing", in the third, "God is the All-Wise", in the fourth, "God is the All-Possessing", and, in the fifth, "God is the All-Powerful". Those who are too far away to hear the mu'adhdhin (muezzin) are to pay someone 19 mithqāls (a small weight redefined by the Bab) of white sugar each day to chant the adhan for them. If believers should be asleep, they are under no obligation but, if awake, they are to be somewhere where they can hear the voice of the muezzin, although they should not go out of their rooms to hear him. If the weather is cold or the muezzin finds it difficult to chant for long for any other reason, he is permitted to chant the following once only: "God has testified that there is no god but Him and that he whom God shall manifest is the truth from God. All are created by him at the command of God. And we are all believers in what God has revealed to him." 39 Wudu' or ritual ablution is to be performed before the salat, as in Islam, and its details may be found in section 7, below.

If a believer should forget part of the prayer, he is not required to repeat all of it, but may go over only that part which he missed.<sup>40</sup> On a journey, it is permissible at the time of prayer to perform only one sajda, during which one is to praise God, after which one is to sit in the haykal al-tawhīd posture (squatting back on the heels) and to praise God 18 times (presumably by the use of the phrase "Praise be to

God"). 41 Alternatively, the Haykal al-dīn prescribes that, on a journey, the believer is to perform wudu' and then to repeat the words "Praise be to God, Possessor of might" (subḥān Allāh dhī'l-aydāyi). 42 Pregnant or menstruating women are exempted from salat; they are instead to perform wudu' and to praise God 95 times each day, using the formula "Praise be to God, the Possessor of appearance and beauty"; elsewhere, this formula is given with a slight difference.<sup>43</sup> It is recommended that, after each salat, the worshipper should ask forgiveness from God on behalf of his parents.44

#### Invocations, supererogatory prayers and reading of scriptural texts

Apart from the salat, Babi practice resembles Islamic in the existence of various invocations and supererogatory prayers, some designed for repetition at specific times or places. Thus, for example, believers are to stand facing the sun as it rises on Friday and to recite the following verse: "Glory from God be upon your uprising, O dawning sun. Bear witness then, O sun, unto that to which God hath borne witness in same injunction is given in the *Haykal al-dīn*, except that the verse to be used is different: "Bear witness (O sun) that no god is the same injunction the Sales of the Sale Friday, they are to make mention of God, Muhammad and the Imams (mazāhir amrihi) as well as (or, possibly, alternatively) "him whom God shall manifest" (man yuzhiruhu 'llāh)<sup>47</sup> and his "Letters of the Living" (hurūf al-ḥayy)<sup>48</sup> 202 times<sup>49</sup> and to call upon God with the phrase "O God!" (yā 'llāh) to the number of four letter ghayns (i.e. 4000 times).<sup>50</sup> The Arabic Bayan contains a similar regulation, whereby, on the night and day of Friday, the believer is to repeat the phrase: "Praise be to Thee, O my God. Bless the Essence of the Seven Letters [i.e. the Bab - 'Ali Muhammad] and the Letters of Truth [i.e. the Letters of the Living] with glory and majesty."51

In the Haykal al-dīn, it is decreed that the believer is to mention the unity of God 19 times per day, probably by use of the phrase "there is no god but God"; those who fail to do so are to be fined 19 mithqals of diamond, but not if their failure is due to forgetfulness. Similarly, the Bab (nuqtat al-Bayān) is to be mentioned 19 times a day, with a fine of 19 mithgals of gold for failure. Muhammad (in his new persona as the first of the Letters of the Living) is to be mentioned 5 times, then 14 times (19 in all) per day, while 'Ali, Fatima, Hasan, Husayn and the other Imams<sup>52</sup> are to be mentioned in their resurrected identities 5 times per day, with varying fines for failure. Finally, the four gates ("the gates of guidance"— abwāb al-hudā) are to be mentioned as having returned,

again 19 times a day, with a fine for neglect.<sup>53</sup> The Arabic Bayān contains an injunction to perform a salat for the Bab, which would appear, on the basis of the Haykal al-din, to consist of 95 takbirs — but it is not clear how often this was to be performed.<sup>54</sup>

Elsewhere, the Bab makes it obligatory to perform ritual mention of God 95 times each day, using a different name of the Divinity for every day of the month. Thus, the believer is to recite the phrase Allāhu abhā on the first day of the month, Allāhu a'zam on the second, and Allāhu aadam on the nineteenth, the choice of the remaining names being left to the individual.<sup>55</sup> In the Arabic Bayān, it is made obligatory to recite the phrase "God is Most Great" (Allahu a'zam) — this ritual being known technically as  $ta'z\bar{t}m - 19$  times per day. 56 The Haykal al-din known technically as ta zim - 15 times per day of the phrase "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>57</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>58</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u>, the believer is Most Manifest "God is Most Manifest" (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u> (Allāhu azhar).<sup>59</sup> In the <u>Chahār sha'n</u> (Allāhu azhar). following verse: "The glory from God be upon you, O moon shining at all times, and before times, and after times" (fī kulli hīn wa qabla hīn wa ba'da hīn). It is preferable to recite this verse 142 times (to the number of the name  $al-Q\bar{a}'im$ ). <sup>58</sup> It is, at the same time, made clear in another passage that dhikr is to be performed silently, in the heart, in contrast to the Islamic (and, in particular, the Sufi) practice of repeating the divine names aloud; excessive performance of dhikr is not considered pleasing to God.<sup>59</sup> Like salat, dhikr is to be performed wearing an 'aba.<sup>60</sup>

Apart from this daily dhikr, the Bab also prescribed for each believer the recitation each day of 700 verses of the Bayan (a verse being 30 letters, according to another passage), 61 or, if he should be unable to do so, the mention of God 700 times, apparently by use of the invocation "O God" (Allāhumma).62 In a different chapter, there exists what appears to be a supplementary regulation to the foregoing, whereby each believer is required to read the verses of the Bavān and is not permitted to read less than 19 verses at a time. Those who are unable to do so are to recite 19 times at sunrise the following words: "God, God is my Lord, and I associate no one with God, my Lord."63 A different verse is given in the Haykal al-dīn, also to be repeated 19 times: "Praise be to God, the King, the Almighty."64

Other invocations are recommended in more general fashion. It is not considered proper to engage in any activity without first pronouncing the following verse: "In truth, I stand up or sit down for the sake of God, Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, Lord of all things, Lord of the seen and unseen, Lord of all worlds" or, alternatively: "In truth, I do this for the sake of God, Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, Lord of the seen and the unseen, Lord of all worlds." Either of these verses may be recited aloud or in the heart. 65 Similarly, anyone who wishes for something is required to call on God by each of His

seven possible names (in each attribute),  $^{66}$  each name to be spoken 100 times (to the number of the letter  $q\bar{a}f$ ). Similarly, it is prescribed that, should a believer wish to make use of anything, he should utter one of the names of God, either outwardly or inwardly, or even by merely turning his attention to the name. The  $Bay\bar{a}n$  is to be mentioned (? quoted) on anything made by a believer.

The Islamic use of the ritual phrase bism Allāh al-rahmān al-rahīm at the beginning of books, chapters and so forth was replaced by the Bab by the phrase bism Allāh al-amna' al-aqdas. 70 The words "there is no god but God" are to be written at the beginning of books (presumably before the bism Allah), and "there is no Proof but 'Ali Muhammad" ('Alī qabla Muhammad) at the end. 71 Similarly, the Islamic ritual greeting of al-salām 'alaykum (to which the reply is 'alaykum al-salām) was replaced by a slightly more complex series of salutations. Thus, men are to greet one another with the phrase Allahu akbar (God is Most Great), the response to which is Allahu a'zam (God is Most Mighty). while women are to use the salutation Allahu abha (God is Most Splendid), to which the reply is Allahu ajmal (God is Most Beauteous). 72 The Haykal al-din prescribes different forms for these salutations. Men are to greet one another with the phrase Allahu akbar and to reply with Allahu azhar (God is Most Manifest); women are to greet with Allahu ajmal and to reply with Allahu a'azz (God is Most Glorious). 73 These forms are, strictly speaking, not greetings at all but invocations of God, the first two being known in Islam as takbir and ta'zim respectively.

There does not appear to be any Babi equivalent of the Islamic pronunciation of the name of God over an animal being slaughtered, but while cleaning a fish, one is to repeat the words: "In the name of God, the Protector, the Self-subsisting." Oaths (hilf) are to be sworn by God or by him whom God shall manifest and are to be regarded as binding. 75

#### 3 Talismans

The Bab began his career with claims to universal and divinely inspired knowledge similar to those advanced by the Shaykhi leaders such as al-Ahsa'i, Kazim Rashti and Karim Khan Kirmani. Hhen, in 1848, Shirazi proclaimed himself to be the hidden Imam in person, and went on to describe himself as empowered to abrogate the religious dispensation of Islam and usher in a new revelation, he saw himself as not so much in contact with divine knowledge as its source. He was therefore able to reveal to men not only material knowledge, but also gnosis located in the interworld of barzakh or hūrgalyā.

In the broadest sense, the supernatural knowledge that the Bab claimed to make known in his writings differs little from most other

systems of esoteric knowledge in Sufism or extreme Shi'ism, in that it purports to reveal the inner meaning (bāṭin) and structure of exoteric reality and, in particular, the true significance of expressions of that reality in conventional scriptural terminology. The Bab is especially concerned to uncover the meaning behind eschatological concepts such as resurrection, the grave, the questioning of the dead, death itself (and life), the hour, the bridge, the book and so forth, which he reinterprets in an original allegorical manner within the framework of an elaborate metaphysical system. The Bab's view of the world is rooted in a subtle vision of existence as structured according to a series of correspondences between names and the realities that underlie them, in patterns familiar to us from Hurufi, Bektashi, and related speculations.

This system of correspondences is linked in a unique way to the Bab's theory of knowledge in general, much as the idea of kashf is central to Ibn al-'Arabi's ontology. 78 A knowledge of the realities lying behind words and letters is not merely part of a more comprehensive knowledge, but serves as the key to such a knowledge and forms the most distinctive feature of the Bab's revelation of hidden truth. In one of the last sections of the Kitāb-i panj sha'n or Shu'ūn-i khamsa,79 an extremely late major work of the Bab's written between 19 March and 5 April 1850, God is credited with the following statement: "I have created the letters and made them the keys of every science (mafātīh kulli 'ilm)." He then goes on to address all things, saying "consider everything from the most exalted heights to the lowliest atom: you shall behold it all in the 28 letters, just as you have beheld all the letters in it; and you shall behold all the spirits of the letters in their spirits". 80 Some lines later, he continues: "I created an essence of hidden<sup>81</sup> and concealed knowledge, and I stored it up behind the veils of the unseen from the beginning that has no beginning until now."82

This knowledge or science is, of course, gematria and, in particular, the science of letters as expressed in the construction of talismanic devices. In a later section of the *Panj sha'n*, the Bab, now writing in his own person, explains the importance of this knowledge and provides a brief summary of what it entails.

Among the bounties bestowed by God on the Point of the Bayan [i.e. the Bab]<sup>83</sup> is the knowledge of all things in a single person (nafs-i wāḥid), so that he may behold the creation (takwīn) in the world of letters, with the eye of certitude. This is a perfect proof unto all men, like the verses. It was one of those things hidden in the divine knowledge which was not sent down until now, and it is more glorious than any other knowledge. All the [holy] books were sent down and shall be sent down on the basis of this knowledge . . . In brief, all things are confined to the 28 letters [of the

ينج ساًل (مئنو ل غر) alphabet]. Likewise, the creation of all things is confined to the meanings contained in these letters. God has collected together these letters in 11 degrees within His knowledge [i.e. 11 degrees corresponding to the sum of the letters  $h\bar{a}$  and  $w\bar{a}w$ , representing existence or huwiyya] and has established them as the talisman (haykal) of the Primal Will  $(mashiyyat-i\ awwaliyya)$ , which is the Primal Man  $(ins\bar{a}n-i\ awwal)$ . The outward form  $(z\bar{a}hir)$  of the talisman is the ha' (= 5), while its inward nature (batin) is the waw (= 6). He then created 18 talismans in the shadow of this talisman, within the ocean of names [i.e. in the world of the divine names]. Nor can they become 20, for the utmost limit of the number of the names is the name  $mustagh\bar{a}th$  (= 2001).

The meaning of this rather obscure passage is made somewhat clearer a few lines later, when the Bab states that this knowledge has only been revealed so that the "guides of the  $Bay\bar{a}n$ " may be enabled to prove to others how the whole of the Qur'an is contained in a single point. <sup>85</sup> This is, of course, a reference to the tradition that the whole of the  $F\bar{a}tiha$  is in the  $bism\ Allah$ , the whole of the  $bism\ Allah$  in the  $b\bar{a}$ , and the whole of the ba in the point beneath it. In Shi'i tradition, the point is identified with 'Ali. A related tradition, of considerable relevance to the present discussion, is that "knowledge is a single point which the ignorant have multiplied".

According to the system elaborated by the Bab in the Persian  $Bay\bar{a}n$ , the "Primal Point" from which all things originate is the Universal Will, which first manifests itself in the form of 19 letters, the numerical equivalent of the divine name al- $w\bar{a}hid$ . In the religious sphere, this is expressed by the appearance of the Point in the person of the manifestation of the Universal Will, followed by his first 18 disciples, the first things to be created in each cycle. When 19 of these wahids have been brought into being, "all things" ( $kullu\ shay' = 361$ ) are symbolically created. This process is again reflected in the structure of the  $Bay\bar{a}n$  in 19 sections of 19 chapters, or the Babi year of 19 months, each of 19 days. <sup>86</sup>

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In the Kitāb-i panj sha'n, however, the Bab describes this process in a rather more complex way, using as the basis of his system the concept of the Primal Will as a talisman or temple, a notion that can be found in the Persian Bayān, where God says, "there is nothing whatsoever whose decree does not return to this human talisman (haykal-i insānī), which has been created at My command. And that talisman returns by degrees until it reaches My Prophet."<sup>87</sup> This procession of talismans is illustrated in the Panj sha'n by the case of Muhammad, who is the "first talisman", followed by the second, who is 'Ali. Although the talisman of 'Ali and his inner being were created by Muhammad, 'Ali nevertheless possessed

what was sent down by God in the Qur'an, and this was true of each of the succeeding talismans through to the nineteenth, which was the fourth of the abwab.<sup>88</sup>

All of this can be expressed in a more direct fashion through the construction of actual talismans in which the pattern of the reality underlying all creation can be discerned. In the Dalā'il-i sab'a, which would appear to have been completed shortly after the Panj sha'n, the Bab writes that "among the firm evidences is the knowledge of all things in a single individual, the elaboration of which is on the level of miraculous inimitability (i'jāz). This hidden and concealed knowledge has been explained in the Kitāb-i hayākil-i wāḥid, nor was anyone aware of it before this. The fruit of it is this, that one should see in the letters how all things are joined together in 11 degrees, which is the talisman of existence (haykal-i huwiyyat). When you cause the first talisman to journey through the ocean of names, it reaches as far as 19, but it does not enter the number 20."89

The above-mentioned *Kitāb-i hayākil-i wāḥid* is, as is evident from a number of other sources, nothing other than the last five sections of the *Kitāb-i panj sha'n*, which are devoted to the explanation of this subject. In these sections, the Bab provides practical guidance as to how to construct a series of 19 talismans containing various divine names calculated on an elaborate mathematical basis, as follows:<sup>90</sup>

The first name is obtained by writing down the letters of the alphabet in their numerological order. Since these number 28, the divine name  $wah\bar{t}d$  (= 28) is obtained.

Next, the dots representing these letters numerically are taken, these being 9 units, 18 tens (i.e. the tens plus the units), 27 hundreds (i.e. the hundreds plus the tens plus the units), and 4 thousands (i.e. the

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يا هتی ۱۰۸	ملوك ع ۹	عزز ۸۴	74	۶.	میوب ۴۸	

Figure 1 The pattern for the construction of the first of the 19 hayakil. For the other 18, see Appendix II.

thousand plus the three other groups). These number 58 in all, which gives us the name  $mahb\bar{u}b$  (= 58).

Next, the *alif*s (that is, the ones) are taken, as follows: 1, 10, 11, 100, 101, 110, 111, 1000, 1001, 1010, 1011, 1100, 1101, 1110, 1111. There are 32 occurrences of the numeral one, so we have the name  $b\bar{\iota}daw\bar{\iota}$  (= 32). Like many of the names that follow, this is obviously an artificial construction of the Bab's.

This pattern is continued through the rest of the units up to nine, giving us a total of 11 names, arranged in the following talismanic device:

In this diagram, the top five lines (those of the ha) are the exterior (zahir) of the first talisman, while the bottom six (those of the waw) are its interior (batin). This first talisman, the Bab writes, is "the essence of the talismans, whereby all are created. It is the unity without numbers; you all originate in it and you shall all return to it."

The remaining 18 talismans are constructed on the same pattern, except that the numbers used to obtain the names are doubled in the second, trebled in the third, and so on. In other words, the first talisman is constructed on the basis of alif (1), the second on the basis of  $b\bar{a}$  (2), the third on the basis of  $j\bar{l}m$  (3), up to  $t\bar{a}$  and  $y\bar{a}$  (19). <sup>92</sup> In the final talisman, it is possible to see "the form of comprehensiveness" ( $s\bar{u}$  at alignar). <sup>93</sup>

The Bab seems to have regarded knowledge of the science of talismans as important for two connected reasons. It was, first of all, to serve as a means whereby his followers would be aided to recognize him whom God shall manifest, the messianic figure of the Bab's later works, on his appearance. 94 More significantly, perhaps, this science was seen as a rational proof of the truth of the Bab. I have already quoted a passage from the Panj sha'n in which this knowledge is declared "a perfect proof to men, like the verses", and another from the Dalā'il-i sab'a in which it is described as a "firm evidence" and given the status of i'jaz. In the Panj sha'n, moreover, the Bab says that "this knowledge of talismans has not been sent down except as a means of evidence (istidlal) for the guides of the Bayan in respect of others, to explain how the entire Qur'an is contained in a single point and is manifested from it."95 More generally, "the knowledge of all things in the knowledge of the talismans of oneness" is regarded as "a proof to all that has been and will be created, providing confirmation of his unprecedented wisdom". 96 This emphasis on the need for rational proofs, which stands in contrast to the earlier stress on the need to abandon such evidences in favour of intuitive recognition of the truth, seems to have become extremely important for the Bab, who was highly sensitive to attacks made on him by the 'ulama', who criticized his ignorance of the religious sciences and of Arabic grammar. Towards the end of the Panj sha'n,

indeed, he writes that "it has been prohibited in the *Bayān* to believe in a religion except through demonstration  $(dal\bar{\imath}l)$  and evidence  $(burh\bar{a}n)$ , proof (hujja) and certitude  $(\bar{\imath}q\bar{a}n)$ ."

It should not be assumed, however, that the Bab intended this science of letters and talismans to remain purely speculative or evidentiary. Even at the beginning of his career, he had "fashioned amulets (hayakil), charms (ahraz), and talismans (tilismat)", 98 and in an early work entitled the Khasā'il-i sab'a, he instructed each of his followers to wear round his neck a talisman in his (the Bab's) hand, containing various names of God and other mysterious devices based on the divine names. 99 Another early work, the Ṣaḥīfa bayna 'l-ḥaramayn, contains a section dealing with talismans, with general instructions for their construction. 100

In the *Panj sha'n*, he instructs his followers to teach their children the science of talismans when they reach the age of 11 (the Babi age of maturity). He also instructs them to write out the talismans of unity given in the book and to protect themselves with them. <sup>101</sup> More specifically, they are to read 11 *haykals* every day, completing one cycle of readings every Babi month (i.e. in 19 days), <sup>102</sup> a practice which suggests that this particular talismanic design may owe its basic shape to square Shi'i talismans used on specific days of the week. The following example of such a talisman may be compared with the *haykal* above from the *Panj sha'n*. <sup>103</sup>

In the case of talismans, perhaps more clearly than in any other instance, we can see how the Bab sought to incorporate within his system practices derived from popular Shi'ism alongside legal and ritual prescriptions of a more formal nature. The Persian Bayan, which is the principal text of the Babi shari'a, contains a number of regulations relating to the preparation and use of talismans. Two basic forms are mentioned: the haykal, which is to be worn by men, and the dā'ira, to be worn by women. 104 The Persian Bayan also refers to the construction of a haykal consisting of 2001 names of God (to the number of almustaghath), which is to be worn as an amulet from the moment of birth and never left off. 105 The Arabic Bayan and the related Haykal al-din make it obligatory for every individual either to write or to have written for him from the moment of his conception the phrase Allahu a'zam 19 times per month; if it is light enough, this is to be carried about as a talisman. Should someone fail to complete his talisman up to the time of his death, his youngest heir is to do so for him. These amulets are, in any case, to be passed on to one's heirs. 106

It is not entirely clear what relationship (if any) exists between the haykals described in the Panj sha'n and those in the shape of a pentagram commonly found by that name and evidently identical with the 'triangular' talisman referred to in the Sahīfa bayna 'l-haramayn.

بصير بالعباد	ان الله	الى الله	ابرى	وانوض
٧	14. 7	49	٥٣	محدمل
\\	٤	۱۲	ي	٧٧
)Y	19	۸۱۷۵	و .∨	۶
1.71	٤	98	)\	IA
1 14-	محد رسول	الا الله	الد	У

Figure 2 A square Shi'i talisman, from Phillott and Shirazi, Notes on certain Shi'ah Tilisms, p.534.

Pentagram haykals, many of them in the hands of the Bab and Mirza Yahya Subh-i Azal, are quite common, consisting in general of repetitious phrases, sometimes incorporating Quranic verses and the names of Muhammad, Fatima, 'Ali, Hasan and Husayn. The following example will give some idea of the basic form: 107

There appear to be several variant forms of the da'ira or circle talisman, intended for the use of women. In the Persian Bayān, the Bab instructs that it be divided into five wahids, each to be divided into 19 sections, and that women may write within it whatever they wish. 108 There is, however, a short but detailed treatise by the Bab, in which the method for constructing a da'ira is given step by step. 109 For an example of a talisman drawn on this pattern, see Fig. 4. It will immediately be apparent that this device is formed on fairly traditional lines, incorporating several elements derived from standard Islamic talismanic models, such as the seven seals of Solomon, 110 devices formed by analogy with spectacle letters, 111 and Quranic verses.

Apart from this more or less standarized form, however, there are two other styles of da'ira, one incorporating Quranic verses around a central jadwal bearing the words Allahu akbar, above which is the

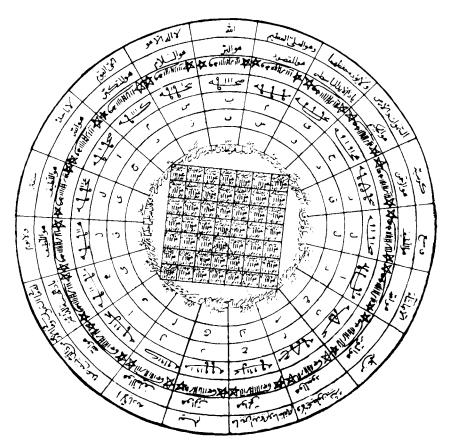


Figure 3 A pentagram *haykal*, item 40:4 in Folder 2, E. G. Browne Oriental Collection, received from Rizwan'Ali in 1897.

phrase "and there is no god but God": and one made up of concentric circles of writing alone, in a manner bearing a close resemblance to the pattern of Mesopotamian magic bowls. I also possess a copy of a predominantly circular device made up of the complete (but slightly corrupt) text of the *Lawḥ -ināqūs* by Mirza Husayn 'Ali Baha' Allah. The incantatory style of the original suggests a talismanic use, as does the arrangement of four verses at the corners. There is, indeed, a close resemblance between this figure and a *da'ira* found in al-Buni's *Shams al-ma'ārif*. 113

#### 4 Rings, engraved stones, and tattoos

Closely related to the use of talismans in Shi'ism is the wearing of engraved stones, in the form of ringstones or pendants. The Bab laid considerable stress on the preparation and wearing of such stones, particularly as rings, and — as we shall see — gave directions for their use on the bodies of the dead. In the Bayān, it is made obligatory for everyone to have engraved and to wear in the form of a ring, a stone of red cornelian/agate ('aqīq al-aḥmar; sic: the Bab often adds a definite



**Figure 4** A Babi *da'ira*, printed in gold and incorporating script in the Bab's own hand, given to E. G. Browne by Subh-i Azal in 1896. Item B.6 in Folder 3 of Browne's Oriental Collection.

article before the second element of an indefinite clause, or removes it before the first element of a definite clause) inscribed with the verse: "Say: God is the Truth, and all save God is created and all are His servants." In the same chapter, the Bab writes that "If anyone should wish to enter into the talismanic protection of God", he should order a da'ira of five circles to be inscribed on a round cornelian. In the first circle there is to be written the Throne verse, in the second the names of the circle, in the third the letters of the bism Allah, in the fourth the six names (i.e. al-Fard, al-Ḥayy, al-Qayyūm, al-Ḥakam, al-'Adl, and al-Quddūs), and in the fifth whatever is conformable to his condition and intention, but to no more than 19 letters. Similarly, it is pleasing to God if no more than 19 letters be inscribed in the first and second circles. 115

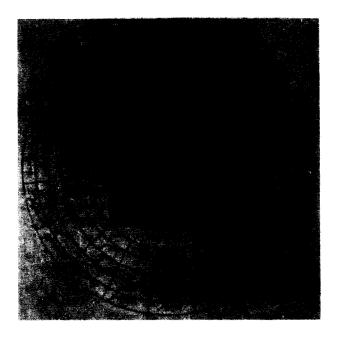


Figure 5 A Babi da'ira received by E. G. Browne from Mirza Mustafa of Isfahan in 1913. Item 40:2 in Folder 2 of Browne's Oriental Collection.

In the Haykal al-dīn, the believers are directed to wear on their right hands a ring inscribed with two verses: "Praise be to God, the mighty Power; praise be to God, the inaccessible Knowledge." In his commentary on the sūra al-qadr (chapter 97 of the Qur'an), the Bab writes: "That figure is one of the letters of the greatest name, which 'Ali spoke of in what he said. Its form is this:

There is no one who shall inscribe [with it] a ringstone of red, Yemeni ruby but shall gather together all good, and it shall be his protection (hirz) from all evil, for it is the greatest name which hath spoken of the Three Degrees in the Torah and the Four Names in the Gospel and the Five Names." The relationship between this use of the traditional Shi'i "greatest name" symbol and the later Baha'i "ringstone symbol" will be discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.

For those who are able, it is obligatory to inscribe the words "Praise be to God" on a peerless diamond and to give it, with their own hands, into the keeping of the Oa'im. 118 It is again obligatory for everyone to own a yellow ruby (la'al al-asfar), on which the words "Praise is God's" are to be inscribed, this to be given to the first person to announce to him tidings of the advent of him whom God shall manifest. 119 It is also an obligation to inscribe the "word of unity" (kalimat al-tawhīd — i.e. "There is no god but God") on a green emerald and to give it to whoever reads the book of God on the promised day. For those who are able, this instruction should be carried out on a ruby (yāqūt). 120 We shall encounter another use of a ring in our later discussion of pilgrimage. In the Haykal al-dīn, the Bab makes it obligatory for his followers, if they are able, to possess 19 rings and 19 sheets of fine paper. 121 It would appear to be these same rings and sheets which the Persian Bayan states are to be left to one's heirs, the rings being each inscribed with one of the names of God. 122

In a chapter of the Persian Bayān dealing with matters relating to bathing and personal hygiene, the Bab instructs men to tattoo the word al-rahman (the Merciful) on their chest, and women the word Allahumma (O God). It is permissible to write more than these two words, but no directions are given for other phrases. 123

#### 5 Fasting (sawm, siyam)

The Bab does not give detailed regulations concerning fasting sawm, siyām. He ordains a fast of 19 days (i.e. one Babi month) at the end of the year, 124 specifically in the last month, 'Alā', 125 during which believers are to abstain between sunrise and sunset from food and drink, sexual intercourse, disputation (even on matters of learning), violence and passing decrees against God. Fasting is not obligatory for either men or women until the age of 11 (the Babi age of maturity), although they may do so until noon — if they continue after that, they are not fasting. Similarly, one is not to fast after the age of 42 and will not be regarded as fasting if one continues to do so. 126

### 6 Pilgrimage (hajj and ziyara)

Perhaps the most significant injunction issued by the Bab with regard to pilgrimage is for the destruction (or, possibly, abrogation — raising up: irtifā') of the shrines of the past, including those in Kufa, the Ka'ba, and the graves of the Imams and their descendants. 127 New shrines are to be established in their place. In the Persian Bayān, the Bab indicates that he is to be buried "in one of the twin shrines", which (especially in view of his own use of the term in the Ṣaḥīfa bayna 'l-ḥaramayn) may be a reference to Mecca and Medina. No regulation is given here for a pilgrimage to this place, although it is stated that an edifice (bayt) is to

be built here (cf. the use of bayt with reference to Jerusalem and the Ka'ba in Bayān, 4:12), which is to be made of mirrors (presumably in the manner of Shi'i shrines like Shah Chiragh in Shiraz). <sup>128</sup> In the Arabic Bayān, however, it is laid down as an obligation on believers to visit the house of the Bab in Shiraz, his tomb, the tombs of the Letters of the Living, and the mosques (presumably the mosques of the Letters of the Living and those associated with the first two places) — provided the individual is capable of doing so. <sup>129</sup>

Properly speaking, the new ka'ba or house of God (bayt Allāh) was to be the house of the Bab in Shiraz. This edifice was to measure 36 cubits (dhar') in length and breadth (not including the walls). If it were possible, the believers would be commanded to fill it from the surface of the water (? in the pool) to its top with diamonds and to replace its earth with elixir (iksīr) and its water with red perfume ('atṛ-i aḥmar). But, since this is impossible, any suitable form will do, although it would be ideal if it could be covered with segments of mirror. <sup>130</sup> A mosque (the masjid al-ḥaram) is to be built on the spot where the Bab was born, and another beside the house of God. <sup>131</sup> The tomb of his son Ahmad, who was still-born, is to be placed within the precincts of the masjid al-haram, and is to be treated as a place of prayer. <sup>132</sup>

Pilgrimage to this new house is ordained, but those who are separated from it by a stretch of sea are absolved of the obligation and are instead to give whatever monies they would have spent on the journey to a believing relative. Alternatively, they may pay trustees (awliya') to perform the pilgrimage on their behalf. He performance of the hajj is incumbent on all males once in their lives, but on the condition that the pilgrim possesses sufficient funds to travel without discomfort. Otherwise, it is not permissible to make the pilgrimage. On arrival at the bayt, the pilgrim must pay four mithqals of gold to the 19 servants who look after it and the pilgrims; slaves, servants, children, those who have been plundered on the way and those who are unable to do so are absolved from paying this sum. The 19 servants of the house are not to ask for this sum and are to share the money between themselves once a year.

Pilgrimage may not be purchased for someone who is dead (by sending someone in his place), but, if someone has been planning to have another perform the pilgrimage on his behalf and dies before this takes place, then his intention to do so will be recognized by God. Women are absolved from the performance of the pilgrimage, to save them the hardship of travel. Those who live in the land of the house (Shiraz) or in its environs must, however, perform a pilgrimage each year. This includes the women of this region, who are to visit the house of God by night, whenever they wish; they are to sit on seats next to the "manifestations of the unity" (mazāhir al-wāhid — the 19 servants of the house), praise God and return to their homes. They

are also expected to go by night to the *masjid al-haram*, apparently after performing the circumambulation of the house, and to sit there with 19 women (seemingly 19 female servants of the mosque).<sup>139</sup>

The Bab does not appear to have detailed anywhere the pilgrimage rites associated with the *hajj* to Shiraz, but a number of relevant injunctions do exist. It was made obligatory for anyone entering Shiraz to prostrate himself at the threshold of the city, and we may assume that this was a preliminary rite of the *hajj*. <sup>140</sup> Circumambulation (*tawāf*) of the house is mentioned in a number of places, <sup>141</sup> but the number of times is not specified. The house itself was to be entered by the pilgrims, who were to pray there, <sup>142</sup> although the form and content of their prayers were again not specified by the Bab. As we shall see, these omissions in the Babi *hajj* were all rectified by Baha' Allah in laying down the provisions for Baha'i pilgrimage.

Aside from the *hajj*, the Bab envisaged other pilgrimages (*ziyarat*) to be performed by his followers. Whereas in Shi'ism there have come into existence (as in North African Islam) numerous shrines and tombs to which *ziyarat* may be made, the Bab sought to limit these to the resting-places of the 19 "Letters of Unity" (i.e. himself and the 18 Letters of the Living), who were regarded as the manifestations in the Babi cycle of Muhammad, Fatima, the 12 Imams, and the four gates, together with himself as the "Primal Point". Tombs were to be erected over these 19 sacred remains, <sup>144</sup> and all other graves were to be regarded as in their shadow, removing the need to perform pilgrimages to any place but the 19 shrines. Right of refuge and pardon was to be extended to any who might seek it at these shrines or even express the intention of so doing. <sup>147</sup>

Those performing ziyara to one of these shrines were expected to fulfil certain conditions of physical and ritual cleanliness: "If you desire to perform a visitation to [the shrine of] the Point [i.e. the Bab] or one of the Letters of the Living, you must purify yourself absolutely, to such an extent that, if you become aware of a hair too many on your body, it is not seemly for you. Put on your purest clothes — not [necessarily] the greatest in value — even should you wear an old, pure, goodly, fine, clean shirt, such that you know not of even a speck of black from a mosquito on it. And if you are aware of such, it is not seemly for you. And when you find yourself in that most glorious, noble and exalted condition, put on [your finger] a ring of red cornelian, which shall be your guide in this path before your Lord, the Majestic, and in your appearing before God upon the Throne of Majesty."148 Detailed instructions for purifications, prayers and so forth to be used in the course of a ziyara to the shrine of Shaykh Tabarsi may be found in the ziyaratnama for the martyrs killed there. 149

The basic rite for a pilgrimage of this type would appear to be, as in Shi'ism, the reading of a "tablet of visitation" (ziyaratnama). One of the earliest works of the Bab was a ziyaratnama for the Imam 'Ali, 150 and he continued to write large numbers of these works, 151 including a Ziyāra jāmi'a al-kabīra (tablet of visitation for all the Imams), 152 and ziyaras for the Babi martyrs of Shaykh Tabarsi. 153 A manuscript (6007.C) in the Baha'i Archives in Tehran contains no fewer than 31 ziyaras belonging to the Bab's later period, including tablets for Mulla Husayn Bushru'i ("the first to believe" — awwal man āmana) and other Letters of the Living. A ziyaratnama written for the chief of the Letters of the Living, Mulla Muhammad 'Ali Barfurushi Quddus, is included in translation in Appendix IV. In addition to the ziyaras for himself and the Letters of the Living, the Bab also decreed that, after his death, the believers should recite 95 times the phrase "God is Most Great" or "God is Most Mighty", and that they should restrict themselves to five repetitions of Allahu akbar for the Letters of the Living. 154

A restricted form of ziyara is ordained in the Bayān for the inhabitants of Tabriz ("the place of the striking" — a reference to the bastinado inflicted on the Bab there in 1848) and for those living in its environs to a distance of 66 farsakhs (about 396 kilometres) who are over the age of 29 (his age at the time of the bastinado). They are to travel to the scene of the bastinado once a year and to remain there for 19 days (one Babi month), during which time they must practise self-purification (takhlīṣ). On the spot itself, they are commanded to perform a salat of five rak'at. Whoever is unable to make the journey is required to carry out these instructions in his own house. 155

In another version, this rite is made incumbent on all believers, consisting of two *rak'at*, followed by invocations, the uncovering of the head, sitting on the ground without sandals, and the removal of all clothing (except, I should think, that covering the private parts). They are not to leave before 19 days have elapsed, remaining in meditational seclusion (*i'tikāf*) and praising God. A prayer is given by the Bab to be said on leaving Tabriz. <sup>156</sup>

### 7 Ritual purity and impurity

The concepts of purity (tahāra) and impurity (najāsaljanāba) are of considerable importance in Shi'ism, and at the beginning of his career the Bab wrote more than once on their legal definitions. The Risāla furū' al-'adliyya (chapters one and two) and a short work entitled Kitāb al-ṭahāra (The Book of Purity) contain detailed discussions of ritual cleanliness before salat and the agencies which may render the individual free from a state of impurity. Thus, in the latter work 11 impure items (najāsāt) are listed, which may affect prayer by being present on one's clothes or body, on the part of the forehead touching the ground

in prostration (al-masjad al-jabha), in mosques or on copies of the Qur'an, or in the holy shrines. They are: urine; excrement; blood; semen; a dead body; a dog; a roast pig or part of it; intoxicating liquor; fermented raisins or dates  $(zab\bar{\imath}b)$ ; an unbeliever  $(mushrik \text{ or } k\bar{a}fir)$ ; and an apostate (murtadd). Ten purifying agents are then mentioned, including water, earth and the sun. 157

In the Risāla furū' al-'adliyya, a somewhat different list is given of the causes of impurity, being ten in number: sleep; unconsciousness; illness causing unawareness; urine; faeces; semen; the state of menstruation; menstrual discharge; a woman up to 40 days after childbirth; and touching the dead body of a believer after the body is cold and before it is washed. 158 Directions are then given for ablutions (wudu' and ghusl) to cleanse the individual from these impurities, whether by the use of water or of earth. 159 Further instructions are given concerning the method of determining whether water is pure, and it is stipulated that certain things may render it unclean: anything from the hand of an unbeliever or one who denies the Imams or who does not believe in the twelfth Imam (baqiyyat Allah), urine, faeces, animals whose flesh is interdicted, dead bodies, whatever has not been rendered lawful by the recitation of the name of God over it, blood, dogs, wine, pigs and anything else declared najis by the Imams. 160 Water that has been thus polluted may again be rendered pure by various agents — the sun, earth, the removal of an animal, alteration, circulation, the blood of the Imams, and "those things which have fallen beneath the gaze of the Family of God". 161 The Bab himself states that, although none of the 'ulama' has mentioned this last agent, the decision about it rests with him (as the  $n\bar{a}'ib$  — representative — of the Imam).

It is of interest to note that, when the Risāla furū' al-adliyya reached Karbala, Qurrat al-'Ayn (the female leader of the Babis there) read this last instruction, whereupon she claimed to be the manifestation of Fatima and said that "the glance of my eye has the same effect as that of hers, and whatever I cast my glance upon shall be made pure". She then instructed her followers to bring whatever they brought in the bazaar to her, so that she might render it lawful. <sup>162</sup> This is of particular interest in indicating that many of the Babis in this early period regarded their Shi'i fellow-citizens as impure because of their unbelief.

In his later works, although he does not enter into such precise details as in those of the early period, the Bab continues to exhibit a marked concern for ritual purity and physical cleanliness, the demarcation between the two often being blurred. In general, it is probably fair to say that the Bab places less emphasis on ritual purity (which he makes less particular) and greater emphasis on bodily hygiene and related matters than the Shi'i 'ulama'. Thus, "nothing in the Bayān is loved more by God than purity, delicacy, and cleanliness", 163 and again: "In

the  $Bay\bar{a}n$ , God does not like to behold for anyone aught save joy and fragrance. He loves all to be in the utmost purity, both spiritual  $(ma'naw\bar{i})$  and physical  $(\bar{s}\bar{u}r\bar{i})$ , in whatever state they be in, that they may not be disgusting to their own selves, how much less to anyone else." <sup>164</sup>

Various purifying agents are mentioned by the Bab in his later works. In the Persian Bayan, he lists eight of these: (1) Belief in the Bayan; (2) The book of God or a verse of it; (3) The name of God, to be spoken over the thing to be purified 66 times, using the phrase "God is the Most Pure" (Allahu athar); (4) The act of passing from the hands of non-Babis into those of believers; (5) The Tree of Truth (i.e. himself) and its works; (6) The four elements (air, fire, water, earth); (7) The sun; and (8) Anything that has undergone an alteration of essence. 165 In the Haykal al-dīn, he lists these agents as: (1) The recitation of "God is Most Pure" 66 times; (2) Whatever has been sent down in the Bayān; (3) Whoever enters the faith; (4) Whatever has changed in essence; (5) The sun, the moon and the stars; (6) Fire and air; and (7) Water and earth. 166 And in the Arabic Bayan, he lists the following: (1) The recitation of "God is the Most Pure" 66 times; (2) The Point (i.e. himself) and whatever verses he writes; (3) His words; (4) Whoever enters the faith; (5) Whatever changes its essence; (6) The four elements; and (7) The sun. 167 According to the Persian Bayan, all of these purify whenever the object to be rendered pure is not in its essence impure (as, for example, a pig). 168 All things are regarded as pure except those who do not believe in the Bayan and whatever is expressly forbidden. 169

A number of things are specified as pure, including some which had been regarded as doubtful or impure in Islam. These are: dogs and other animals, even if their fur is wet;<sup>170</sup> blood in the mouth after the use of a toothbrush or toothpick; the foot of an animal which has been in the rain and which enters a room;<sup>171</sup> (in respect of someone who wishes to pray) the hair of animals, European objects, ivory and bone handles;<sup>172</sup> semen;<sup>173</sup> the faeces of a child up to the age of two;<sup>174</sup> the excreta of animals in general;<sup>175</sup> more specifically, that of mice, bats or owls  $(ab\bar{a}b\bar{\imath}l)$ .<sup>176</sup> The wearing of silk and the use of gold and silver vessels, regarded as unlawful in Islam, is permitted by the Bab.<sup>177</sup>

Nevertheless, wudu' or ritual cleansing is still recommended in a number of circumstances. After meals (which are to be eaten in the position known as haykal al-tawhid), if one wishes to pray, it is necessary to perform wudu', washing both face and arms and wiping them with a silk cloth, this to be done while in the haykal al-tawhid posture, with clean water (such as rose water). If there is no water, five repetitions of the phrase "In the name of God" will suffice for the wudu'. 178 Nocturnal emissions and masturbated semen (mā tashhadūna

PB 5: 14 P-175 fi 'l-ru' yā aw antum bi-anfusikum 'an anfusikum tastamaniyūn) are not a cause of impurity, but it is necessary to perform wudu' after sexual intercourse. After the wudu', one is to prostrate oneself (or, according to the Haykal al-dīn, to sit with one's wife) and to repeat 19 times: "Praise be to Thee, O my God; there is no god but Thee; praise be to Thee; I am one of those who prostrate themselves." This is sufficient if there is no water, and it also suffices to wash the head, chest, arms and legs after the wudu'. 179

Similarly, the complex Islamic regulation concerning the purity of water in wells and the rule of kurr (the largest amount of water which can be rendered impure by a dog or whatever) is abolished by the Bab, a single rule covering both large and small quantities of water. Water is pure in itself provided it has not changed in any of its three basic qualities: colour, smell or taste. 180 To pour water twice on something that has been rendered unclean (but is not in its nature unclean) suffices to make it pure again; to dip the object once in water is sufficient for this purpose, provided the water is not of such little quantity as to excite one's disgust. 181 If water should be altered by something impure, it may not be used for purification, but something pure will not render water impure, even if it changes its character. 182 Water which has been mixed with earth is not regarded as water which has been added to (mudāf), with which purification is not permitted. Nothing is more loved by God than to keep water in a state of the utmost purity, to such an extent that, if a believer becomes aware that a cup of water has been placed on an impure spot, he will be grieved. But it is made clear that "God does not like anyone to be minute in matters of purity, which will lead to what will in the end cause harm to that individual; rather, the believer is too glorious for anything to change him. Nay, all the instructions regarding purity have been given that men may be educated to the degree of delicacy and purity, to such an extent that no one may be disgusted by anything in himself, how much less in another." 183 The true meaning of purity is to cleanse oneself of all that does not pertain to God. 184

### 8 Rites of birth, death and marriage

A special form of salat is indicated by the Bab in the case of the birth of a child. This consists of five takbirs (i.e. recitals of the phrase Allahu akbar, "God is Most Great"), the first followed by the repetition 19 times of the phrase "We all, verily, believe in God" (innā kullun bi'llāhi mu'minūn) the second by 19 "We all, verily, are certain of God" (mūqinūn), the third by 19 "We all, verily, live through God" (muḥayyūn), the fourth by 19 "We all, verily, die through God" (mumayyitūn), and the fifth by 19 "We all, verily, are content with God" (rāḍiyūn). The ritual as given in the Arabic Bayān differs somewhat from this. Thus, the words "God is Most Mighty" (Allahu

a'zam) are to be repeated five times, while standing. The following phrases are to be repeated 19 times, one after each ta'zim: (1) "We all, verily, believe in God"; (2) "We all, verily, are certain of God"; (3) "We all, verily, originate with God" (mubdi'ūn); (4) "We all, verily, return to God" (mu'īdūn) (sic); (5) "We all, verily, are content with God". 186 I have already mentioned above the instruction to prepare an amulet with 2001 names to the number of mustaghath, which is to be given to a child at birth and never removed from that time forth. Suitable names for children are suggested by the Bab in a number of places. 187

Extremely similar to the salat prescribed for the birth of a child is the prayer decreed for the dead, which is, in fact, the only prayer which may be said congregationally. 188 The greater the number present, the more pleasing it is to God, but no one is to lead the prayer; all are to remain in their places and not to seek to stand in front of others. 189 The salat consists of six takbirs, the first followed by 19 repetitions of "We all, verily, worship God" ('ābidūn), the second by 19 "We all, verily, bow down before God" (sājidūn), the third by 19 "We all, verily, are satisfied with God" (qānitūn), the fourth by "We all, verily, make mention of God" (dhākirūn), the fifth by "We all, verily, give thanks unto God" (shākirūn), and the sixth by "We all, verily, are patient in God" (sābirūn). 190 The version of this salat given in the Arabic Bayān is again different. Six ta'zims are to be said over the dead, then the following phrases are repeated 19 times: (1) "We all, verily, worship God" (2) "We all, verily, bow down before God" (3) "We all, verily, are satisfied with God" (4) "We all, verily, act on behalf of God" ('āmilūn); (5) "We all, verily, are devoted unto God" (mukhlisūn); (6) "We all, verily, give praise unto God" (hāmidūn). 191

Directions concerning the washing and burial of the dead are given in detail in the Persian Bayān. The corpse is to be washed once, three or five times, in the following manner: (1) The head, while saying "O Single One" (yā fard); (2) The chest and belly, while saying "O Living One" (yā hayy); (3) The right arm, while saying "O Self-subsisting One" (yā qayyum); (4) The left arm, while saying "O Judging One" (ya hakam); (5) The right leg, while saying "O Just One" (yā 'adl); (6) The left leg, while saying "O Holy One" (yā quddus). The names of God used here are the "six names" which have been mentioned in connection with the da'irat (see Appendix III). The body is to be washed with water or purified with camphor and lotus (sidr) and, if possible, washed again with rose water or other perfumed water, then wrapped in five shrouds of any material. These shrouds may have written (?embroidered) on them any names of God, up to, but not exceeding, 19. 193 On the right hand a ring is to be placed, with the following inscription if the deceased is a man: "Unto God belongs all that is in the heavens and the

earth and what is between them; God is informed of all things." If the deceased is a woman: "To God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what is between them; God is powerful over all things." These verses are given differently in the Arabic Bayān. Thus, on a man's ring should be written: "Unto God belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth and what is between them; God is Most Knowing, Powerful, Inaccessible." And on a woman's: "Unto God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what is between them; God is Most Knowing, Powerful, Inaccessible." In the Haykal al-dīn, it is directed that two rings be placed on the hands of the dead, without distinction between male and female. On the right-hand ring is to be inscribed: "We are all, verily, God's, and we all, verily, begin in God"; and, on the left: "We are all, verily, from Him and we shall all, verily, return to Him." The rings used for the dead are to be of cornelian.

The dead are to be placed in coffins or tombs of crystal or marble or polished stone, <sup>198</sup> and an amount of dust from the graves of "the first and the last" — presumably the first and last Letters of the Living, Mulla Muhammad Husayn Bushru'i and Mulla Muhammad 'Ali Barfurushi Quddus — is to be buried with them. <sup>199</sup> Relatives of the deceased are to visit their graves at least once every 19 days, or more often if possible and, if they can, stay by the grave for 19 days, reciting the divine verses and lighting lamps. <sup>200</sup> The Islamic mourning rites, involving tearing of one's clothes and beating of the body, are prohibited by the Bab. <sup>201</sup> PA 9:12

Marriage is ordained by the Bab at the age of 11, the age of maturity, for both male and female.202 It is conditional on the payment of a dowry, the limits of which are set down in the Bayan, and on the consent of both parties, although it is obligatory for parents to marry their children at this age if they can. 203 The marriage rite is basically very simple. According to the Persian Bayan, the man, having paid the requisite dowry, is to repeat the verse "Verily, I belong to God, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, the Lord of all things, the Lord of the seen and the unseen, the Lord of the worlds." The woman is then to do the same, after which they are to put their seals on a sheet of paper, the whole process to be formally observed by witnesses on behalf of both parties, preferably relatives. 204 The rite as given in the Arabic Bavān and the Havkal al-dīn differs somewhat from the above. In the former, the instruction is that the couple should place their seals on the contract<sup>205</sup> and then say the words (presumably one after the other): "Verily, we are content with God." In the latter work, the details are clearer. The woman is to say first the words: "Verily, we are content with God" (using the feminine form) and then to place her seal on the contract.207 Then the man is to repeat this phrase (in the masculine

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form, but different from that in the Arabic  $Bay\bar{a}n)^{208}$  and to place his seal on the contract. After this, the witnesses (whose number is not specified) are to place their seals on the contract, the men placing 60 seals beneath that of the groom, the women 95 seals beneath that of the bride. The next phrase is unclear and exists in two readings, but seems to mean that the marriage should be consummated after this.  $^{209}$ 

#### 9 Festivals

As has already been mentioned, the Bab reformed the calendar, introducing a solar year of 19 months, each of 19 days (details of this calendar are given in Appendix V). 210 However, he did not indicate any festivals, with the exception of Naw-Rūz, the old Iranian New Year's Day, which falls on 21 or 22 March.<sup>211</sup> This is described as the day of "there is no god but God" and is compared to the Point (nuqta) in the Bayān.<sup>212</sup> It is also known as the "Day of God', on which goodly acts will receive the recompense due to the same acts performed for the period of one year. 213 On the night of Naw-Ruz (i.e. the night preceding it, in Western terms), it is permitted to recite the following verse 361 times: "God has borne witness that there is no god but Him, the Protector, the Self-subsistent" and, during the day, the same number of times: "God has borne witness that there is no god but Him, the Mighty, the Beloved" — or any other verse beginning with "God has borne witness" and mentioning His power. 214 Those who, during Naw-Ruz, recite "there is no god but God" (tawhīd kunad khudā-rā) 361 times will be protected during the coming year from "whatsoever may descend from the heaven of destiny". 215 The Arabic Bayan only mentions the second of the above verses, but adds that, during the night of Naw-Ruz one is to enumerate the benefits of God from 19 to 2001 times. <sup>216</sup> In the Haykal al-dīn, the Bab instructs his followers to mention God 361 times during Naw-Ruz, apparently using any phrase they wish, <sup>217</sup> and to count God's blessings during the night 19 times (or up to 2001 times for kings). 218 At the time when the sun actually enters the sign of Aries, it is permitted to serve from 19 to 2001 plates of food (whereas it is normally permitted to serve only one at a time).<sup>219</sup>

The first month, Bahā', is regarded as the most important of the year. The first day, as noted above, is the "day of the Point", while the other 18 days are sacred to the 18 Letters of the Living. 220 Similarly, the first month is regarded as the "month of the Point", especially dedicated to him whom God shall manifest, and the other months as those of the Letters of the Living. 221 In the Haykal al-dīn, it is stipulated that the second month of each year (or another, if one wishes) is to be devoted to the mention of God. 222 There do not, however, appear to be any rituals connected with the months in these contexts, apart from the invocations for each day of the month mentioned earlier. Once a month,

each believer is expected to invite as guests 19 individuals, even if he is able to serve them only water.<sup>223</sup> Although this does not in itself involve or constitute a particular ritual, it is important as the basis for the later Baha'i "Nineteen-Day Feast" (see below, p. 65).

Friday is reserved, not as a day of congregational prayer, as in Islam, but as a day for listening to sermons. <sup>224</sup> The formal sermon (*khutba*) is to be followed by impassioned preaching (*maw'iza*) and by mention of him whom God shall manifest. <sup>225</sup> These Friday gatherings are to be held in the mosques which the Bab ordered constructed. <sup>226</sup> The use of a pulpit is prohibited, this being replaced by a chair or, in a large gathering, a chair placed on a platform to enable all present to hear. <sup>227</sup> Sermons are also to be given on "the days of glory and sadness" <sup>228</sup> — presumably commemorations of joyful or sad events in the Babi calendar; but these days are nowhere specified by the Bab.

# 10 Rites connected with him whom God shall manifest (man yuzhiruhu 'llah)

Many of the rituals listed in the above pages are connected indirectly by the Bab with the messianic figure of the Bayan, him whom God shall manifest — thus, by performing such and such an act, it is hoped that the believer will enter into the presence of man yuzhiruhu 'llah when he appears and that he will believe in him. Similarly, as we have seen, there are invocations of him whom God shall manifest, there is a month dedicated to him, and there is to be mention of him during the Friday gatherings. But there are also three quasi-rituals connected specifically with him. The first is that, whenever his name is mentioned, all present are to stand.<sup>229</sup> The second is that, whenever his name or the names of his Letters of the Living are mentioned, the believers are to bless them (by saying "May God bless him/them and preserve him/them"). This is also to be done on hearing the names of the Bab or his Letters of the Living. 230 If their names are being repeated constantly, one phrase of blessing will be sufficient.<sup>231</sup> The third is that, in every important gathering 19 places are to be left vacant in case he whom God shall manifest and his Letters should appear.<sup>232</sup> In the Arabic Bayān, it is stated that this is only necessary in large gatherings, and that it normally suffices to leave one place vacant. 233

### 11 Ritualism in scriptural texts

In view of the extensive references which will be made to incantatory texts in the section on Baha'i ritual, it may be worth mentioning here the important part played by the style of many of the Bab's writings in creating a generally ritual atmosphere, even when specific rites are not being carried out. The rhyming prose (saj') of the Qur'an, which

possesses a vibrant, incantatory quality most marked in the earliest suras, has led to considerable stress being laid in Islam on the chanting of its verses, on sacred occasions and at gatherings convened simply for that purpose. The rhyming, rhythmical cadences of the Qur'an are clearly reproduced in many of the Bab's early works, most notably the Qayyūm al-asmā'. In certain later works, however, the Bab goes beyond this familiar style to produce lengthy passages, consisting largely of invocations of God by an infinitude of names (many of them quite unheard of in Arabic, although based on theoretical patterns), in which content is entirely secondary to the all-important incantatory style, a style quite unreproducible in any European language. Most notable for this characteristic are the Kitāb al-asmā' and the Kitāb-i panj sha'n (Shu'ūn-i khamsa), in which variation after variation is played on the names of God. Chanted by an expert, I have no doubt that these passages, curious as they are on the written page, would prove extremely compelling, even hypnotic. I provide an example of this style from the Panj sha'n in Appendix VI.

#### BABI RITUAL PRACTICE

Little can be said of Babi practice in ritual matters. The early Babis were often exceedingly ignorant of the tenets and laws of their religion, particularly the uneducated in Zanjan and elsewhere in the later years of the Bab's career. The Bab's isolation and the scattered and beleagured condition of the mass of his followers from about 1848 meant that the later Babi texts, such as the Bayans, were little read and their contents only partially known.<sup>234</sup> Collation of the varying decrees spread over different volumes was, of course, quite impossible. Babi writing of this period and that immediately succeeding, such as the Kitāb-i nugtat al-kāf, shows that considerable doctrinal diversity existed, and there is every reason to believe that Babi practice, unregulated and unco-ordinated, was seldom fully or at all in accordance with the code of the Bayan. During the struggle at Shaykh Tabarsi, from 1848 to 1849, for example, some of the Babis looked on their leader, Mulla Muhammad 'Ali Barfurushi Quddus, as the qibla and faced in his direction when performing salat; on the night of the 'Id al-Qurban, Mulla Husayn Bushru'i and others performed circumambulation around the house of Quddus — a practice which they continued on other nights. 235 When we consider that a fair number of those present at Tabarsi were 'ulama' and that no fewer than half of the Bab's earliest disciples, the Letters of the Living, were among them, it is not difficult to conjecture the nature of Babi ritual observance in Zanjan, Nayriz, Tehran, Qazvin and elsewhere. The Nuqtat al-kāf mentions that the Babis in Zanjan prayed five times each night "in a new manner", and at each of the ramparts one individual would chant the phrase "God is Most Glorious" (Allahu abha) 92 times (the equivalent of the name Muhammad). 236

After the relative recovery of the now decimated Babi communities from the setbacks of 1848-52, access to texts remained difficult and much was destroyed or corrupted. Even with widespread copying of the Persian Bayan and other late works, no attempt seems to have been made to systematize Babi law and ritual or to correlate the varying regulations which, as we have seen, are often confused or contradictory or, in a number of cases, in need of commentary. More importantly, the failure of the Babis to develop a well-defined organization, coupled with a lack of positive leadership, meant that no overall policy could be formulated in respect of ritual practice. The majority of Babis, from about 1866 onwards, gave their allegiance to Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri Baha' Allah, under whom a new religious system, with its own legal and ritual prescriptions, came into existence — this will form the subject of the second part of our study. But the remainder (with the exception of a small group of Kullu Shay'i Babis in Shiraz), who attempted to preserve Babism in its original form under the leadership of Mirza Yahya Nuri Subh-i Azal, lacked the doctrinal and organizational coherence of the major group. Azal seems to have been unable to extricate Babism from the state of doctrinal anarchy into which it fell in the period immediately following the death of the Bab in 1850, as is clear from Azali works such as the Hasht bihisht. The breakdown of any clear authority in Azali Babism after the death of Mirza Yahya in 1912 meant that the small and poorly organized community of Babis in Iran failed to formulate any definite policy on matters of doctrine, law or ritual. The only effort in this direction known to the present writer is the anonymous  $\tilde{A}'in-i$   $B\bar{a}b$ , a short work which falls far short of comprehensiveness or systematic presentation. It is likely that the major rituals of the Persian and Arabic Bayāns continue to be observed, where possible, by the Azalis today, but undoubtedly many of the more complex regulations have been allowed to fall into abeyance, while those which would demand greater religious freedom (or a Babi state), such as the haji, are clearly impossible to perform properly.

## Chapter Three

# Baha'i Ritual Observances

The Baha'i faith, as it gradually emerged from Babism under the leadership of Mirza Husayn 'Ali Baha' Allah, developed a distinct character in terms of both doctrine and practice. Baha' Allah himself provided the basic laws and rituals of Baha'ism in a number of works written after 1866, notably the *Kitāb al-aqdas* and its companion volume the Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb. As will become clear in succeeding pages, Baha' Allah based his shari'a very firmly on the legal system of the Bab, reducing the complex regulations of the Bayan to a more manageable and systematic code, abrogating many of the more severe Babi laws, and simply abandoning others whose application seemed impractical. Where gaps existed in respect of Babi observance, these were normally filled by fresh legislation, commentary, or the provision of suitable texts. The justification for this wholesale revision of the Babi shari'a lies in Baha' Allah's claim to be he whom God shall manifest, on whose acceptance or rejection the Bab had made the entire Bayanic code dependent. Thus, in the Lawh-i ishrāqāt, Baha' Allah states: "His holiness the Herald [i.e. the Bab] . . . sent down certain laws, but the realm of command was subject to acceptance. Wherefore this oppressed one has promulgated some of them and sent them down in the Kitāb-i agdas in different terms, while we have suspended others . . . and some laws have been sent down afresh."1

Under the later direction of the eldest son of Baha' Allah, 'Abbas Effendi 'Abd al-Baha' (d.1921), and the latter's grandson Shoghi Effendi Rabbani (d.1957), Baha'ism continued to develop its character as a distinct religious system, with its own laws, institutions and observances — a process carried on since 1963 under the aegis of the elected "Universal House of Justice" (bayt al-'adl al-a'zam). During this period, the movement has placed considerable emphasis on the need for doctrinal unity, combined with flexibility and regional variation in subsidiary matters of organization and even religious practice.

I propose to deal in the remainder of the present study only with ritual and semi-ritual observances either prescribed or sanctioned by Baha'i scriptural texts in Persian or, more usually, Arabic. Needless to say, this provides us with a prescriptive rather than actual picture of Baha'i practice. Actual practice is complicated by a number of factors. The spread of the religion in the West and, in recent decades, in South America, Africa, India, South-East Asia and elsewhere has added a new dimension to the question of ritual observance. Baha'is from Islamic backgrounds are normally better informed about legal and ritual requirements and are required to observe a greater number of religious obligations than their fellow-believers from Christian, Buddhist and other backgrounds. This situation is intensified by the fact that the majority of Baha'i texts dealing with legal or ritual matters are still available only in Persian or Arabic. Although a full study of Baha'i ritual would involve widespread fieldwork in Europe, North America, India and elsewhere, it would be necessary to make a distinction between regional variations in actual Baha'i observance and the persistence of local custom in more traditional societies. It would also be necessary to study in detail and on a broad basis the question of ritual innovation representing a modification of traditional ritual, or of what we might term "pseudo-Baha'i" practices (taking genuinely Baha'i practices in the prescriptive sense). I have included an example of one such innovation in the second of the following sections.

#### 1 Salat and associated observances

(i) Salat. The question of salat in Baha'ism is slightly complicated by the fact that the original form of prayer to be used was later abrogated by a different format incorporating three different prayers. In the Kitāb al-aqdas,<sup>2</sup> Baha' Allah states that "salat and fasting are obligatory for you from the age of maturity".<sup>3</sup> The age of maturity, which was 11 in Babi law, is raised to 15 by Baha' Allah.<sup>4</sup> The Aqdas itself contains the injunction to perform a salat of nine rak'as three times per day: "Prayer has been written down for you: nine prostrations unto God, the Revealer of the verses, at the time of noon, and in the morning, and in the evening; we have exempted you from the other number as a command in the book of God." The details of this salat were, according to the Aqdas, to be found in another work.<sup>6</sup>

The fate of this *salat* is difficult to determine. It seems that it was originally withheld after writing, being made available only to a few pilgrims who visited Baha' Allah in Palestine. Some time later, the sheets containing the text of the *salat*, together with other writings, were sent from Acre to an unspecified location in order to preserve them. According to 'Abd al-Baha', these papers later fell into the hands of his half-brother and rival, Mirza Muhammad 'Ali. 9

In the meantime, Baha' Allah himself had written a Lawh-i salāt containing the texts of three new prayers, which were regarded as abrogating the original salat.<sup>10</sup> The recitation of any one of these three salats was now stated to be sufficient for the observance of the obligation.<sup>11</sup> These three salats differ considerably one from another in form and each is subject to a different regulation concerning the time of its performance.

The first is a long salat containing three sajdas and other supplicatory gestures, as in the Muslim salat. In the Lawḥ-i ṣalāt, Baha' Allah indicates that the long prayer is to be performed "at whatever time and on whatever occasion that man perceives in himself a state of acquiescence and humility". 12 Questioned as to this, he replied that the prayer might be said once during each 24 hours. 13 According to 'Abd al-Baha', the performance of this long prayer exempts the worshipper from that of the other two salats. 14

The second salat is a prayer of medium length, without an actual rak'a, but containing a number of supplicatory gestures. It exists in two forms, a full form and a shorter alternative, which may be used at the discretion of the worshipper. This salat is to be said three times per day, in the morning, at noon and in the evening. <sup>15</sup> According to 'Abd al-Baha', it is permissible to perform the prayer before the actual rising of the sun. <sup>16</sup> The form of this prayer as given in the  $Ad\bar{i}'a$ -yi hadratimahbūb and the English translation in Prayers and Meditations of  $Bah\bar{a}'u'll\bar{a}h^{17}$  is somewhat misleading in that the two verses to be used in the performance of ablutions are given at the beginning as if they form a part of this prayer in particular, which is not the case. In other editions, they have been printed separately. <sup>18</sup>

The third prayer consists of a single verse, to be said between noon and sunset, <sup>19</sup> preferably while standing. <sup>20</sup> Two editions of it exist — an incomplete version given in the  $Ad\bar{t}'a$  and used for the English and subsequent translations, and the original version in the hand of the Baha'i scribe Zayn al-Muqarribin Najafabadi. <sup>21</sup> This short salat may, if wished, be recited at noon together with the medium salat, following a single ablution. <sup>22</sup> These three Baha'i salats, in translations by Shoghi Effendi, may be found in Appendix VII.

(ii) Wudu'. The performance of ritual ablutions before salat is ordained in the Kitāb al-aqdas: "... perform ablutions for the salat as a command from God, the Single, the Powerful". 23 The form of these ablutions is prescribed in the Lawh-i ṣalāt, preceding the text of the medium prayer, and is as follows: "Whoso wisheth to pray, let him wash his hands, and while he washeth, let him say: Strengthen my hand, O my God, that it may take hold of Thy Book with such steadfastness that the hosts of the world shall have no power over it. Guard it, then, from

meddling with whatsoever doth not belong unto it. Thou art, verily, the Almighty, the Most Powerful.

"And while washing his face, let him say: I have turned my face unto Thee, O my Lord! Illumine it with the light of Thy countenance. Protect it, then, from turning to anyone but Thee."24

If water should be unavailable, the worshipper may instead make use of the phrase "In the name of God, the Most Pure, the Most Pure", 25 a replacement or extension of the Babi formula "In the name of God". This formula may also be used whenever the face or hands have been hurt or are painful, so that the use of water is likely to be harmful. 6 This ablution does not have to precede immediately the salat for which it is intended, and may be said at any time before it during the period in which the salat may be performed. If wudu' has been carried out for another purpose (examples of which will be given later), it is unnecessary to repeat it should it be the proper time for salat, but wudu' carried out in the morning, for example, is not sufficient for the afternoon salat and must be renewed for the latter. The ritual nature of wudu' is clear from the regulation whereby, even if someone has just washed his entire body while bathing, it remains necessary to carry out the ablution before salat.

(iii) Qibla. We have seen that the Bab gave the qibla a somewhat metaphysical interpretation, ordaining it to be "he whom God shall make manifest". During the lifetime of Baha' Allah, therefore, his followers were instructed to turn to wherever he resided as the qibla, in conformity with his claim to be man yuzhiruhu'llah. Thus, in the Aqdas, we read: "When you wish to perform the salat, turn your faces in my most holy direction, the sanctified station which God has made the point round which circles the Concourse on High, the spot unto which turn the inhabitants of the cities of eternity, and the source of command unto all in the heavens and the earth."<sup>31</sup> This regulation was to be altered on his death: "and on the setting of the sun of reality and utterance, [turn your faces to the spot we have appointed for you". 32 Similarly, in a letter to a certain Muhammad 'Ali we read: "You have asked concerning the qibla . . . while the sun is still shining above the horizon, it is and shall be acceptable to turn towards it; an arrangement has also been made for afterwards."33

The identity of this future qibla does not appear to have been revealed in Baha' Allah's lifetime. In both the Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb and another letter, he himself indicates that the decree concerning "the spot we have appointed for you" had not yet been "sent down", but that it would be made known in future. According to 'Abd al-Baha', this regulation was, in fact, later made clear by Baha' Allah in one of his "tablets" (alwāh), the qibla being designated as the tomb of Baha' Allah

himself. The same source goes on to say, however, that the tablet containing this ordinance was among a number entrusted to him by Baha' Allah before his death and stolen shortly after the event by the followers of his half-brother, Mirza Muhammad 'Ali. Thus, until the recovery of this purloined letter, the designation of the Baha'i qibla rests on the authority of 'Abd al-Baha', as found in a number of his letters. Within the terms of Baha'i belief, this is in no sense problematic, since 'Abd al-Baha' is regarded as having been appointed by his father to interpret and expound his teachings.

(iv) Sundry regulations. Prostration ( $suj\bar{u}d/sajda$ ) may be performed on anything pure<sup>37</sup> — as we shall see in section 6, below, on ritual purity, this, in effect, means on any clean surface whatever, since Baha' Allah abolished entirely the decree of impurity. Nevertheless, it is specifically stated that certain substances, regarded as unclean in Islam, would not make salat invalid, these being hair (al-sha'r), bones  $(al-'iz\bar{a}m)$ , and other things "deprived of spirit"  $(m\bar{a}\ muni'a\ 'an\ al-r\bar{u}h)$ . And it is permissible to wear sable  $(al-samm\bar{u}r)$ , as well as silk (al-khazz) and squirrel-skin  $(al-sinj\bar{a}b)$ .<sup>38</sup>

The sick and the aged are exempted from both salat and fasting.<sup>39</sup> The definition of "aged" is given in the Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb as over 70.<sup>40</sup> Menstruating (but not pregnant) women are also exempted from salat, in place of which they are to carry out the Babi prescription to perform wudu' and to repeat 95 times between noon and sunset: "Praise be to God, the Possessor of appearance and beauty."<sup>41</sup>

As in the Bayan, a regulation exists for the making up of salat missed during a journey, although the Baha'i law on this matter is somewhat more elaborate than its Babi equivalent. The basic prescription is that, on reaching a place of security, the traveller must, in place of each salat he has missed, perform a single saida and repeat the words "Praise be to God, the Possessor of greatness and majesty, of grace and bounty." or, if this is not possible, simply "Praise be to God." Following this, he should sit in the haykal al-tawhid posture described previously (see p. 11) and repeat 18 times the words: "Praise be to God, the Possessor of the kingdom of earth and the kingdom of heaven."42 The Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb clarifies certain issues left unmentioned in the Agdas. Thus, it is specified that the use of the sajda and the verse is only to replace salats missed during the journey, when in a place without security; in a safe place, any salat whose proper time comes round must be performed in full. 43 A single sajda and verse must be performed for each salat missed, after which a single repetition of the 18 verses suffices for all.<sup>44</sup> The above regulations also apply should a prayer be missed at home.45

The Islamic injunction to keep the head of the worshipper covered while reciting scripture or performing salat is not, according to Shoghi Effendi, required by Baha'i law. 46 In the case of the long and medium salat, where the worshipper is at one point required to sit, it is permissible to make use of a chair, although it is regarded as preferable to seat oneself on the ground for this. 47 Following the salat, any devotions (awrād, adhkār) taken from those written by Baha' Allah may be recited as the individual wishes. 48

In general, it is probably true to say that the performance of *salat* and, in particular, of the supplementary ordinances such as *wudu'*, is more widespread among Baha'is from an Islamic background or Baha'i families of long standing in Iran and elsewhere. Western Baha'is, for whom the concept of *salat* is essentially alien, seem to be less strict in its performance and, where they do carry it out, prefer to use the short prayer, which is free of prostrations and other gestures. It is, however, difficult to form a clear picture of current practice other than on the basis of personal contact.

# 2 Other *salats*, invocations, supererogatory prayers, reading of scriptural texts, and salutations

In view of the vast amount of devotional writing produced by Baha' Allah, 'Abd al-Baha' and, to a lesser extent, Shoghi Effendi, it is extremely difficult to reduce to any reasonable compass the prayers, invocations and so forth available to Baha'is for a wide variety of circumstances. Our task is made somewhat easier, however, by the fact that the majority of Baha'i devotional texts have no ritual associations and are simply read or chanted by individuals either alone or on behalf of a group, without the performance of any definable rite.

Apart from the daily salat described above, there are other forms of prayer for special purposes in Baha'ism. Among these is the salat for the dead, identical to that prescribed in the Bayān, with one or two new subsidiary ordinances. No specific regulation seems to exist with regard to the performance of the salat prescribed by the Bab on the birth of a child, but the text of this prayer is published by Mazandarani in Amr wa khalq, 49 and it is to be assumed that it is used to some extent by Iranian and perhaps Arab Baha'is. A lengthy prayer, involving ablutions and prostrations, exists for the use of Baha'is whenever they want to pray for an important need. 50 An English translation of this salat is given in Appendix VIII.

The complicated ordinances of Babism in respect of daily supererogatory invocations are almost entirely dispensed with in the Baha'i faith. The main injunction of this type is found in the *Aqdas*: "It has been written down for whosoever believes in God, the Judge, that he should wash every day his hands and then his face, and should seat himself facing God and utter in remembrance of God 95 times: 'God is Most Glorious' (*Allahu abha*)."<sup>51</sup> According to the *Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb*, the *wudu'* performed for the *salat* will suffice for this ritual as well.<sup>52</sup> It is also allowable to perform this *dhikr* before sunrise, even though the day proper (*al-yawm*) does not begin until the appearance of the sun.<sup>53</sup>

The Kitāb al-aqdas also contains an injunction to read the writings of Baha' Allah morning and evening: "Recite the verses of God every morning and evening. Whosoever fails to do so has not kept faith with the covenant of God and His bond." This same prescription is also found in a tablet apparently addressed to some Baha'is in Manshad: "Preserve that which has been sent down from the heaven of my will, then read it in the evening and the morning." The choice of what verses to read is entirely that of the worshipper, the "verses of God" here being defined in the Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb as "all that has been sent down from the kingdom of utterance". Similarly, the Babi injunction to read no fewer than 700 verses each day is abrogated in the statement of Baha' Allah that "the greatest condition is the desire and love of holy souls to recite the verses. If one verse or word be read with joy and fragrance, it is better than the reading of numerous books." 56

Apart from these, there are no further obligatory (wājib) devotional observances. According to 'Abd al-Baha', what has been laid down in the holy text (manṣūṣ) constitutes those matters that are obligatory (farā'id), but other prayers and devotions are voluntary (ghayr-i mafrūd). <sup>57</sup> Aside from numerous prayers designed for use on holy days (which will be dealt with in the section on festivals), ziyaratnamas (which will be considered under pilgrimages), and prayers designed for protection or for use as amulets (which will be discussed under talismans), there are several semi-ritual texts for other purposes, the performance of which would seem to be recommended rather than obligatory.

A number of prayers and invocations exist which may be used on a daily basis. Thus, in one place, Baha' Allah recommends that his followers read each day the following verses of the Qur'an: "And he that fears God, God shall make for him a passage out, and He shall provide for him in a manner that he reckoned not; and he that relies upon God, God shall be a sufficiency unto him. God shall bring His cause to maturity, for He has appointed a measure for everything" (Qur'an 65:2-3). This passage is, he says, "the source of grace and bounty, and the dawning-place of compassion. Through it, if God wills, the door that is closed shall be opened and affairs that have been delayed shall be put into motion." A general prayer requesting divine

assistance and protection is prescribed by Baha' Allah for recitation every morning and evening.<sup>59</sup> A translation will be found in Appendix IX.

'Abd al-Baha' wrote a number of prayers which are headed with injunctions indicating that they should be read every morning, every day, or every night and day. These are specifically intended for Baha'i "teachers" ( $muballigh\bar{u}n$ ), especially those on journeys for the purpose of spreading the Baha'i religion, but, since "teaching" is regarded as an obligation for all Baha'is, these prayers may, in theory at least, be used as prescribed by any individual. There also exist a number of prayers by 'Abd al-Baha' which may be used on a daily basis at mealtimes, although no specific injunctions are provided with them. Translations of these appear in Appendix X.

Numbers of prayers and tablets exist which are used by Baha'is in times of hardship or difficulty.<sup>61</sup> Among these a number are generally given a special status, whether by reason of repeated use or because of some special character they are supposed to possess. Shoghi Effendi writes that "These daily obligatory prayers [i.e. the three salats], together with a few other specific ones, such as the Healing Prayer, the Tablet of Ahmad, have been invested by Baha'u'llah with a special potency and significance, and should therefore be accepted as such and be recited by the believers with unquestioned faith and confidence, that through them they may enter into a much closer communion with God, and identify themselves more fully with His laws and precepts."<sup>62</sup> The regular reading of these devotions at Baha'i meetings and in private imbues them with a semi-ritual character, a character sometimes enhanced by the style of the prayers themselves.

The best-known and most widely used of these prayers is an Arabic tablet written by Baha' Allah for Mirza Ahmad Yazdi and translated in part into English by Shoghi Effendi. The heading of the English edition printed in the British Baha'i prayer-book states that "This Tablet has a very special power if read when in trouble or difficulty." The text itself contains the assurance that "Should one who is in affliction or grief read this Tablet with absolute sincerity, God will dispel his sadness, solve his difficulties and remove his afflictions." The translation of this tablet is given in Appendix XI.

A short prayer attributed to the Bab, popularly known in English as the "Remover of Difficulties", is widely used by Baha'is when confronted with personal or communal problems. It reads: "Is there any Remover of difficulties save God? Say: Praised be God! He is God! All are His servants, and all abide by His bidding!" This prayer is of considerable interest in that, although devoid of any ritual significance in itself, it has generally come to be used by Baha'is in a ritualistic manner. It is not uncommon at Baha'i gatherings for there to be a

"round of Removers of Difficulties" (when each person present in turn recites the prayer) or to have it read a total of 9, 19, 45 or 95 times (all figures which have a significance in Baha'ism, but which have no particular relationship to the prayer in question).

Some years ago, a practice was begun whereby groups of Baha'is or individuals would recite the "Remover of Difficulties" 500 times. This ritual was based on a statement attributed to Baha' Allah, in which. addressing the Babis at the time of his exile to Baghdad, he says: "Bid them recite: 'Is there any Remover of difficulties save God? Say: Praised be God! He is God! All are His servants, and all abide by His bidding!' Tell them to repeat it 500 times, nay, 1000 times, by day and night, sleeping and waking, that haply the Countenance of Glory may be unveiled to their eyes, and tiers of light descend upon them."66 Although it is clear that this is neither addressed to the Baha'is nor intended in any but a hyperbolic sense (and is, in any case, devoid of the scriptural authority which is essential for the acceptance of observances in the Baha'i faith), the belief that it constitutes a positive prescription to be universally followed was, and in some areas may still be, given considerable prominence. It is an extremely interesting example of the growth of popular ritual observance within a movement devoted to the principle of accepting only authoritative prescriptions in respect of devotional practice.

A number of prayers exist which are designed to be read before sleep, 67 on waking in the morning, 68 on leaving one's home, 69 and on leaving a city. 70 There is a prayer to be said after disturbed dreams (or, indeed, on waking generally) — the translation of this is to be found in Appendix XII — and another for the purpose of requesting that God reveal matters to the worshipper in his sleep (in Appendix XIII). The present writer possesses two English texts prescribing similar rituals, the performance of which will lead to dreams of a visionary nature; unfortunately, no Persian or Arabic text has ever been found by him to correspond to these, and they are included in Appendix XIV with the proviso that they may be unauthentic. They are of particular interest in view of their high ritual content.

For those who seek to have a child, there exists a prayer by Baha' Allah in which God is asked to bless the worshipper with offspring. The translation of this prayer may be found in Appendix XV.

A number of tablets and prayers exist which have a ritual quality less by reason of their content or manner of use than because of the style in which they are written, containing repeating phrases or choruses or recurring passages in which small variations occur. The best-known of these in the West is the "Tablet of the Holy Mariner" (Lawh mallāḥ alquds), one of two tablets of the same name, this being in Arabic, the other in Persian. The Arabic "Tablet of the Holy Mariner" contains

throughout the refrain "Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious", except after the last three lines, when it changes to "Glorified be our Lord, the Most High". A translation by Shoghi Effendi appears in Appendix XVI. A short prayer found in the Adī'a contains for several lines the refrain "O Thou, no God is there but Thee" — the translation appears in Appendix XVII. In the same compilation there is a text similar in many respects to the "Tablet of the Holy Mariner", in which a varying refrain is used, with usually a single word changing in each line — the translation appears in Appendix XVIII. Extremely popular in the East and to a lesser extent in the West, where until recently only an "unofficial" translation was available in English, is a devotion known in Arabic as Qad ihtaraga 'l-mukhlisun and in English as "The Fire Tablet":71 although this tablet does not contain a refrain as such, its phrasing is that of variation on a fixed pattern, particularly noticeable in the original, which is written in rhyming prose. The semi-ritual use of this tablet is based on the statement in the last verse that "Should my servants one and all read it and meditate upon it, there shall be ignited in every vein of their bodies a conflagration that shall set ablaze the worlds." A fresh translation may be found in Appendix XIX.

Apart from the daily repetition of Allahu abha and one or two other invocations noted earlier, a number of others are in use among Baha'is. The Islamic salat which is to be said on the occasion of natural wonders such as earthquakes, eclipses or floods, is abrogated by Baha' Allah. In its place, believers may (but are not obliged to) say the following verse: "Greatness belongs to God, Lord of the seen and the unseen, Lord of the worlds."<sup>72</sup> Beyond this, no other authorized invocatory rituals are known to the present writer, although there are a number which have become fairly widespread despite their not being formally prescribed. These include communal and private recitals of phrases such as Allahu abha (God is the most glorious), ya bahā' al-abhā (O Thou glory of the most glorious), ya bahīyu 'l-abhā (a variant of the preceding), and ya 'llāhu'l-mustaghāth (O God, the Invoked), usually in set cycles of 9, 19, 45, or 95 times, much in the manner of Islamic dhikr. The use of a subha or rosary to assist in counting these adhkar is entirely optional but is not widespread, especially in the West. A Baha'i rosary resembles its Islamic counterpart, but has groups of beads arranged on the basis of the figures mentioned above, 95 in all.

The Babi form of salutation (Allahu akbar and Allahu a'zam for men, Allahu abha and Allahu ajmal for women) is permissible for Baha'is, according to a statement by 'Abd al-Baha'. Nevertheless, he stresses that the use of Allahu abha alone is the proper Baha'i greeting.<sup>73</sup> This latter greeting was instituted by Baha' Allah himself during the period of his exile in Edirne,<sup>74</sup> and is today in universal use by Baha'is, although its public employment in the West is not recommended.<sup>75</sup>

The Islamic practice of speaking or writing the phrases "May the mercy of God be on him" (rahmat Allāh 'alayhi) or "May God forgive him [his sins]" (ghafara 'llāh lahu) after the mention of a deceased person or the phrase "May God be well pleased with him" (radiya 'llāh anhu) after the mention of a living person of importance, is replaced by the phrase "Upon him be the most glorious glory of God" ('alayhi Bahā' Allāhi 'l-abhā') or simply "Upon him be the glory of God" ('alayhi Bahā' Allāh). 76 It is also normal when writing in Persian or Arabic to replace the Islamic salā 'llāh 'alayhi wa sallama (May God bless him and grant him salvation) and its equivalents (used after the names of the Prophet and the Imams) with numerous honorific formulae such as jalla jalāluhu (glorified be his majesty), jalla sultānuhu (glorified be his sovereignty), jalla thanā'uhu (glorified be his praise), and jalla ismuhu 'l-a'lā (glorified be his most exalted name) after the names of the Bab, Baha' Allah, 'Abd al-Baha' or Shoghi Effendi, with certain formulae reserved for one or the other but no single fixed form for any one. When quoting texts from the writings of any of these figures, it is normal to precede them with one of a number of formulae, such as: qawluhu ta'ālā (his word, exalted be he), qawluhu 'l-a'lā (his most exalted word), qawluhu 'l-ahlā (his most sweet word), or qawluhu 'l-'azīz (his mighty word). In general, Persian Baha'i writing is remarkable for its widespread use of honorifics and deferential turns of phrase; Baha' Allah is, for example, referred to as hadrat-i Bahā' Allāh (his holiness, Baha' Allah), Jamāl-i qidam (the ancient Beauty), Jamāl-i abhā (the most glorious Beauty), or Jamāl-i mubārak (the blessed Beauty); the Bab is almost invariably termed hadrat-i a'lā (his holiness, the most exalted) and occasionally hadrat-i nuqta (his holiness, the Point); 'Abd al-Baha' is known as hadrat-i 'Abd al-Bahā', hadrat-i markaz-i mīthāq (his holiness, the Centre of the Covenant), or hadrat-i mawlā 'l-warā (his holiness, the Lord of Creation); Shoghi Effendi is almost always spoken of as hadrat-i wali-yi amr Allāh (his holiness, the Guardian of the cause of God). In keeping with conventional Persian usage, the verb farmūdan (to command) is invariably used in the plural, either absolutely in place of guftan (to say), or as an auxiliary in phrases such as tashrif farmūdan for tashrif āvardan, itself for āmadan (to come), nāzil farmūdan for nāzil kardan (to send down, reveal), and so forth. Sharafsudūr yāftan (to find the honour of being issued) is commonly used for sudūr yāftan in respect of letters, while tablets are normally revealed bi-iftikhār-i fulān (in honour of so and so). Some writers use even more complex phraseology, such as stating that a quotation from scripture "will give adornment to these pages" (zīnat-bakhsh-i īn awrāq mīgardad). So standard has the use of terminology of this type become that the more common formulae have acquired a decidedly ritualistic character; it would be unthinkable not to use honorifics with the names of the central Baha'i figures or to use nondeferential verb forms. It is probably true to say that, contrary to what one might expect, Baha'i writing in Persian is one of the few remaining strongholds of stereotyped, old-fashioned phraseology, a fact that increases its ritualistic character (much as out-dated Christian prayerbooks or translations of the Bible convey a greater sense of ritual to many people than their modern counterparts).

#### 3 Talismans and rings

The use of hayakil (but not, it seems, dawa'ir) appears to have continued for a time at least during the early Baha'i period, 77 but Baha' Allah provided no definite prescription for their preparation or use, and the practice seems to have died a natural death. Nevertheless, there exist a number of prayers the purpose of which is to provide talismanic protection to the reader or wearer or, in some cases, to others less directly associated with them. One of these, by Baha' Allah, contains the "greatest name" symbol which we have seen used in earlier Babi dawa'ir. Another (number 4 in Appendix XX) ends with an address to the rising sun similar to that found in the Bayān. Examples of five such talismans by Baha' Allah and another by 'Abd al-Baha' are given in Appendix XX.

The carrying of amulets and prayers or the dissolving in water of the "greatest name" (in its Baha'i form — see below) are recommended by 'Abd al-Baha' as a cure for illness: "The carrying of an amulet or a prayer, or else the dissolving in water of the greatest name written down, and the drinking [of this water] for the alleviation of illness — if these two actions be performed with absolute devotion, with a pure heart and pure intention and with attraction of the spirit, their effect shall be powerful indeed."78 Wide use is made of a lengthy prayer, known in Arabic by its opening words as Anta 'l-Kāfī and in English simply as "The Long Healing Prayer" or "The Healing Prayer". Although primarily used as a prayer for healing, this is, in fact, intended for use as a talisman, as is clear from a passage towards the end which reads: ". . . protect the bearer of this blessed paper, and whosoever reads it, and whosoever comes upon it, and whosoever passes about the house in which it is kept. Heal, then, through it, every sick and feeble and impoverished one from all afflictions, adversities, calamities, and griefs. And guide through it whomsoever wishes to enter the paths of Thy guidance and the highways of Thy grace and forgiveness." The ritual effect of this prayer is achieved above all by its superbly incantatory style, in which short rhyming, rhythmical verses, which change only three words at a time, are interspersed with a repeated chorus line, itself incorporating both rhyme and rhythm. The talismanic effect is enhanced here particularly by the manner in which God is invoked, as in Islam, by a string of names — except that, in this case,

many of the names simply do not exist in Arabic or have meanings ostensibly inapplicable to the divinity. By thus making use — in the manner of the Bab in the *Kitāb al-asmā'* or the *Shu'ūn-i khamsa* — of names formed on theoretically possible Arabic patterns, the mystical, one might say magical, effect is increased dramatically, a fact concealed by translation. In Appendix XXI, I have provided a literal translation of the opening verses, using transliterated forms for the divine names in order to convey something of the incantatory flavour of the original.

Although the use of mystical devices incorporating geometrical patterns and calligraphy, such as hayakil and dawa'ir, was soon abandoned in Baha'ism, two closely related symbols came to be adopted for the use of adherents. These are known respectively as the "greatest name" (al-ism al-a'zam, ism-i a'zam) and the "ringstone symbol" (nigīn-i ism-i a'zam — ringstone of the greatest name). The former consists of the following arrangement of the Arabic words (ya baha' al-abha (O glory of the most glorious).



The use of elaborate calligraphic patterns of this type, incorporating the names of God, the Prophet or (in Shi'ism) the Imams, is common in Islam. The present symbol is, however, regarded as unusually holy by Baha'is, who are supposed to hang it in the central place in a room and to treat it with the utmost reverence, in that it is an invocation of God by his "greatest name", Bahā'. 80

Although now generally found in the form of a framed print hung on a wall, this device was commonly used in the past on book covers and may occasionally be seen on pendants, badges or other forms of personal jewellery, although indiscriminate use of this kind is officially disapproved.

The ringstone symbol consists of the following pattern:



This device was designed by 'Abd al-Baha'<sup>81</sup> for use on ringstones, although it is frequently found nowadays on other forms of jewellery. It incorporates the two principal letters of the name Baha', the ba' and the ha' the first repeated twice, the second four times, together with two five-pointed stars. 'Abd al-Baha' himself explains in detail the esoteric significance of this symbol and its relationship to various aspects of Baha'i doctrine; the letter in which this explanation is given appears as Appendix XXII.

Both the "greatest name" and the "ringstone symbol" derive their inspiration to some degree from the concept and form of the "greatest name" as conceived in Shi'ism. In brief, there are several traditions which state that, of the divine names, one exists which may be termed the "greatest name of God"; Shi'i traditions claim that this name is in the keeping of the hidden Imam and will be revealed by him when he returns. In one Shi'i tradition attributed to the Imam 'Ali, the greatest name is given in cryptic fashion in the device already reproduced (see p.23). Alternatively, the following form is sometimes found:

Other variations on this device exist, as we have noted earlier. There is also a curious form of the greatest name as follows:

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Baha'i interpretation emphasizes the use of the letter ha' in these devices and argues that the greatest name is, in fact, Baha'. The waw with its tail stretching backwards over the other elements of these devices is given a complex interpretation based on a letter of Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, discussed in Appendix XXIII.

The five-pointed star found in the Islamic greatest name (and elsewhere), in the form of the Babi *hayakil*, and on either side of the Baha'i ringstone symbol is, according to Shoghi Effendi, the proper symbol of the Baha'i religion. Much more widely used, however, is a nine-pointed star, which may be found on Baha'i jewellery and publications, and even in the landscaping around Baha'i temples. This latter symbol is, nevertheless, according to Shoghi Effendi, not "part of the teachings" of the Baha'i faith, but is "only used as an emblem representing "9". "83 The number nine itself "is considered by the Baha'is as sacred", 84 representing as it does both the number of

perfection (as the highest unit) and the numerical equivalent of the name Baha'. The nine-pointed star is used on the headstones of Baha'i graves, in lieu of the greatest name symbol, which is regarded as too sacred for this purpose.<sup>85</sup>

#### 4 Fasting (sawm, siyam)

The Babi fast of 19 days during the month of A'la', the last month of the year, is retained by Baha' Allah. He states that "the fast of the Bayān has been accepted by the All-Merciful, and its injunction has been sent down in the Kitāb al-aqdas". 86 In the Aqdas itself, the period of the fast is partly indicated as follows: "We have written down for you the fast for a limited number of days, and we have made Naw-Ruz a festival for you on its completion." The number of days is fixed precisely at 19 by Baha' Allah. 88 In a letter to Haji Kazim Nassaj, Baha' Allah explicitly ordains the month of A'la' as that of the fast: "Fasting has been written down for you in the month of A'la'." 89

As in Islam and Babism, fasting is ordained from sunrise  $(al-tul\bar{u}')$  to sunset  $(al-uf\bar{u}l)$ , but abstinence is from food and drink only  $^{90}$  — sexual intercourse is not mentioned. Smoking, however, is regarded by 'Abd al-Baha' as drink  $(az\ jumla-yi\ mashr\bar{u}b\bar{u}t)$ .  $^{91}$  Together with salat, fasting is obligatory from the age of maturity, 15.  $^{92}$  As with salat, fasting is not to be given a spiritual interpretation which would urge against its literal performance (as was argued by some Sufis in Islam).  $^{93}$ 

In the Kitāb al-aqdas, various individuals are exempted from fasting, these being travellers, the sick and women who are pregnant, nursing, or menstruating. As in the case of salat, menstruating women are to perform wudu' and to repeat 95 times each day "Praise be to God, the Possessor of appearance and beauty". The upper age limit for fasting is lower than in Islam (which is "the extremity of old age"), but higher than in Babism (where it is fixed at 42), being set at 70.95 According to Shoghi Effendi, this latter exemption applies to all those who have reached the age of 70 and not only to those whose physical strength is impaired. Persons engaged in heavy work (ishghāl-i shāqqa) are also exempted, but are to be circumspect during the time of fasting, in order to show respect for the law.

The regulations concerning the exemption for travellers are somewhat complex. The minimum period of travel is nine hours or two hours on foot. 98 If the traveller breaks his journey, he remains exempt from the fast, provided his proposed stay at his halting-place is less than one month; if he proposes to stay for at least 19 days, he must fast. Should he arrive in the middle of the fasting month at a place at which he proposes to stay 19 days, he may remain exempt for three days before resuming the fast. If he reaches his permanent home during the fast, he must commence fasting on the day of his arrival. 99 If the festivals of the

births of the Bab and Baha' Allah or the declaration of the Bab (which are celebrated in the East according to the lunar calendar — see section on festivals below, p. 63) fall during the fast, then all are exempt on those days.<sup>100</sup>

It is permissible to vow to fast in another month than A'la' (in the hope of having a personal need fulfilled, for example), but this practice is not recommended, it being regarded as preferable to make vows to perform actions which will be of benefit to others. <sup>101</sup> There appears to be no regulation, as in Islam, for making up a fast which has been missed through illness or for a similar cause.

Numerous prayers and devotional passages exist for use during the fast. 102 Of particular note is a lengthy devotion designed for use on rising before dawn and which contains a refrain coupled with a regular stylistic pattern in the verses, giving it a highly ritualistic appearance similar to that of several of the prayers we have discussed before. 103

#### 5 Pilgrimage (hajj and ziyara)

Hajj is ordained by Baha' Allah in the Kitāb al-agdas as follows: "God has decreed for those among you who are able pilgrimage unto the House, with the exception of women; God has exempted them as a mercy on His part." Elsewhere in the Aqdas, the injunction is given to "raise up the two Houses in the two places", 105 but the identity of these houses is not made clear. In the Risāla-vi su'āl wa jawāb, in reply to the question "concerning the hajj", it is stated that "one of the two houses is obligatory; otherwise it depends on the preference of the individual who sets off on the hajj". 106 This was still unclear and the question was repeated; this time an unequivocal answer was given: "The hajj to the House, which is for men, refers to the Most Great House in Baghdad and the House of the Point in Shiraz. Whichever one the hajj is made to, it is sufficient. The one nearest to any given country should be visited by the people of that country." The Baha'i hajj, then, is a clear development of Babi pilgrimage, retaining the house of the Bab in Shiraz as a hajj centre and adding the house of Baha' Allah in Baghdad as a second bayt. The introduction of two places to which hajj may be performed is highly innovative.

While in Edirne, Baha' Allah wrote a number of tablets containing details of the rites of the hajj, 108 but initially only one of these was actually made available. This was the Sūra al-ḥajj, addressed to Mirza Muhammad Nabil-i Zarandi. 109 It contains detailed instructions as to the rites to be performed in the course of the hajj to the house of the Bab in Shiraz, and calls on Zarandi to perform the pilgrimage on behalf of Baha' Allah, which he did shortly afterwards. 110 The rites to be performed are fairly complex, although less so than those of the Islamic hajj. On reaching a spot from which he can see the city, the pilgrim is to

dismount and recite certain verses; he is then to raise his hands and repeat a lengthier passage. After this, he is to ride on until he is about 2000 paces from the city. Here he is to dismount again and immerse himself in water. On emerging, he is to trim his moustache, clip his nails, shave his head, apply perfumes and put on the best clothes he can afford. (The regulation concerning the shaving of the head, which occurs in the Islamic haji, was later regarded as abrogated by the ruling in the Kitāb al-agdas that men are not to shave their heads.)<sup>111</sup> He is then to turn towards the house, raise his hands, and repeat another series of verses. On completing this, he is to lower his hands to the level of his cheeks, recite Allahu akbar nine times, raise his hands again, and recite another passage. On lowering his hands, he is to walk towards the city, uttering the phrases la ilaha illa 'llah, Allahu akbar, Allahu aqdas, and Allahu amiad. He is then to repeat the formula "Here am I, O my God, here am I; greetings unto Thee, and the light be before Thee" as often as he wishes without cooling his enthusiasm. On reaching a spot 20 paces from the city gate, he is to stop, repeat the phrase Allahu akbar 19 times, and then address the city with another series of verses. He must then walk to the city gate, where he is to prostrate himself. After kissing the dust, he is to raise his head, then stand and repeat Allahu akbar a further 19 times. He should then walk until he reaches the house, at which point he is to stop and repeat further verses. On their completion, he should prostrate himself, then place his right cheek on the ground and repeat more verses. He is then to stand and turn to the right of the house, raise his hands, and recite another passage. Having done this, he is to circumambulate the house seven times (a difficult process in view of the position of the house within a complex of alleyways and other houses). While performing the circumambulations, he is to mention the name of God and, on their completion, to enter the first portico, in front of the door of the sanctuary (this possibly refers to the short passageway at the foot of the stairs leading to the Bab's room, accessible through the original entrance to the house). Standing there, he is to raise his hands and repeat a lengthy passage. At this point, the pilgrimage ends. The full text of the portion of this document giving the rites of the Shiraz hajj is given in translation in Appendix XXIV.

Baha' Allah notes in the Sūra al-hajj that he wishes someone from every city to perform this pilgrimage on his behalf, but, in the event, Zarandi is, to this day, the only person to have done so. The particular difficulties inherent for even small numbers of people in performing such a pilgrimage in the face of Muslim hostility in Iran were and are insuperable. In a letter to Aqa Mirza Aqa Afnan, 112 then in Port Said, 'Abd al-Baha' expressed concern lest even a simple ziyara (as distinct from the hajj) should fall into neglect and asked him to make preparations so that some individuals could go from time to time and at

least perform the ordinary ziyara. Baha'is living in Shiraz were to make a ziyara to the house at least once a month. 113

The house itself underwent serious vicissitudes over the years. Following the Bab's martyrdom in 1850, his wife and mother, who had lived in the house until then, moved out. Badly looked after by its new tenant, a non-Babi called Mirza Husayn, it gradually fell into ruin until. some years later, Aqa Mirza Aqa Afnan brought a succession of Baha'i tenants to live there. During this period, however, a number of earthquakes caused structural damage. With the approval of Baha' Allah, the Bab's wife in 1289/1872-3 instructed Aga Mirza Aga to carry out repairs which altered the original structure and in 1290/1873-4, she herself moved back into the house until her death at the end of 1299/ 1882. In 1302/1884-5, Baha' Allah entrusted the perpetual keeping of the house to the Bab's late wife, her sister, and the latter's children. Zuhra Bigum, the sister of the Bab's wife, moved into the house and remained there until her death in 1307/1890. On his arrival in Shiraz to take up custodianship of the house in 1321/1903, Aga Mirza Aga Afnan carried out fresh repairs which restored it to its original condition. 114 In later years, Shoghi Effendi placed considerable emphasis on the imperative need to preserve the house of the Bab in its pristine form. particularly in respect of the main walls. This even extended to a rigorous prohibition of the illumination of the house by electricity. Emphasis was also laid on the need to preserve the room in which the Bab made his initial claim to Mulla Husayn Bushru'i as particularly sacred. 115 Further repairs were necessitated following damage sustained in the course of an attack on the house by a Muslim mob in 1955. For the present writer, who had visited the house on numerous occasions and who has benefited over the years from the friendship of Abu 'l-Qasim Afnan, its custodian, it is painful in the extreme to have to record that, in 1979, the house was razed to the ground and the site bulldozed.

Some time after Zarandi had completed the pilgrimage to Shiraz, a second Sūra al-ḥajj was written, contained in a lengthy letter to him. 116 He was now instructed to perform the hajj to the house of Baha' Allah in Baghdad, in accordance with the directions set out in the tablet; this he did shortly afterwards. 117 Somewhat shorter than the text containing the Shiraz rites, this second Sūra al-ḥajj is otherwise similar in most respects to it. On entering Baghdad, the pilgrim is to advance towards the Tigris, repeating the phrase Allahu akbar. When he reaches the river, he is to put on his best clothes and perform ablutions, using verses provided for recitation during the washing of hands and face. He is then to cross over the bridge, reciting the phrase Allahu akbar; at the end of the bridge he must turn to face in the direction of the house and, on the first step he takes, he is to recite a series of verses. When he has read these, he is to say Allahu abha and then to begin the circumambulation

of the house, which is to be performed seven times. On completion of this, he is to stand at the door of the house and beg forgiveness from God 70 times (presumably by use of the phrase astaghfiru 'llāh), then repeat a passage in which divine forgiveness is sought. He is then to advance towards the door of the house, repeating Allahu abha; at the door he is to stand and repeat further verses. He must then address the house, its land, its wall and all upon it, using a lengthy passage. He should then prostrate himself and pray to God, using a prayer provided. He is then to raise his head and seek divine forgiveness, reciting another invocation. Having done this, he is to enter the house until he reaches the courtyard and stands before what is termed a qibla (the meaning is unclear: this may refer to a spot on which Baha' Allah frequently sat). There he is to raise his arms and to repeat another series of verses, which include what amounts to a Baha'i testimony of faith. After this another passage is to be recited. Having completed this, he is to remain silent and to listen for the "call of God"; if he hears it and inhales the "fragrance of God", he may be assured that God has forgiven him his sins. Otherwise, he is to repeat the rites of the hajj. According to 'Abd al-Baha', hearing the "call of God" is to be interpreted in spiritual terms. 118 The text of the relevant portion of the letter to Zarandi is provided in translation in Appendix XXV.

A ziyaratnama exists for use at the Baghdad house; written in Acre, this was also addressed to Zarandi. It does not contain any directions for rites to be performed at the house, but is simply a tablet to be read there by pilgrims. Part of it has been translated into English by Shoghi Effendi. 119

As in the case of the Shiraz house, Zarandi has, to date, been the only person to perform the Baha'i hajj to the house of Baha' Allah in Baghdad. The house itself was bought from the original owner in the time of Baha' Allah, although there were several disputes over it in later years, instigated by relatives of the first owner. During the period of the First World War the house was badly damaged, but it was later repaired by Hajj Mahmud Qassabchi, who entirely rebuilt it. From this time, Baha'is began to perform ziyara to the house in sufficiently large numbers to excite the animosity of the Shi'i population of Baghdad. 120 In 1920 the house was seized by the Shi'is and soon became the centre of a bitter and protracted process of litigation which reached as far as the League of Nations. Although the League found unequivocally in favour of the Baha'is, the house, which had been turned into a Husayniyya — a building set apart for reciting eulogies of the Imam Husayn — was never, in the end, restored to them and remains to this day in non-Baha'i hands. 121

With the death of Baha' Allah in 1892, his tomb at Bahji near Acre was designated by 'Abd al-Baha' as a place of ziyara ranking in

importance with the houses in Shiraz and Baghdad. In one letter, he writes that "there is no obligation for everyone to visit such places [holy sites in general], other than the three, namely: the Most Holy Shrine, the Blessed House in Baghdad and the venerated House of the Bab in Shiraz. To visit these is obligatory if one can afford it and is able to do so, and if no obstacle stands in one's way . . . These three Holy Places are consecrated to pilgrimage." It should, however, be made clear that what 'Abd al-Baha' is here referring to is ziyara; hajj as such, with its connected rites, may only be performed to the two houses, even though this cannot be done in practice. 'Abd al-Baha's statement is interesting in that it permits ziyara as well as hajj to the houses, and introduces as an obligatory practice ziyara to the shrine of Baha' Allah.

The tomb of Baha' Allah as such was, as we have noted, designated as the qibla of the Baha'i world and is regarded by Baha'is as the most holy spot on earth. In this respect, its importance as a focus for pilgrimage far outweighs in the minds of most Baha'is that of the Shiraz and Baghdad houses. The area around the tomb itself is termed, in an echo of the sacred enclosure at Mecca, the haram, and considerable emphasis was placed by Shoghi Effendi on the ritual "cleansing" of this region by the expulsion from it of renegade members of the family of Baha' Allah, termed "Covenant-Breakers" (nāqiḍūn). 123 In later years, the very houses in which these individuals had lived were demolished and their sites razed. The haram area has been widely landscaped, the shrine now standing at the centre of a vast circle of gardens, with paths converging on it. The original mansion of Bahji, in which Baha' Allah lived for some 20 years, stands to the side of the shrine proper.

In 1899, the remains of the Bab, which had been moved from place to place secretly from the time of his execution in 1850, arrived in Palestine. Ten years later, on 21 March 1909, they were placed by 'Abd al-Baha' in a shrine built by him on Mount Carmel, overlooking the port of Haifa. 124 Baha' Allah had previously indicated in the Kitāb al-aqdas that houses should be raised up in places "wherein the Throne of your Lord, the Merciful, hath been established". 125 This was a reference to locations in which either he or the Bab (the "Thrones" upon which God was manifested) had stayed, however briefly, as well as to the places in which the remains of the Bab had been kept on their long journey to Palestine. Now that these remains had been given a permanent restingplace, 'Abd al-Baha' designated the shrine of the Bab, which was termed the maqām-i a'lā, "the most exalted spot", as a place of Baha'i pilgrimage. He thus writes in a letter to Aqa Mirza Husayn Burujirdi and Hajj Abu 'l-Qasim Dabbagh that "the basis of pilgrimage (ziyarat) is the blessed garden (rawda-yi mubāraka — the shrine of Baha' Allah) and the most exalted spot (magam-i a'la). It is necessary to set out for these two places."126

On his death in 1921, 'Abd al-Baha' himself was buried in the shrine, in a room adjacent to that in which the remains of the Bab had been deposited. In later years the original structure, a rough stone building, was added to by Shoghi Effendi and in 1953 a superstructure, topped by a gold-tiled dome, was completed under his direction. The area around the shrine was extensively landscaped and its importance as a pilgrimage centre considerably enhanced by the re-burial in its vicinity of the remains of the wife, daughter and younger son of Baha' Allah. The sector around these latter graves was designated an arc on which the administrative institutions of the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa were to be grouped. In 1957, an "International Baha'i Archives" building was completed, and work was recently completed on a structure termed the "Seat of the Universal House of Justice". 127

Although the shrine of Baha' Allah remains the central focus of Baha'i pilgrimage, the shrine of the Bab has come to be endowed with considerable significance for Baha'is. Curiously enough, in view of the position of the shrine of Baha' Allah as the Baha'i qibla, Shoghi Effendi portrays the shrine of the Bab as the centre of the world. He speaks of nine concentric circles, the outermost being "the entire planet", the next the "Most Holy Land", then Mount Carmel, then the precincts of the Bab's sepulchre, then "the most holy court" (the gardens and terraces immediately round the shrine), then the Bab's mausoleum, then the chambers of the tomb itself, then the vault in which the Bab is laid, and finally the sarcophagus containing the Bab's dust. <sup>128</sup>

Baha'i pilgrims had, in fact, been going to the Holy Land from the time of Baha' Allah's arrival there in 1868. Various conditions were established for intending pilgrims, and it was necessary to obtain permission to visit Palestine. 129 Following the death of Baha' Allah, pilgrims, soon including Americans and Europeans, continued to travel to Palestine, the main purpose of their visit being to meet 'Abd al-Baha'. Both Western and Eastern pilgrimage accounts concentrate on encounters with 'Abd al-Baha', his table-talk and his personality. It is in these early pilgrimages to a person rather than a place that we can observe the genesis of what has since become the main Baha'i pilgrimage, now involving large numbers of individuals from many parts of the world, but still predominantly Iranians, Americans and Europeans.

In its present form, Baha'i pilgrimage to Israel — which is, in practice, the only pilgrimage known to Western Baha'is, the vast majority of whom are utterly unaware of the distinction between hajj and ziyara — takes place at any time of the year (excluding the summer), being arranged for groups of varying sizes over a nine-day period. During their stay at the Baha'i World Centre, pilgrims visit the shrines of the Bab and Baha' Allah, are shown Baha'i relics at the Archives building, and perform ziyara to numbers of other sites

connected with Baha' Allah and 'Abd al-Baha', including Baha' Allah's prison-cell and the house of 'Abbud in Acre, the farm of Mazra'a, and the mansion of Bahji. Two focal experiences are regarded as crowning the pilgrimage - ziyara to the shrine of Baha' Allah itself, usually involving prostration at the threshold of an inner room in which the prophet is buried, and the unveiling to pilgrims of a photograph and some drawings of Baha' Allah and a drawing of the Bab, in the course of the visit to the Archives. Visits to the shrine of the Bab tend to be less formalized, and pilgrims are permitted to visit the shrine and that of 'Abd al-Baha' singly or in groups at any time of the afternoon or evening. There is virtually no ritual involved and care is taken to prevent its development. Iranian pilgrims still tend to follow Shi'i patterns in their manner of performing the ziyara, kissing the lintels and thresholds of the entrances to the various shrines, touching walls, carpets and other objects within the shrines, and occasionally introducing boxes of confectionery to receive baraka (the confectionery later being given to the sick for its supposed curative powers). A ziyaratnama, compiled on the instructions of 'Abd al-Baha' by Mirza Muhammad Nabil-i Zarandi, is used by pilgrims at both the shrine of Baha' Allah and that of the Bab, and another, originally a prayer written by 'Abd al-Baha' himself, is used at his shrine. 130 At the shrine of Baha' Allah, use of the ziyaratnama takes precedence over all other prayers, but the recitation of other devotions is none the less permissible. 131

We have already noted that Baha' Allah enjoined the building of houses at places where he or the Bab had been. Such sites are numerous, and numbers of them have been acquired by the Baha'is in Iran and Turkey, where they are places of local pilgrimage. Most notable is the house in Tehran in which Baha' Allah was born, which is an important centre of ziyara, both for Iranian Baha'is and for others visiting the country. The Siyah Chal, the Tehran dungeon in which Baha' Allah was imprisoned for four months in 1852-3, and where he is said to have first received divine revelation, was acquired some years ago by the Baha'is, but the situation in Iran has not permitted its being opened to pilgrims. Other shrines exist throughout Iran, some in the hands of the Baha'is, many others owned by individual Muslims or the state. These latter include the fort of Shaykh Tabarsi, where Mulla Husayn Bushru'i and other Letters of the Living are buried, the castles of Maku and Chihriq, where the Bab was imprisoned, the citadel of Tabriz, where he was incarcerated briefly, and the house of the Imam Jum'a there, where he was bastinadoed (and which, as we have seen, he designated as a centre of pilgrimage). The site of the Bab's martyrdom, a particularly holy spot for Baha'is, has undergone serious vicissitudes over the years and no longer exists in a form at all resembling its state in 1850. Of importance also are the shrine of Quddus in Babul, the

"Babiyya" house in Mashhad, and the residence of Baha' Allah in Takur. Throughout the country there exist graves of various Babi and Baha'i martyrs, most of which are regarded as places of ziyara. According to 'Abd al-Baha', "every illumined grave, whether of a martyr or not, belonging to a believer, in whatever country it may be, must be treated with the utmost respect; to visit such a grave is the cause of spirituality and the illumination of hearts." Innumerable ziyaratnamas were written by Baha' Allah and 'Abd al-Baha', designed to be read at the graves of eminent individuals or martyrs or groups of martyrs. Following the Iranian Revolution and the recrudescence of religious animus devoid of checks there, the fate of the hundreds of Baha'i holy places in Iran seems bleak.

Outside Iran, Turkey and Israel, there exist a number of Baha'i shrines connected with the journeys of 'Abd al-Baha' to the West. In London, the resting-place of Shoghi Effendi in the Great North London Cemetery attracts regular pilgrims from both Britain and abroad, and many American Baha'is in particular, travelling to Israel for the purpose of pilgrimage, make a point of stopping off in London in order to visit the grave.

#### 6 Ritual purity and impurity

Little needs to be said on this topic. In the Kitāb al-aqdas, Baha' Allah writes: "God has lifted the decree of uncleanness from all things and from other religions (milal ukhrā) . . . All things were immersed in the ocean of purity on the first [day] of Ridwān . . ."<sup>133</sup> More specifically, as we have noted in the section on salat, he removes the decree of impurity from hair, bones or other things "deprived of spirit" (this in respect of prayer), sable, silk and squirrel-skin. As in Babism, the use of gold and silver vessels and utensils is permitted. <sup>134</sup> Liquid semen is also regarded as pure. <sup>135</sup> General cleanliness is strongly enjoined. Anything which is repellent (makrūh) is to be cleaned with water which has not changed in colour, taste or smell. <sup>136</sup>

### 7 Rites of birth, death and marriage

The Babi salat to be used on the birth of a child is neither specifically retained nor abrogated by Baha' Allah, but it is printed by Fadil-i Mazandarani in Amr wa khalq, 137 and it is possible that it is in use to some extent in Iran. Circumcision is not considered obligatory. 138 'Abd al-Baha' recommends the holding of meetings for the purpose of naming children, at which prayers and supplications for the future guidance of the child are to be read. 139 Baha' Allah himself suggests that boys be named Husayn or 'Ali and given the laqab 'Abd al-Baha', and that girls be called Dhikriyya, Nuriyya, Sadhijiyya or 'Izziyya and given the laqab Amat Allah (maidservant of God). 140 Elsewhere, he expresses approval

for the names Diya', Badi', Husayn and 'Ali. 141 'Abd al-Baha' states that the names Baha' Allah and Bab may not be given to children, but that it is permissible to name them 'Abd al-Baha'. 142

Numerous regulations exist in respect of the washing, shrouding and burial of the dead. A prayer exists by Baha' Allah which is to be read at the bedside of the dying and afterwards up to the time of burial. 143 The body of the deceased is to be wrapped in five shrouds of silk and cotton or, if this is not possible, in one only. 144 As in Babi law, a ringstone is to be placed on a finger of the dead. 145 Baha' Allah mentions the Babi inscriptions "Unto God belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them; God is, verily, informed of all things" for men, and "Unto God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them; God is, verily, powerful over all things" for women. 146 He goes on, however, to say that this represents an earlier decree and that it would be preferable for a new inscription to be used, identical for both men and women: "I began in God and I have returned unto Him, detached from all else save Him and clinging unto His name, the Merciful, the Compassionate." This ringstone is only to be used in the case of adults. 148

The dead are to be placed in coffins of crystal (al-bulūr), rare stone (al-ahjār al-mumtani'a) or attractive hard wood (al-akhshāb al-sulba al-latīfa). The place of burial is to be no farther than one hour's journey from the city in which death occurs. This applies equally to travel on land or sea, but the less time taken the better. The body is to be placed towards the Baha'i qibla, with the feet facing in that direction. At present, however, the practice in Islamic countries is to bury the dead facing towards Mecca in order not to excite trouble from the Muslim populace. 154

The Babi salat of six takbirat followed by six set phrases to be repeated 19 times is prescribed by Baha' Allah. Before this is performed, however, a prayer is to be read by one individual, the text of which is provided by Baha' Allah, in one form for a man and another for a woman, in a tablet giving the details of the salat for the dead. Is If no one able to read is present, only the takbirat need be recited. The takbir is not, as in Islam, Allahu akbar, but Allahu abha (being regarded as a salutation), as stated by 'Abd al-Baha'. According to Shoghi Effendi, the takbirat are to be recited at a medium pace, neither fast nor slow. The entire prayer for the dead is to be performed before burial takes place; it is not necessary for those present to face the qibla while reciting it. It is to be said only for adults.

Cremation is not prohibited, but is strongly discouraged. <sup>161</sup> Similarly, it is not forbidden to expose the dead on a *dakhma* or "tower of silence" (as was the Zoroastrian practice), but this is not advised. <sup>162</sup> A body, once buried, may be moved to another spot, although respect is to be

shown in doing so.<sup>163</sup> Shoghi Effendi himself undertook the transfer of remains considered sacred to the Baha'is for re-burial in Haifa, and this practice has been continued by the Universal House of Justice in Iran and elsewhere.

The expression of inordinate grief or happiness on occasions such as a death or birth is deplored, a middle course being recommended. <sup>164</sup> The Islamic convention of holding specific mourning rites after one week and 40 days is abrogated, <sup>165</sup> but memorial gatherings are commonly held at an interval after the burial and, in many cases, on an annual basis. <sup>166</sup> At these gatherings, prayers by Baha' Allah and 'Abd al-Baha' are read, in particular the *Ḥurūfāt-i* 'āliyyāt of Baha' Allah. <sup>167</sup>

In the Lawh-i bishārāt, Baha' Allah states that "to make journeys for the purpose of visiting those that are in their graves is unnecessary." According to 'Abd al-Baha', this is to be taken as referring only to travel from one country to the next expressly for this purpose. Both this and the regulation concerning one hour's journey as the maximum before burial seem to have been designed to abolish the Shi'i practice of sending bodies to be buried near the shrines of Imams and other holy figures and later performing lengthy journeys to visit the graves of relatives in Iraq and elsewhere.

No particular rites are indicated for visits to graves, other than the general custom of reading prayers or, where one exists, a *ziyaratnama*. In the case of the resting-place of Shams al-Wuzara' in Qum, however, 'Abd al-Baha' requested that, in the course of *ziyara* to it, candles be lit, since this would be "a cause of drawing nigh unto the court of grandeur". <sup>170</sup> This would certainly seem to make acceptable the Islamic practice of lighting candles at graves in general. As noted earlier, Baha'is make use of the nine-pointed star symbol on headstones, the "greatest name" now being regarded as too sacred for this purpose. <sup>171</sup> The latter will, however, be seen on older Baha'i tombstones.

Marriage is ordained by Baha' Allah in the *Kitāb al-aqdas*,<sup>172</sup> but is not, as in Babism, made obligatory.<sup>173</sup> Both men and women may marry at the age of legal maturity (15), but not before, and it is forbidden to betroth a girl before this age.<sup>174</sup> As in Babism, the consent of both parties is necessary to the match, but Baha' Allah also insists on the consent of all living parents.<sup>175</sup> Marriage to two women is permitted, but monogamy is recommended.<sup>176</sup> In practice, bigamy is forbidden to Baha'is at present, but it is important to note that 'Abd al-Baha' has stated that "by the clear text of the holy book, marriage with two wives is permissible; this can never be prohibited, but is permissible (*halal*) and allowable".<sup>177</sup> Elsewhere, he states that "concerning the matter of polygamy, this is decreed and cannot be abrogated; 'Abd al-Baha' has not abrogated it." He does, however, make it clear that, since marrying a second wife has been made dependent on an impossible

condition (to treat both with absolute justice — a Quranic condition also), it may be considered as an injunction to monogamy. Shoghi Effendi states that, since the condition is impossible to fulfil, bigamy is clearly forbidden. So

Following the agreement of both parties and all parents, an engagement period of 95 days is to be observed. <sup>181</sup> It is permissible neither to hold the wedding before this period is completed nor to delay after it. <sup>182</sup> The marriage is to be consummated on the same evening that the ceremony is held. <sup>183</sup> The ceremony itself is basically very simple. Baha' Allah himself provides the following outline of it:

You have asked concerning the laws of marriage and divorce. That which was sent down previously on this matter in the *Kitāb al-aqdas* has been forwarded. Likewise, a sermon (*khutba*) has been sent down from the heaven of divine oneness in this connection. After the consent of the two parties and the consent of the parents, they should present themselves in a gathering of the pious and recite this blessed sermon with the greatest joy and fragrance. After reading the *khutba*, the two beloved in one place should read these two blessed verses that have been sent down in the *Bayān*. The two verses mentioned in the *Bayān* should be written down, after which the husband should hand over the dowry to the wife and both of them should put their seals upon a sheet of paper, and the witnesses likewise. And if it be a place where the people are unable to read the sermon, it is no matter; the reading of the two verses is sufficient. 184

According to the *Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb*, the two verses to be repeated are "We are all, verily, content with God", using the masculine form for the man and the feminine for the woman, which does not correspond exactly to the forms given in the Persian or Arabic *Bayāns* or in the *Haykal al-dīn*. <sup>185</sup> The recitation of the sermon is not considered obligatory. <sup>186</sup>

In practice, Baha'is are discouraged from allowing a rigid pattern for the marriage rite to develop. In general, couples select prayers and other passages from Baha'i (and, sometimes, other) writings, which are read by friends and relatives, on occasion with music interspersed. At some point during these proceedings the two verses are recited. In the West, it is not uncommon to have the chairman of the local Baha'i Assembly officiate during the recital of the verses, and this practice is generally required in areas where Baha'i marriage is recognized. In many cases in the West, a reading popularly known as the "Marriage Tablet" is used at weddings. This is, in fact, a talk given by 'Abd al-Baha' to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab on 22 December 1918, before the latter's

departure from Palestine, in which he gives Sohrab advice on choosing a wife. The earlier portion, which refers to the choice of wife, is always omitted.<sup>187</sup>

### 8 Festivals

A total of four festivals are instituted by Baha' Allah in the *Kitāb alaqdas*. These are New Year's Day, Naw-Ruz, <sup>188</sup> the festival of Ridwan, <sup>189</sup> the day of the Bab's "declaration", <sup>190</sup> and the festival of the births of the Bab and Baha' Allah. <sup>191</sup> These comprise a total of seven days. To these seven, two further holy days were later formally added by 'Abd al-Baha' — the anniversaries of the death of Baha' Allah and the martyrdom of the Bab. <sup>192</sup> Of the nine holy days which 'Abd al-Baha' lists, some, he says, are ordained in the sacred text (*bi-nuṣūs-i ilāhiyya*) and others are calculated by analogy with it (*qiyās bi-ān*). <sup>193</sup> On these nine days, work of any kind is prohibited. <sup>194</sup>

Naw-Ruz, the only holy day ordained in the *Bayān*, is celebrated both as the first day of the new year, falling on the vernal equinox (normally 21 March), and as a festival corresponding to the Muslim 'Id al-Fitr, to celebrate the end of the fast. <sup>195</sup>

The Ridwan festival, known as the "Most Great Festival" (al-'id al-a'zam), commemorates the "declaration" of Baha' Allah in the Najibiyya garden (renamed by Baha'is the Ridwan garden) outside Baghdad in 1863. Covering a period of 12 days in all, from 21 April to 2 May, the first, ninth, and twelfth days are designated by Baha' Allah as holy days on which work is to be suspended. <sup>196</sup> Commemorations for the first day of Ridwan are held at about 3.00 pm on 21 April. <sup>197</sup>

The "declaration" of the Bab (yawm-i ba'that) was, as we have noted earlier, originally added to the Islamic calendar by the Bab as a date to be commemorated, but was not specifically instituted as a holy day in the Bayān. It falls on 23 May or, more precisely, from sunset on 22 May to sunset on the 23rd, the actual "declaration" having occurred, according to the Persian Bayān, at two hours and 11 minutes after sunset. 198 The celebration of this event takes place at this time. 199 The birth of 'Abd al-Baha' is reckoned by Baha'is to have taken place on the same day, but he himself strictly forbade the celebration of this latter event on the date in question. 200

The births of the Bab and Baha' Allah occurred on 1 Muharram 1235/20 October 1819 and 2 Muharram 1233/12 November 1817 respectively. On the basis of the Islamic lunar calendar, they fall, therefore, on two consecutive days and, for this reason, are regarded by Baha' Allah "as one day". <sup>201</sup> Unlike all the other Baha'i holy days, these two are observed in accordance with the Islamic calendar, <sup>202</sup> but at present the practice in the West is to commemorate them on a solar basis, resulting in a gap of almost a month between them.

The death of Baha' Allah (usually referred to as his "passing" or "ascension" — su'ūd) occurred on 29 May 1892. The event is commemorated at 3.00 AM on this day. The martyrdom of the Bab, which took place on 9 July 1850, was commemorated during the lifetime of Baha' Allah, although, as we have noted, it was not included as a holy day in the Kitāb al-aqdas. From the time of Baha' Allah, the martyrdom of the Bab has been commemorated in the East according to the Muslim calendar, on 28 Sha'ban, whereas Western Baha'is observe a holy day on 9 July. According to 'Abd al-Baha', commemoration on the solar date is correct and the anniversary will in future be observed universally on that basis. The martyrdom is commemorated at noon on either of these dates. The martyrdom is commemorated at noon on either of these dates.

During the lifetime of 'Abd al-Baha', in response to requests for a day to be celebrated in his honour, a festival was instituted by him on 26 November, known in the East as the Jashn-i A'zam (most great festival—using the Persian word jashn and not 'id, which is reserved for the Ridwan, Naw-Ruz and birth celebrations) or yawm-i julūs (day of the accession) and in the West as the Day of the Covenant. <sup>206</sup> Following the death of 'Abd al-Baha', the day of his passing was designated as a Baha'i anniversary, the event being commemorated at 1.00 AM on 28 November. <sup>207</sup> According to Shoghi Effendi, it is not prohibited to work on these two days, but they are to be regarded as "among the specific holy days". <sup>208</sup>

There are no specific rites laid down for the commemoration of these holy days, although it is normal for Baha'is to hold communal gatherings for that purpose. It is regarded as obligatory to recite "revealed" verses on these days, although these do not have to be devotions or tablets specifically written for the festival in question.<sup>209</sup> There are, nevertheless, numerous Baha'i writings either designed to be read on a specific holy day or in some way closely associated with it. Thus, for example, the ziyaratnama for the Bab and Baha' Allah, which is used at their shrines, ought to be read on the days of their martyrdom or death. 210 In practice, this ziyara is also normally recited on other holy days associated with the Bab and Baha' Allah (such as the anniversaries of their births), and is invariably chanted or read while the congregation stands facing the qibla. This practice, for which there does not appear to be any specific injunction (and which probably represents sunna practice traditionally established by 'Abd al-Baha'), is certainly an important ritual element in these gatherings. Other writings commonly used in Iran in connection with specific holy days are: a tablet by Baha' Allah for the evening of the birth of the Bab,  $^{211}$  and the *Lawh-i ru'yā*,  $^{212}$  also by Baha' Allah, both for the anniversary of the birth of the Bab; three tablets by Baha' Allah, the Lawh-i ghulām al-khuld, Lawh-i nāqūs and Lawh-i layla-yi mab'ath<sup>213</sup>, all for the declaration of the Bab. The

translation of the Lawḥ-i nāqūs appears in Appendix XXVI. Texts of these and other tablets and historical passages have been collected in a single volume by 'Abd al-Hamid Ishraq Khavari, entitled Ayyām-i tis'a, which serves as a handbook for the celebration of Baha'i holy days in Iran. Apart from the reading of sacred texts, it is customary at Baha'i gatherings on these occasions to read passages detailing the historical events involved or to have someone speak about these events and their significance — a practice clearly based on the Shi'i custom of rawda-khwani.

In addition to these 11 anniversaries, Baha'is are frequently called on to celebrate centenaries or quinquagenaries of significant events in Baha'i history. This often involves the holding of special gatherings for the purpose of communal devotions.

Finally, it should be noted that Baha'is do not observe a specific day in the week as a holy day or a day of communal prayer. Friday, however, is designated a day of rest,<sup>214</sup> and it is possible that religious gatherings will increasingly be held on that day in future.

### 9 The Nineteen-Day Feast

In our section on Babi festivals, we noted that each believer was expected, once a month, to invite 19 individuals as guests. This, in a much modified form, has become the later Baha'i institution of the Nineteen-Day Feast (dyāfat-i nūzdah rūza), a gathering held once every 19 days. In the Kitāb al-aqdas, Baha' Allah re-institutes the original Babi practice: "Receiving guests (al-diyāfa) has been written down for you once a month, even if it be with water."<sup>215</sup> It is not, however, regarded as obligatory to do this.<sup>216</sup> At this stage, the practice did not involve anything more than the monthly extension of hospitality to friends, the number of guests not being specified as in Babism. A more definitely religious element was introduced later by 'Abd al-Baha', who stated that, in addition to its function as means of encouraging friendship and unity between men, this "feast" ought also to serve as a gathering at which mention of God  $(dhikr-i il\bar{a}h\bar{t})$  should be made, verses read and prayers chanted.<sup>217</sup> It is, in fact, to be regarded as "one of the meetings for the mention of God and the gatherings for His worship", and its primary purpose is the performance of these devotions. 218 This religious significance is enhanced for Western Baha'is by frequent references by 'Abd al-Baha' to this monthly feast as being in essence comparable to the Christian Lord's Supper.<sup>219</sup>

Under the administration of Shoghi Effendi, which involved a marked increase in the organizational aspects of Baha'i community life, the Nineteen-Day Feast, as it now came to be known, was radically altered and acquired a more structured form. As it is now observed, the Feast is divided into three distinct parts: a devotional programme, consisting of

the reading by individuals of prayers by Baha' Allah, the Bab, or 'Abd al-Baha': an administrative section, at which local Baha'i Assemblies make reports to their communities, consult with them, and disseminate information sent from the national Baha'i headquarters in each country; and a "material Feast", at which food is eaten and those present meet socially. 220 The originally individual character of the observance has been almost entirely lost; a Feast may only be held under the jurisdiction of a Baha'i Assembly, although an individual will usually be asked to host the gathering in his own home. But there is no longer any question of each individual Baha'i holding his own Feast each month. unless, of course, he does so on a purely informal basis, in which case it will not constitute a Nineteen-Day Feast. The Feast should preferably be held on the first day of the Baha'i month or, if this clashes with a regular public meeting or whatever, on the nearest possible date within the same Baha'i month.<sup>221</sup> This meeting forms the only regular gathering for any Baha'i community (except where a particular community institutes regular weekly, fortnightly or monthly meetings for the purposes of prayer, study or social intercourse, which are not regular for all communities) and is the nearest equivalent to a church service in Christianity or Friday prayer in Islam, while considerably less formalized. Within the limits of the programme set out, individual hosts and communities are encouraged to develop original ways in which to celebrate these feasts, particularly in respect of the devotional portion. In Iran, however, a national committee prepares the entire programme for feasts throughout the country, which is distributed to local Assemblies on a regular basis.

### 10 The Mashriq al-adhkar

The Kitāb al-aqdas contains an injunction to build houses for the mention of God. 222 Any house constructed for this purpose, whether in a city or village, is to be known as a Mashria al-adhkār, a "dawning point of the mentions [of God]". 223 It is particularly recommended by Baha' Allah that individuals go to the Mashriq al-adhkar in the early morning (fi 'l-ashār), 224 or, indeed, up to two hours after sunrise, 225 for the purpose of prayer. 'Abd al-Baha' states that, in the Mashrig aladhkar, various forms of prayer may be offered (du'a, munajat, namaz), and the divine verses chanted. 226 No fixed forms are given for worship in the Mashriq al-adhkar; Shoghi Effendi, as we have noted earlier, has insisted that this "House of Worship" "will gather within its chastened walls, in a serenely spiritual atmosphere, only those who, discarding for ever the trappings of elaborate and ostentatious ceremony, are willing worshippers of the one true God". 227 Images or statues are prohibited, 228 as is the use of a pulpit (minbar) — a chair being recommended for the use of those reading the sacred texts.<sup>229</sup>

During the time of 'Abd al-Baha', it was recommended that small meetings for the purpose of prayer and the reading of verses be held, these being known as *Mashāriq al-adhkār*.<sup>230</sup> Similarly, in Iran at present, it is common to refer to prayer meetings held in the early morning by this same term. Here again, there are no narrow forms prescribed. All that may be observed with respect to Baha'i practice in Iran is that prayers are always read or, more usually, chanted by a single individual, who remains seated. Only prayers written by the Bab, Baha' Allah, 'Abd al-Baha', or Shoghi Effendi may be used (in the West, those of the last-named are not known, although Iranians may occasionally chant them). It is common for the reader on completing a prayer to kiss the prayer-book and to touch it to the forehead in the traditional gesture of respect, although this practice is by no means universal. Apart from these, no ritual forms are normally observed at devotional gatherings.<sup>231</sup>

In the early part of the 20th century, a tradition of Baha'i hymnody was developed in the United States, centred on selections of hymns written chiefly by Louise Waite. This devotional trend was later severely modified, particularly within the context of the Baha'i temple at Wilmette. <sup>232</sup> In recent years, however, there seems to have been a return to the use of music, but not of collective hymn-singing.

#### 11 Dress

In Islam, Prophetic tradition established a code of practice with regard to dress, particularly in respect of men. The semi-ritual character of Islamic dress is made sharply clear in the objections of many 'ulama' to the wearing of Western clothes or in the impact on religious life of the reforms in this respect instituted by Atatürk in Turkey or Reza Shah in Iran. Babi law tactily accepts Islamic garb and, as we have noted, there are specific references in the Bayān to the 'aba and jubba and their respective appropriateness for salat. We have noted also the Bab's injunction against the wearing of black, as a result of which many Babis favoured white clothing. This latter custom was particularly remarked by E. G. Browne among the Baha'is whom he met in Haifa and Acre in the course of his visit to Palestine in 1890.<sup>233</sup>

In the Kitāb al-aqdas, however, all restrictions on the manner of men's dress are abolished: "God has lifted from you the decree of restriction with regard to dress and beard as a bounty from Him. He, verily, is the Ordainer, the Knowing. Do that which sound minds will not reject and make not yourselves a plaything for the ignorant." In the Lawḥ-i bishārāt, he similarly states that "the reins of dress and the ordering of the beard have been committed to the hands of men's free choice. But beware, O people, lest you make yourselves a plaything for the ignorant." In a letter to the Baha'i poet 'Andalib, Baha' Allah

makes it clear that the earlier prohibition on the wearing of foreign garb has been abolished.<sup>236</sup>

The Aqdas does, however, make a restriction with regard to the cutting of men's hair. It is prohibited both to shave the head and to allow the hair to cover the ears.<sup>237</sup> In accordance with this latter prohibition, it became customary among the Baha'is in the time of Baha' Allah and later to wear the hair swept back behind the ears and cut at their lower level, as noted by Browne.<sup>238</sup> In practice, this rule is generally disregarded in the West, although it has come to the attention of the author that in some areas, such as India, it is rigidly enforced.

'Abd al-Baha' strongly deprecated the Western practice of women appearing in public with heads uncovered and enjoined the wearing of the *chārqad* or scarf, which would surround the face on all sides and prevent men not of the family from seeing their hair.<sup>239</sup> The face and hands alone may be uncovered.<sup>240</sup> In practice, this injunction is far from being observed, whether by Western Baha'i women or emancipated Iranian women, and it is hard to see how it could be enforced at the present time.

### BAHA'I RITUAL PRACTICE

Both Babism and Baha'ism possess a high ritual content, almost all of it of a prescriptive nature. There is virtually no customary practice and, indeed, there has been little enough time for this to develop, even in the oldest Baha'i communities. There are significant differences between Western and Eastern Baha'i practice, with greater incidence of ritual being observed in the case of the latter. Western Baha'is possess a limited amount of information about ritual practices, have few translations of relevant texts, and belong to backgrounds which have not prepared them to understand the precise nature of observances such as salat and hajj. Nevertheless, they are often eager to learn of and to observe devotional practices with a ritual flavour, as exemplified by the exercise of repeating 500 "Removers of Difficulties". A comparison in terms of the observance of basic rituals such as salat between first-generation Western converts and Iranians from Baha'i families of several generations would be instructive.

Innovation tends to be limited, scriptural authority generally being sought for any practice which it is desired to introduce. From less literate communities, however, come reports of greater laxity in this respect and a stronger tendency to conserve traditional customs. Most Western Baha'is tend to be individuals who have rebelled in youth or early adulthood against their religious upbringing and are, for that reason, generally loth to tolerate practices with a Christian appearance, while being eager to adopt observances which will enhance or emphasize their new religious identity. African, Indian and other Baha'is from

traditional societies tend, as far as the present writer is able to ascertain, to see their new religion in terms of their indigenous beliefs and culture and to be less eager to abandon these in favour of new practices introduced by Baha'i missionaries. Here again, a comparative study would be of immense value.

It is obviously difficult to predict future trends. Clearly, present devotional practice, whatever its merits in terms of simplicity and spontaneity, may be felt by many to be lacking in a certain intensity found in other forms of worship. The transcending qualities of a King's College, Cambridge, Advent service or a Sufi *dhikr* are not lightly to be dismissed, nor are the heritages that they represent. It is in human nature to seek the sublime in acts of worship whose solemnity allows the individual worshipper to rise above his mundane and everyday self. The charm of the Quaker meeting will not enable all men to find transcendence. It is almost certain, therefore, that within the Baha'i community there will develop increasingly artistic and formal expressions of existing ritual practices, without transgressing the fundamental injunction against excessive ritualism. What form such worship would take it is, of course, beyond the scope of the present study to suggest.<sup>242</sup>

# List of Abbreviations

Adī'a: Mīrzā Ḥusayn 'Alī Nūrī, Bahā' Allāh, Adī'a-yi ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb Amr: Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil-i Māzandarānī (ed.), Amr wa khalq, vol. III or IV

B.A.: Sayyid 'Alī Muḥammad Shīrāzī, the Bāb, al-Bayān al-'Arabī

B.F.: Sayyid 'Alī Muhammad Shīrāzī, the Bāb, Bayān-i Fārsī

CUL: Cambridge University Library

E.: Elder's translation of Mīrzā Ḥusayn 'Alī Nūrī Bahā' Allāh, al-Kitāb al-aqdas

H.: al-Ḥasanī's edition of Mīrzā Ḥusayn 'Alī Nūrī Bahā' Allāh, al-Kitāb al-aqdas, in appendix to al-Bābiyūn wa 'l-Bahā'iyūn

H.A.: 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāvarī (ed.), Ganjīna-yi ḥudūd wa aḥkām

H.D.: Sayyid 'Alī Muḥammad Shīrāzī, the Bāb, Haykal al-dīn

INBA: Iran National Baha'i Archives

Taṣbīḥ: Mīrzā Ḥusayn 'Alī Nūrī, Bahā' Allāh, Risāla-yi taṣbīḥ wa tahlīl

## **Notes**

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1. For general bibliographies, see William P. Collins, Bibliography of English-Language works on the Bābī and Bahā'ī faiths, 1844-1985 (Oxford 1990); D. M. MacEoin, Babism, Baha'ism, in L. P. Elwell-Sutton (ed.), Bibliographical Guide to Iran (Brighton and Totowa 1983); idem, The Literature of Baha'ism and its Study. A Critical Assessment and Annotated Bibliography, Bibliographies and Indexes in Religious Studies (in preparation). For the titles of dissertations on both movements, see P. Smith, Doctoral and Masters' Theses on Bahā'ī Subjects (1923-77), Bulletin of the British Society for Middle East Studies 6/ii (1979), pp.129-30, and idem, Additional Doctoral and Masters' Theses Relating to Bābī and Bahā'ī Subjects, ibid 9/i (1982), pp.89-90. The following brief introductions may be consulted: D. M. MacEoin, Babism, Encyclopaedia Iranica, III, pp.309-17; idem, Baha'ism, in J. R. Hinnells (ed.), A Handbook of Living Religions (London 1984); A. Bausani, Bābīs, Bahā'īs, Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed.; J. Cole, Bahā'ī Faith i, Encyclopaedia Iranica, III, pp.438-46.
- 2. It has been estimated that, by the late 1840s, the Babis numbered as many as 100,000, constituting some 1.7 to 2.2 per cent of the Iranian population (see P. Smith, A Note on Bābī and Bahā'ī Numbers in Iran, Bahā'ī Studies Bulletin 1/iv [Newcastle 1983], pp.3–7). This figure requires some qualification, but it is a rough indication of the rapidity with which the Babi movement spread in Iran during its first years. See also, M. Momen, The social basis of the Bābī upheavals in Iran (1848–53): a preliminary analysis, International Journal of Middle East Studies 15 (1983), pp.157–83; Peter Smith and Moojan Momen, The Bābī Movement: A Resource Mobilization Perspective, in P. Smith (ed.), In Iran: Studies in Bābī and Bahā'ī History Volume 3 (Los Angeles 1986), pp.33–93; Abbas Amanat, Resurrection and Renewal: the making of the Bābī movement in Iran, 1844–1850 (Ithaca and London 1989).
- 3. See D. M. MacEoin, Azalī Babism, Encyclopaedia Iranica, III, pp. 179–81.
- 4. On the Babi scriptures as a whole, see *idem*, Bayan, in *ibid*, III, pp.878–82;

- idem, The Sources for Early Bābī Doctrine and History: A Survey (Leiden, New York, Cologne 1992).
- 5. On the emergence of Baha'ism out of Babism, see *idem*, From Babism to Baha'ism: problems of militancy, quietism, and conflation in the construction of a religion, *Religion* 13 (1983), pp.219-55.
- 6. See H. M. Balyuzi, Bahā'u'llāh: the King of Glory (Oxford 1980); Mīrzā Muḥammad Jawād Qazwīnī, An Epitome of Bābī and Bahā'ī History to A.D. 1898, in E. G. Browne, Materials for the Study of the Bābī Religion (Cambridge 1918), pp.3–63; Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By (Wilmette, Ill. 1944), pp.89–233; J. R. I. Cole, Bahā'-Allāh, Encyclopaedia Iranica, III, pp.422–9.
- 7. By the 1880s, it numbered about 100,000 adherents (between 1.25 and 2.0 per cent of the population), and from the 1910s to the 1950s the figure grew to between 100,000 and 200,000, representing a decline in population percentage (to between 0.5 and 1.1 per cent). Current numbers are estimated at between 300,000 and 350,000 (0.9 to 1.0 per cent of the population). See Smith, Bābī and Bahā'ī Numbers.
- 8. See *idem*, The American Bahā'ī Community 1894–1917: A Preliminary Survey, in M. Momen (ed.), *Studies in Bābī and Bahā'ī History* (Los Angeles 1983), pp.85–223.
- 9. The following are the main works in which the Baha'i shari'a was elaborated, albeit with a lack of real detail: Al-kitāb al-aqdas (for details of editions, see Chapter 3, note 2); Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb; Lawḥ-i ishrāqāt, in Bahā' Allāh, Alwāḥ-i mubāraka-yi Ḥaḍrat-i Bahā' Allāh . . . shāmil-i ishrāqāt . . . (n.p. n.d.), pp.50-85; Lawḥ-i bishārāt, in idem, Majmū'a-yi alwāḥ-i mubāraka (Cairo 1333/1920), pp.116-24; Lawḥ-i dunyā in ibid, pp.285-301. For translations of the last three, see H. Taherzadeh (trans.), Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh revealed after the Kitāb-i-Aqdas (Haifa 1978), pp.99-134, 19-29, 81-97.
- 10. On the contrast drawn by early Baha'is between the fanaticism of Babism and Baha'i tolerance, see MacEoin, From Babism to Baha'ism.
- 11. I. Goldziher, Muslim Studies, II, trans. C. R. Barber (London 1972); J. Schacht, The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence (Oxford 1950).
- 12. The Faith of Bahā'u'llāh, in Shoghi Effendi, Guidance for Today and Tomorrow (London 1953), p.9.
- 13. M. Perkins and P. Hainsworth, *The Bahā'ī Faith* (London 1980), pp.51-2, 62-93.
- 14. On Islamic ritual generally, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st and 2nd editions, under Adhān, 'Aķīķa, 'Āshūrā, Bairam, Dhikr, Djafr, al-Djamra, Djanāba, Djināza, Djum'a, Du'ā, Fātiḥa, Ghusl, Ḥadath, Ḥadjdj, Ḥaid, Ḥamā'il, Ḥizb, 'Ibādat, 'Īd, 'Īd al-Adḥā, 'Īd al-Fiṭr, 'Idda, Iḥrām, Imām-Bāra, Istikhāra, I'tikāf, Ķasam, Khaṭīb, Khiṭān, Khuṭba, Ķibla, Ķunūt, Ķurbān, Masdjid, Mawlid, Mīķāt, Muṣallā, Nadhr, Nīya, Radjm al-Ṣafā, Ramaḍān, Sadjdjāda, Ṣalāt, Ṣawm, Sa'y, Siḥr, Ṣubḥa, Sutra, Tahadjdjud, Ṭahāra, Tarāwīḥ, Ṭawāf, Tayammum, Ta'ziya, 'Umra, 'Urs, Wird, Wuḍū', Wukūf, Ziyāra. Most standard works on Islam have a section on general devotional and other ritual practice.

- 15. Sufi ritual is discussed in J. S. Trimingham, The Sufi Orders in Islam (Oxford 1971), chap. 7. The North African orders are dealt with in Émile Dermenghem, Le culte des saints dans l'Islam maghrébin (Paris 1954), esp. parts 3-5. Ritual within two orders is analysed in M. Gilsenen, Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt (Oxford 1973) and J. K. Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes (London 1965), chap. 4.
- 16. On Shi'i ritual, see D. Pinault, The Shiites: ritual and popular piety in a Muslim community (London 1992); M. Ayoub, Redemptive Suffering in Islam: a study of the devotional aspects of Ashura in Twelver Shi'ism (The Hague 1978); P. Chelkowski (ed.), Ta'ziyeh: ritual and drama in Iran (New York 1979).
- 17. On some popular religious practices, including use of the rosary, see Samuel Zwemer, Studies in Popular Islam (London and New York 1939). See also E. E. Calverley, Worship in Islam (Madras 1925); H. Massé, Croyances et coutumes persanes (Paris 1938); B. A. Donaldson, The Wild Rue (London 1938); E. W. Lane, Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, 2 vols. (London 1836, and later eds); E. Westermarck, Ritual and Belief in Morocco, 2 vols. (London 1926); D. C. Phillott, Bibliomancy, divination, superstitions among the Persians, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal N.S. 2 (1906), pp.399-442.

### 2 BABI RITUAL OBSERVANCES

- 1. Qayyūm al-asmā', CUL, Browne Oriental Ms. F.11, f.185b.
- 2. Sahīfa-yi 'adliyya (n.p. n.d.), pp.5-6.
- 3. Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī Zunūzī, *Risāla* quoted in Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil-i Māzandarānī, *Kitāb-i zuhūr al-ḥaqq*, III (n.p. n.d.), pp.31–2.
- 4. Sharh-i hāl-i Ṭāhira Qurrat al-'Ayn (appended to Tabrīzī, Tārīkh-i Mu'īn al-Saltana, INBA, Ms. 19), p.6.
- 5. The two main mss. used by me are CUL, Add. 3704 (6) and INBA, 6009.C. For details, see MacEoin, *Sources*, pp.59-60.
- 6. The two mss. used by me are INBA, 5006.C, pp.262–78, and 6007.C, pp.413–52. See MacEoin, *Sources*, pp.64–5.
- 7. The three mss. used by me are INBA, 3006.C, pp.148–82; 5010.C, pp.82–166, and 6011.C pp.81–120. See MacEoin, *Sources*, pp.68–71.
- 8. The ms. used by me (and the only one known to me) is INBA, 5010.C, pp.166-75.
- 9. The principal ms. used by me is CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.7. See MacEoin, *Sources*, pp.60–61.
- 10. Sahīfa bayna 'l-haramayn, pp.27-37.
- 11. Ibid, pp.46-8.
- 12. Ibid, pp.55-8, 64-6.
- 13. *Ibid*, pp.84–96.
- 14. Ibid, pp.96-101.
- 15. *Ibid*, pp.101–22.
- 16. Ibid, pp.66-84.
- 17. See MacEoin, Sources, pp.90-91.

- 18. Bayān-i Fārsī (n.p. n.d.), Wāḥid 8, bāb 6, hereafter given as 8:6 (p.286).
- 19. Ibid, 6:5 (p.196).
- 20. Ibid, 6:11 (p.217), 7:11 (p.253).
- 21. Ibid, 6:19 (p.237).
- 22. *Ibid*, 6:3 (p.192).
- 23. Ibid, 6:14 (p.229).
- 24. Ibid, 7:6 (p.246).
- 25. Al-Bayān al-'Arabī (n.p. n.d.), 10:15.
- 26. See 'A. F. (? 'Alī Frahvashtī), Â'īn-i Bāb (n.p. n.d.), p.93 fn.
- 27. B.A., 7:19 (p.32); Haykal al-dīn, published with ibid, 7:19 (p.31); B.F., 7:19 (p.272).
- 28. H.D., 7:19 (p.31).
- B.F., 7:19 (p.270). On these four unities, see Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā'ī, Sharḥ al-ziyāra al-jāmi'a al-kabīra (Tehran 1267/1850-51), Pt.1, pp.72-3; idem, Ḥayāt al-nafs, trans. Sayyid Kāzim Rashtī, 2nd. ed. (Kirman 1353/1974-5), p.37; Ḥājjī Mīrzā Jānī Kāshānī, Kitāb-i Nuqṭat al-kāf, ed. E. G. Browne (Leiden and London 1910), p.23.
- 30. B.F., 7:19 (p.272).
- 31. Ibid, 9:9 (p.324).
- 32. B.A., 5:2 (p.18), H.D., 5:2 (p.5), 4:12, 13 (p.16).
- 33. B.A., 9:9 (p.42).
- 34. B.F., 8:8 (p.289).
- 35. B.A., 8:7 (p.34), c.f. H.D., 8:7 (p.33).
- 36. On Bushru'i and Barfurushi, see D. MacEoin, Bošrū'ī, Encyclopaedia Iranica, IV, p.383 and Bārforūšī, ibid, III, p.794; idem, articles in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., VII, pp.422, 440-41.
- 37. B.A., 10:8 (p.47).
- 38. *Ibid*, 8:7 (p.34). Cf. Trimingham, p.213, on *tawajjuh* to the *shaykh* and the Prophet as to the *qibla*.
- 39. B.A., 11:14 (pp.59–60).
- 40. Ibid, 11:15 (p.60).
- 41. *Ibid*, 8:10 (pp.35–6).
- 42. H.D., 8:10 (p.34). The verse given is corrupt in this and an alternative text (where it reads: subḥān Allāh al-ilahu dhī aydānī[?]); the last word may possibly have originally been al-ayādī.
- 43. B.A., 8:10 (p.35): dhī 'l-ṭal'a wa'l-jamāl; compare with H.D., 8:10 (p.34): dhī 'l-wajh wa'l-jamāl.
- 44. B.F., 8:16 (p.301).
- 45. *Ibid*, 7:17 (p.263) and see p.264. The Arabic *Bayān* gives this same verse (7:17, p.31) with one small change.
- 46. H.D., 7:17 (p.31). A much longer salutation to the rising sun may be found in CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.23, item 64.
- 47. This term is used throughout the *Bayān* to designate the messianic figure whose future appearance the Bab foretold. For details, see Browne's introduction to Kāshānī, *Nuqṭat al-kāf*, pp.xxiv-xxvi, xxix-xxxi.
- 48. These are the first 18 individuals to believe in a prophet and constitute with him, in Babi terminology, a wāḥid or unity; 19 unities form 361, the number of "all things" (kullu shay'). On the Babi hurūf al-ḥayy and their

- metaphysical significance, see Denis MacEoin, From Shaykhism to Babism: a study in charismatic renewal in Shī'ī Islam, Ph.D., University of Cambridge, 1979, pp. 142-6.
- 49. B.F., 8:19 (p.309). The text mentions "the evening and the day of Friday" (i.e. Thursday evening and Friday up to sunset, since the Islamic and Babi day begins at sundown), but it is not clear whether the dhikr is to be performed once or twice.
- 50. Ibid. For the numerical value of the letters of the Arabic alphabet, see G. Krotkoff, Abjad, Encyclopaedia Iranica, I, pp.221-2.
- 51. B.A., 6:19 (p.40).
- 52. The names are very confused in this text, however: Husayn, 'Ali, Muhammad, then Hadi, Mahdi, 'Ali, Muhammad 'Ali and Hasan.
- 53. H.D., 1:6-15 (pp.2-4).
- 54. B.A., 8:13 (p.37); H.D., 8:14 (p.35).
- 55. B.F., 5:17 (p.180). A prayer for daily use may be found in CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.23, ff.177a-182b.
- 56. B.A., 5:17 (p.21).
- 57. H.D., 5:17 (p.8).
- 58. Chahār sha'n, 11:8, in 'A. F., Ā'īn-i Bāb, p.91.
- 59. B.F., 9:4 (pp.317–18).
- 60. H.D., 8:7 (p.33).
- 61. B.F., 6:1 (p.184).
- 62. *Ibid*, 8:14 (p.296); *B.A.*, 8:14 (p.37).
- 63. B.F., 5:8 (pp.162-4). The Arabic Bayān gives this same verse, with the one change "... I associate nothing with God my Lord", B.A., 5:8 (pp.19-20).
- 64. H.D., 5:8 (p.7).
- 65. B.F., 7:2 (pp.240-41).
- 66. The Bab maintains that, in theory, the names of God relating to each attribute total seven. Thus, in respect of the attribute of oneness (tawhīd), God may be named in seven degrees: Awhad, Wahhād, Wāhid, Wahīd, Mutawahhid, Mawhid, and Muwahhad (ibid, 8:2, p.273).
- 67. Ibid.
- 68. *Ibid*, 5:9 (pp.164–5). The choice of name or names to be used is dependent on the component letters of the name of the object. Thus, when the believer contemplates the word sang (stone), composed of three letters — "s", "n" and "k" (or "g" in modern Persian), he should think of the names subbūh (the all-praised), nūr (light) and karīm (the generous).
- 69. B.A., 9:15 (p.43). 70. B.F., 5:10 (p.166).
- 71. B.A., 10:11 (pp.47-8).
- 72. B.F., 6:5 (p.196); B.A., 6:4 (p.24).
- 73. H.D., 6:4 (p.22).
- 74. B.A., 9:19 (p.44).
- 75. Ibid, 11:1 (pp.53-4).
- 76. The bulk of the following section is taken from my earlier article, Nineteenth-century Bābī talismans, Studia Iranica 14/i (1985), pp.77-98. On the early claims of the Bab, see also MacEoin, From Shaykhism to

- Babism, chap. 5; *idem*, Early Shaykhī Reactions to the Bāb and his Claims, in M. Momen (ed.), *Studies in Bābī and Bahā'ī History*, I (Los Angeles 1983), pp.16–19; and Amelia L. Danesh, Some reflections on the different meanings of the word "Bāb", *The Journal of Bahā'ī Studies 2/iii* (1989–90), pp.45–53.
- 77. See B.F., 2:9 (p.44): "How often has that same locus of the Universal Will (mazhar-i mashiyyat-i kulliyya) opened up a gate of mystic knowledge (ma'rifa) in the Interworld (barzakh)." On Karim Khan Kirmani's ideas regarding the availability of knowledge in the interworld, see M. Bayat, Mysticism and Dissent: Socioreligious thought in Qajar Iran (Syracuse 1982), pp.75, 77. On the Shaykhi concept of hurqalya, see H. Corbin, Terre Celeste et Corps de Resurrection (Paris 1960), passim (see index).
- 78. On Ibn al-'Arabi's theory of the soul being able to know its own qadar in its archetype when in a state of kashf, see T. Izutzu, A Comparative Study of the Key Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism. Part One: The Ontology of Ibn al-'Arabi (Tokyo 1966), pp.73-4.
- 79. Kitāb-i panj sha'n (n.p. n.d.). This book derives its name from the "five grades" in which the Bab wrote his works, these being āyāt (Qur'anic-style "verses"), munājāt (prayers), khuṭba (homilies), tafsīr (commentaries) and Fārsī (Persian-language writings): see B.F., 3:17 (p.102), 6:1 (p.184), 9:2 (p.313), where suwar 'ilmiyya (scientific treatises) replace khutba. The last five sections of the Kitāb-i panj sha'n (which were addressed to Mirza Asad Allah Khu'i Dayyan) seem to have been distributed independently and to have been variously named the Lawḥ-i ḥurūfāt, Risāla-yi Ja'fariyya, and Kitāb-i haykal (or hayākil): see D. M. MacEoin, The Identity of the Bāb's Lawḥ-i ḥurūfāt, Bahā'ī Studies Bulletin 2/i (June 1983), pp.78-9; idem, Sources, pp.88-90.
- 80. Panj sha'n, p.405.
- 81. Text reads mastūr, but on analogy with the recurring phrase 'ilm maknūn makhzūn, I prefer to read mastūr.
- 82. Panj sha'n, p.405.
- 83. Nuqta-yi Bayān: the manifestation of the Universal Will is the "Point" from which all things originate, like a line of writing from an initial dot, and is the essence of the divine word in each era. Thus, Jesus was the "Point of the Gospel", Muhammad the "Point of the Qur'an", and the Bab the "Point of the Bayan". The Bab is more frequently referred to as Nuqta-yi Ūlā, the "Primal Point".
- 84. Panj sha'n, pp.446-7.
- 85. Ibid, p.447; cf. p.434.
- 86. A useful summary of this subject may be found in A. L. M. Nicolas (trans.), Le Béyan Persan, 4 vols. (Paris 1911-14), I, pp.7-9, fn.2.
- 87. B.F., 2:1 (pp.14–15).
- 88. Panj sha'n, p.412. In fact, the fourth bāb was the eighteenth, if we count Muhammad, Fatima and twelve Imams.
- 89. Dalā'il-i sab'a (n.p. n.d.), pp.45-6. See also Panj sha'n, pp.422-3.
- 90. Panj sha'n, pp.406-11.
- 91. *Ibid*, p.407. On the "wāḥid without numbers" contrasted with the "wāḥid with numbers", see p.409.

- 92. Ibid, p.408.
- 93. Ibid. See also Appendix II.
- 94. Ibid, p.428.
- 95. Ibid, p.447; cf. p.434.
- 96. Ibid, p.423.
- 97. Ibid, p.437.
- 98. Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī Zunūzī, quoted by Māzandarānī, *Kitāb-i zuhūr al-ḥaqq*, III, pp.31-2.
- 99. Cited by M. A. Faydī, *Ḥaḍrat-i Nuqṭa-yi Ūlā* (Tehran 132 B.E./1975-6), pp.53-4.
- 100. Ṣaḥīfa bayna 'l-ḥaramayn, CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.7, chap. 2, pp.27-37. Two forms of talisman (tilism; haykal) are referred to: rectangular (shikl al-tarbī') and triangular (shikl al-tathlīth) see p.28. This latter would seem from the description on p.30 (which says it should not be regarded as resembling a Christian cross) to be identical to the pentagram talisman which the Bab later made the Babi haykal proper.
- 101. Panj sha'n, pp.409, 413.
- 102. *Ibid*, p.412. This cycle works out exactly.
- 103. For examples, see D. C. Phillott and M. K. Shirazi, Notes on certain Shi'ah Tilisms, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* N.S. 2/x (1906), pp. 534-7.
- 104. B.F., 5:10 (p.166).
- 105. Ibid, 7:10 (pp.252-3).
- 106. B.A., 7:8 (p.30); H.D., 7:8 (p.29).
- 107. This is one of several examples collected by E.G. Browne, contained in Folder 4, no. 10 of the Browne papers in CUL. See, for further examples, haykals in Sayyid 'Alī Muḥammad Shīrāzī, the Bāb, and Sayyid Ḥusayn Yazdī, Qismatī az alwāḥ-i khaṭṭ-i Nuqṭa-yi Ūlā wa Sayyid Ḥusayn Kātib (n.p. n.d.), pp.19, 26.
- 108. *B.F.*, 5:10 (p.166).
- 109. Published in Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār*, 5 vols. (n.p. 124-9 B.E./1968-73), IV, pp.115-20; see Appendix III.
- 110. On these, see H. A. Winkler, Siegel und Charaktere in der muhammedanischen Zauberei (Berlin and Leipzig 1930), chap. 2.
- 111. See *Ibid*, pp.150-67. Many of these devices appear in Arabic and Persian secret codes and may be legible (see C. E. Bosworth, Codes, *Encyclopae-dia Iranica*, V, pp.883-5).
- 112. For these two types of da'ira, see Bāb and Yazdī, Qismatī az alwāh, pp.11, 22. The example reproduced in MacEoin, Nineteenth-century Bābī talismans, fig. 7, has the words Allahu a'zam in the central jadwal, above which is the phrase, "For 'Ali, on him be peace". On circular talismans, see T. Canaan, The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans, Berytus 4 (1937), p.109.
- 113. See G. Anawati, Le Nom suprême de Dieu, Atti del Terzo Congresso di Studi Arabi e Islamici (Naples 1967), p.31.
- 114. B.F., 6:10 (p.215); B.A., 6:10 (p.25).
- 115. B.F., 6:10 (pp.215-16).
- 116. H.D., 6:10 (p.24).
- 117. Sharh sūra al-qadr, in Māzandarānī, Asrār, V, p.241.

- 118. Kitāb-i chahār sha'n and untitled sahīfa, in 'A. F., Ā'īn-i Bāb, pp.69-70. On the untitled sahīfa, see ibid, p.49.
- 119. Ibid, in 'A. F., A'īn-i Bāb, p.70.
- 120. Untitled sahīfa, in ibid.
- 121. H.D., 8:2 (p.32).
- 122. B.F., 8:2 (p.274). Those who are able are required to possess three diamonds (to the number of the letters in bism), four yellow rubies (to the number of the letters in Allah), six emeralds (for al-amna') and six red rubies (for al-aqdas), all to be given to him whom God shall manifest (ibid, 8:5, p.285).
- 123. *Ibid*, 8:6 (p.286). E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers 1909), pp.149-50, 165, refers to a similar use of henna for writing amulets.
- 124. B.F., 8:18 (p.306).
- 125. B.A., 8:18 (p.39). For the Babi calendar, see Appendix V.
- 126. B.F., 8:18 (p.308).
- 127. Ibid, 4:12 (pp.135-6).
- 128. Ibid, 9:1 (p.312).
- 129. B.A., 6:16 (p.27).
- 130. B.F., 4:16 (pp.141-2). That the reference to the new house of God is to the Bab's Shiraz house seems evident from the remark that there is a mosque in Shiraz (the Masjid-i Jami') in which there exists a structure similar to the ka'ba and that this is a prophetic sign established before the issuing of the decree to construct God's house in that land (ibid, p.142). On this structure, known as the khudā-khāna or House of God, see George Curzon, Persia and the Persian Question (London 1892), II, pp.101-2. The Bab's house, which had been very faithfully preserved and restored by the Baha'is, was tragically destroyed by mob violence in 1979.
- 131. H.D., 5:1 (p.5); B.A., 5:1 (p.18); B.F., 4:17 (p.145).
- 132. H.D., 4:16 (p.16); B.A., 4:17 (p.16). The sentence which follows this direction in the Haykal al-dīn (pp.16-17) remains incomprehensible to me: "And what was buried [or, I buried] about him, let you build upon them [fem. pl.] three times, then make mention in the house of God there" (wa mā dufinat fī ḥawlihi antum 'alayhinna thalāth marāt tabnūna thumma fī bayt Allāh hunālika tadhkirūna).
- 133. B.F., 4:16 (p.144).
- 134. B.A., 10:15 (p.50).
- 135. B.F., 4:18 (p.146).
- 136. Ibid (p.147).
- 137. Ibid (p.146).
- 138. B.A., 4:19 (p.17). On the mazahir al-wahid as equivalent to the 19 servants, see ibid, 4:18 (p.16.).
- 139. B.F., 4:19 (p.150).
- 140. Ibid, 7:15 (p.260).
- 141. Ibid, 4:18 (p.146), 4:19 (p.150).
- 142. B.A., 4:17 (p.16), 4:18 (pp.16-17), 4:19 (p.17).
- 143. B.F., 4:13 (p.137).
- 144. Ibid (p.138).

- 145. *Ibid* (pp.137-8).
- 146. Ibid, 4:14 (p.138).
- 147. Ibid, 4:15 (p.141).
- 148. Untitled sahīfa, in 'A. F., A'īn-i Bāb, p.76.
- 149. For text, see CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.23 (9), ff.98b-107a.
- 150. Māzandarānī, *Zuhūr al-ḥaqq*, pp.106, 187; Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī Lisān al-Mulk Sipihr, *Nāsikh al-tawārīkh: salāṭīn-i Qājāriyya*, 4 vols. (Tehran 1344/1965–6), III, p.234.
- 151. Cf. statement of Subh-i Azal to E. G. Browne in *idem*, A Catalogue and Description of 27 Bābī Manuscripts, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 24 (1892), p.445.
- 152. Kāshānī, *Nuqṭat al-kāf*, pp.136, 179. A copy of this *ziyara* may be found in CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.22, and there are two copies in INBA (5006.C, pp.278–84; 6012.C, pp.397–412).
- 153. Kāshānī, Nuqtat al-kāf, p.108; Mullā Muhammad Nabīl Zarandī, The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation, trans. and ed. Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette 1932), pp.430-31.
- 154. B.F., 8:13 (p.295).
- 155. *Ibid*, 8:12 (p.294).
- 156. CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.23, item 65; Browne mistakenly assumed the "place where this tree was struck" to be the scene of the Bab's martyrdom (thus translating "the place where this Tree shall be struck down") see Catalogue and Description, p.482.
- 157. Kitāb al-tahāra in INBA, 5010.C, pp.172-5. The text is incomplete and I am unable to list all ten purifying agents they may, however, have been fundamentally identical to those listed in the Bayān and other later works.
- 158. Risāla furū' al-'adliyya in INBA, 5010.C, p.89 (the text refers to '11 things', but only ten seem to be listed).
- 159. Ibid (pp.89-92).
- 160. *Ibid* (pp.92–3).
- 161. *Ibid* (pp.93-4).
- 162. Kāshānī, Nuqtat al-kāf, pp.140-41.
- 163. B.F., 5:14 (p.174).
- 164. *Ibid* (pp.174-5). General instructions regarding personal cleanliness are given in *ibid*, 8:6 (pp.286-7); these include complete bathing every four days, depilation every eight to 14 days, the cutting of the nails every 14 days, and the use of henna and nūrā (a depilatory unguent). The presence of even a speck of dirt on one's clothing is to be treated as a cause for disgust. In 6:2 (p.191) the use of perfumes is recommended.
- 165. Ibid (p.174 and see p.173).
- 166. H.D., 5:14 (p.8).
- 167. B.A., 5:14 (p.21).
- 168. B.F., 5:14 (p.174).
- 169. B.A., 10:5 (p.46).
- 170. Ibid, 10:1 (p.44).
- 171. B.F., 5:14 (p.174).
- 172. Ibid (p.175).
- 173. Ibid, 5:15 (p.176).

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174. H.D., 6:17 (p.26).
175. Ibid; B.A., 6:17 (p.28).
176. B.F., 6:17 (p.236).
177. Ibid, 6:9 (p.213).
178. B.A., 8:10 (pp.34–5); H.D., 8:10 (pp.33–4).
179. B.A., 8:10 (p.35); H.D., 8:10 (p.34).
180. B.F., 6:2 (p.189); B.A., 6:9 (p.25).
181. B.F., 6:2 (p.190).
182. Ibid (pp.190-91).
183. Ibid (p.191).
184. Ibid, 9:10 (p.328).
185. Ibid, 5:11 (p.168).
186. B.A., 5:11 (p.20).
187. See Ibid, 5:4 (p.18); H.D., 5:4 (p.6); B.F., 3:17 (p.102).
188. B.F., 9:9 (p.324).
189. Ibid (p.325).
190. Ibid, 5:11 (p.168).
191. B.A., 5:11 (p.20).
192. B.F., 8:11 (pp.291-2).
193. Ibid (p.292).
194. Ibid.
195. B.A., 5:11 (pp.20–21).
196. H.D., 5:11 (p.7).
197. B.F., 5:12 (p.170).
198. Ibid.
199. Ibid, 8:11 (p.292).
200. Ibid (p.293); B.A., 8:11 (p.36).
201. B.A., 9:18 (p.44).
202. H.D., 6:7 (p.22).
203. Ibid, 6:7 (pp.22–3), 8:15 (p.36); B.F., 6:7 (pp.200–1).
204. B.F., 6:7 (p.200).
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205. Strictly speaking, the verb used here (yamhuranna) ought to mean "to give the dowry", but there are objections to this reading. First of all, this would result in the statement "let them each give the dowry", which contradicts the ruling that it is only the man who is to do so. Secondly, the use of the same verb in the Haykal al-dīn (6:7, p.23) is in a context which more obviously suggests the idea of putting a seal on something. Thirdly, the Persian Bayān (6:7, p.200) would seem to confirm this by its use of the Persian sentence har daw muhr kunand bar lawḥī — "let each of them place a seal on a paper". It would seem that the Bab has here formed an Arabic verb based on the word muhr (seal), from the same root as mahara (to pay a dowry) and mahr (dowry).

206. B.A., 6:7 (p.24).

207. The verb is masculine, but it only makes sense if treated as referring to the woman. The text of the *Haykal al-dīn* is, in any case, extremely corrupt.

208. None of the plurals used (rāḍiyūn, rāḍiyāt) is strictly correct; the plural of rāḍ<sup>in</sup> is ruḍāt.

- 209. H.D., 6:7 (p.23). The last phrase reads either "then let them go unto God" or, possibly more correctly, "then let them go unto the cause of God". Whether or not consummation would usually have been possible for 11-year-old couples is obviously open to question.
- 210. B.F., 5:3 (p.153).
- 211. Ibid.
- 212. *Ibid* (pp.153-4).
- 213. Ibid, 6:14 (p.228).
- 214. Ibid (p.229).
- 215. Ibid, 5:3 (p.154).
- 216. B.A., 6:14 (pp.26-7).
- 217. The instruction is followed by the words "Verily, I am God, there is no god but Me, the King, the Powerful" it is possible that the intention is that this verse be used in the second or third person.
- 218. H.D., 6:14 (p.25).
- 219. B.F., 6:14 (p.229).
- 220. Ibid; ibid, 5:3 (p.153).
- 221. *Ibid*, 5:3 (p.153). On the similarity of this concept to the Zoroastrian arrangement of the days and months, see Browne, introduction to Kāshānī, *Nuqtat al-kāf*, p.lxxv.
- 222. H.D., 7:4 (p.28).
- 223. B.A., 9:17 (pp.43-4).
- 224. H.D., 7:11 (p.30); B.A., 9:9 (p.42).
- 225. H.D., 7:11 (p.30).
- 226. B.A., 9:9 (p.42).
- 227. H.D., 7:11 (p.30); B.F., 7:11 (p.253).
- 228. B.A., 7:11 (p.30).
- 229. Ibid, 6:15 (p.27); B.F., 6:15 (p.230).
- 230. B.F., 8:19 (p.309).
- 231. B.A., 8:19 (pp.39-40).
- 232. B.F., 9:1 (p.322).
- 233. B.A., 9:1 (pp.40-41).
- 234. On the distribution of early Babi scriptural texts, see MacEoin, *Sources*, pp.16-23.
- 235. Lutf 'Alī Mīrzā Shīrāzī, *Untitled History*, CUL, Browne Or. Ms. F.28, item 2, p.71.
- 236. Kāshānī, Nuqtat al-kāf, p.231 (cf. Zarandī, Dawn-Breakers, pp.552-3).

### 3 BAHA'I RITUAL OBSERVANCES

- 1. Bahā' Allāh, Alwāḥ-i mubāraka-yi Ḥaḍrat-i Bahā' Allāh . . . shāmil-i ishrāqāt, p.83.
- 2. The Kitāb al-aqdas was first published from a text in the handwriting of Baha' Allah, in Bombay in 1308/1890, and later by moveable type in 1314/1896. In 1899, the Russian orientalist Aleksandr Tumanskii published the Arabic text of the Aqdas together with his own translation and commentary (Kitabe Akdas, in Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St.

Pétersbourg, 8me. series, 3/vi, St. Petersburg 1899). The Arabic text was published as an appendix to Mīrzā Muhammad Mahdī Khān Za'īm al-Dawla's Miftāh bāb al-abwāb (Cairo 1321/1903), and again separately by a Protestant missionary in Iraq, Khadūrī Ilyās 'Ināyat (Baghdad 1931), these editions containing a number of errors. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Hasanī has published a text of the Agdas based on the 1308/1890 edition as an appendix to Al-Bābiyūn wa 'l-Bahā'iyūn fī mādīhim wa hādirihim, 2nd ed. (Sidon 1381/1962). An English translation, based on the 1890 edition, was made by Earl E. Elder, Al-Kitāb al-Aqdas or The Most Holy Book (London 1961). A more reliable English version has recently been published by the Universal House of Justice, The Kitab-i-Aqdas. The Most Holy Book (London 1993), too late for the present study. Translations into other languages are expected to follow. A Persian translation, based on Mīrzā Mahdī Khān's edition, exists as an appendix to the translation of Miftāh bāb al-abwāb by Hāji Shaykh Hasan Farīd Gulpāygānī, 3rd ed. (Tehran 1346/1967). I have made use of the very reliable text published by al-Hasanī, retaining his versification. For the convenience of those without access to this text, I also refer to Elder's translation and to two important Baha'i compilations published in Iran and containing extensive quotations from the Agdas. These are 'Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāvarī, Ganjīna-vi hudūd wa ahkām, 3rd ed. (Tehran 128 B.E./1971-2) and Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fādil-i Māzandarānī, Amr wa khalq, vols. 3 and 4 (Tehran 128 B.E./1971-2, 131 B.E./1974-5). Reference will also be made to a small volume published by the Universal House of Justice, A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitāb-i-Aqdas the Most Holy Book of Bahā'u'llāh (Haifa 1973). These are hereafter cited as H.A., Amr and Synopsis, respectively.

- 3. Aqdas, v. (verse) 25 (H., p.110; E., p.26); H.A., p.11, Amr, IV, pp.82-3.
- 4. Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb, in H.A., p.14.
- 5. Aqdas, vv.15-16 (H., p.109; E., p.24); Amr, IV, p.89. "The other number" would seem to refer to the other 10 rak'as of the Babi salat (see H.A., p.33).
- 6. Agdas, v.22 (H., p.109; E., p.25); Amr, IV, pp.89–90.
- 7. Baha' Allah, letter to Ahmad and letter signed by amanuensis, in *Amr*, IV, pp.90–91.
- 8. Baha' Allah, letter (to Javan-i Rawhani Dirikhsh) and Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.91.
- 9. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mir 'Ali Asghar Usku'i, in Amr, IV, p.92, H.A., pp.32-3. (Cf. Synopsis, p.58, n.12).
- Published in Bahā' Allāh, Adī'a-yi ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb (Cairo 1339/1920-21),
   pp.68-84 (this edition, however, is not entirely reliable). See also 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mir 'Ali Asghar Usku'i, in Amr, IV, p.92, H.A., p.33.
- 11. Baha' Allah, letter to Javan-i Rawhani Dirikhsh, in Amr, IV, p.91, H.A., p.22. Idem, su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.94, H.A., p.22.
- 12. Adī'a, p.69.
- 13. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.96.
- Letter to Mirza Fadl Allah Mu'awin al-Tujjar Naraqi, in Amr, IV, p.96, H.A., p.23.

- 15. "Lawḥ-i ṣalāt", in  $Ad\bar{i}$ 'a, p.69. The meaning of "morning" ( $buk\bar{u}r$ ), "noon" ( $zaw\bar{a}l$ ), and "evening" ( $as\bar{i}l$ ) here has been explained by Baha' Allah in the Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb as "the time of the dawning of the sun, noon and sunset; the time given for the morning prayer is up to noon, then from noon to sunset, then from sunset to two hours later", in Amr, IV, p.94, H.A, p.18.
- Letter to Fadl Allah Mu'awin al-Tujjar Naraqi, in Amr, IV, p.95, H.A.,
   p.18; letter to Mir 'Ali Asghar Usku'i, in H.A., p.19; letter to Haji
   Akhund Tafti, in Amr, IV, p.95.
- 17. Trans. Shoghi Effendi (London 1957).
- See Bahā' Allāh, Ṣalāt wa ṣiyām (Tehran 124 B.E./1967-8), p.1; idem, Risāla-yi taṣbīḥ wa tahlīl, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāvarī (Tehran 129 B.E./1972-3), p.11.
- 19. "Lawh-i salāt", in Adī'a, p.69.
- 20. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.96; H.A., p.22.
- 21. Shoghi Effendi, letter to 'Abd al-Hamid Ishraq Khavari, 9 November 1933, in H.A., p.24 and Ishraq Khavarī (ed.), Mā'ida-yi āsmānī, 10 vols. (Tehran 128 B.E./1971-2-129 B.E./1972-3), III, p.4. The correct version, which contains an additional phrase, has been published in H.A., p.24, Salāt wa siyām, p.14, Tasbīh, pp.21-2.
- 22. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.81, H.A., p.16.
- 23. Agdas, v.49 (H., p.111; E., p.29); H.A., p.14.
- 24. Tasbīh, p.11; trans. Shoghi Effendi, Prayers and Meditations, p.241.
- 25. Agdas, v.28 (H., p.110; E., p.26); Amr, IV, p.80, H.A., p.17.
- 26. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.80, H.A., p.17.
- 27. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mirza 'Ali Asghar Usku'i, in Amr, IV, p.82; H.A., p.16.
- 28. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.81, H.A., pp.15-16.
- 29. Ibid, in Amr, IV, p.82, H.A., p.16.
- 30. Ibid, in Amr, IV, p.80, H.A., p.15.
- 31. Aqdas, v.17 (H., p.109; E., p.25); Amr, IV, p.96, H.A., p.19-20. In the Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb, Baha' Allah states that the words "let him stand up and turn unto God" in the long salat refer to the qibla (Amr, IV, p.97; H.A., p.22).
- 32. *Ibid*, v.18 (H., p.109; E., p.25); *Amr*, IV, pp.96–7, *H.A.*, p.20.
- 33. Letter in H.A., p.20.
- 34. Both in *Amr*, IV, p.97.
- 35. Letter in *ibid*, p.98; also published Ishrāq Khāvarī, *Mā'ida*, II, p.82.
- 36. Letter in Amr, IV, pp.97-8: "O Habīb. The spot unto which men should turn their faces and the place round which circumambulate the angels on high is the resplendent tomb. Let no one after this provide any metaphorical interpretation."
- 37. Agdas, v.27 (H., p.110; E., p.26); Amr, IV, p.102, H.A., pp.26-7.
- 38. *Ibid*, v.24 (H., p.100; E., p.25); *H.A.*, p.27.
- 39. *Ibid*, v.26 (H., p.100; E., p.26); *Amr*, IV, p.99.
- 40. Amr, IV, p.99.
- 41. Aqdas, v.33 (H., p.110; E., pp.26-7); Amr, IV, p.100.
- 42. Ibid, vv.34-5 (H., p.110; E., p.27); Amr, IV, p.100, H.A., pp.27-8.

- 43. See Amr, IV, p.101, H.A., pp.28-9.
- 44. Amr, IV, pp.101, 102, H.A., p.29.
- 45. Amr, IV, pp.101-2, H.A., pp.29-30.
- 46. Letter to Ustavar Rabbani, in H.A., p.23.
- 47. Shoghi Effendi, letter to Ni'mat Allah 'Ala'i, 11 October 1935, in H.A., p.23.
- 48. Baha' Allah, quoted in Amr, IV, p.25.
- 49. IV, p.73.
- 50. See Amr, IV, pp.74-9; abbreviated form published in Ishrāq Khāvarī, Mā'ida, VII, pp.131-5 (which provides corrections for some faulty transcriptions in Amr).
- 51. Aqdas, v.48 (H., p.111; E., p.29); Amr, IV, p.79, H.A., p.55.
- 52. Amr, IV, p.81, H.A., pp.55-6.
- 53. Ibid, in Amr, IV, p.80.
- 54. Aqdas, v.358 (H., p.126; E., p.63); Amr, IV, pp.23-4, H.A., p.150.
- 55. In Ishrāqāt, p.187 (cf. p.211).
- 56. In Amr, IV, p.24; H.A., p.152. 'Abd al-Baha' particularly recommended for this purpose the following texts: Lawḥ-i ṭarāzāt, Kalimāt-i maknūna, Lawḥ-i tajallīyāt, Lawḥ-i ishrāqāt, Lawḥ-i bishārāt and Al-kitāb al-aqdas (letters in H.A., p.151). In a letter to Qabil Abada'i, he advises the reading of the Kalimāt-i maknūna (Hidden Words) day and night (Ishrāq Khāvarī, Mā'ida, V, p.199).
- 57. Letter, in *Amr*, IV, p.28.
- 58. In Ishrāq Khāvarī, Mā'ida, VIII, p.100.
- 59. Amr, IV, p.60; Adī'a, pp.210–11.
- See 'Abd al-Bahā', Tablets of the Divine Plan (Wilmette 1959), pp.16, 33, 38, 43, 48, 53; Munājāthā-yi Ḥaḍrat-i 'Abd al-Bahā (Bombay 1946), pp.63, 64, 65–66.
- 61. For general examples, see Amr, IV, pp.58-62.
- 62. See Bahā'ī Prayers (Wilmette 1973), p.129.
- 63. Bahā'ī Prayers for Special Occasions, new ed. published with Bahā'ī Prayers: a selection, new ed. (London 1967), p.47. The original text is published in Taṣbīḥ, pp.215–18; printed separately as Lawḥ-i Aḥmad (n.p. [Langenhain, Germany] n.d. [198–]).
- 64. Adī'a, p.198; trans. Prayers for Special Occasions, pp.49-50.
- In Muntakhabāt-i āyāt az āthār-i Ḥaḍrat-i Nuqṭa-yi Ūlā (Tehran 134 B.E./ 1977-8), p.156; trans. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.119.
- 66. See Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.119.
- 67. See Taṣbīḥ, pp.225-6, Adī'a, pp.85-7; trans. Shoghi Effendi, Prayers and Meditations, pp.200-1.
- 68. See *Taṣbīḥ*, pp.226-9, *Adī'a*, pp.87-91; trans. Shoghi Effendi, *Prayers and Meditations*, pp.177-8, 190, 191.
- 69. See Taṣbīḥ, p.235, Adīʿa, p.92; trans. Shoghi Effendi, Prayers and Meditations, p.203.
- 70. See Taṣbīḥ, p.236, Adīʿa, pp.209-10; part trans. in Shoghi Effendi, Prayers and Meditations, p.196.
- 71. Original text in *Taṣbīḥ*, pp.219–24. A fresh, anonymous translation has been issued: *Qad iḥtaraqa 'l-mukhliṣūn (The Fire Tablet)* (London 1980).

- 72. Aqdas, vv.30-31 (H., p.110; E., p.26); Amr, IV, p.73. Risāla-yi su'āl wa jawāb, in ibid.
- 73. See *Amr*, III, pp.74–7.
- 74. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.176.
- 75. Idem, in Principles of Bahā'ī Administration, 3rd ed. (London 1973), p.16.
- 76. Māzandarānī, Asrār, II, p.89-90.
- 77. Ibid, V, p.276.
- 78. Amr, IV, pp.68-9.
- 79. Adī'a, p.192; Taṣbīḥ, p.212. The full text of this prayer has been published separately with an English translation: Lawḥ-i mubārak-i Anta 'l-Kāfī Anta'l-Shāfī, ma'rūf bi-Munājāt-i shafā'; The Healing Prayer (Langenhain 137 B.E./1980-81). The translation has also been published separately as The Long Healing Prayer (London 1980).
- 80. The original design of this symbol was produced by the Baha'i scribe and calligrapher Mirza Husayn Isfahani Mishkin Qalam. Some older versions carry a redundant *madda* in the top left corner.
- 81. Māzandarānī, Asrār, IV, p.343.
- 82. See ibid, pp.342-3, and II, pp.82-91.
- 83. Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, compiled by Gertrude Garrida (New Delhi 1973), p.52.
- 84. *Ibid*, p.51.
- 85. Ibid, p.79.
- 86. Letter in *H.A.*, p.37.
- 87. Aqdas, v.43 (H., p.110; E., p.27); Amr, IV, p.104, H.A., p.34.
- 88. Letter to Zayn al-Muqarribin, in Amr, IV, p.105.
- 89. Letter in H.A., p.36.
- 90. Agdas, v.47 (H., p.111; E., pp.28-9); Amr, IV, p.105, H.A., p.45.
- 91. Letter to Haji Mirza Aga Jahrumi, in H.A., p.45.
- 92. Agdas, v.25 (H., p.110; E., p.26); Amr, IV, pp.82-3, H.A., p.11.
- 93. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mirza Husayn Miyan-daw-abi (brother of 'Ali Muhammad Varqa), in *H.A.*, pp.12-13.
- 94. Aqdas, vv.33, 44 (H., pp.110, 111; E., pp.26, 28); Amr, IV, pp.105, 106, H.A., p.46.
- 95. Su'āl wa jawāb, in H.A., p.47; Baha' Allah, letter in ibid, p.48.
- 96. Letter to National Assembly of the Baha'is of Iran, in H.A., p.48.
- 97. Su'āl wa jawāb, in H.A., p.46, Amr, IV, p.107.
- 98. Ibid, in H.A., pp.48, 49, Amr, IV, p.108.
- 99. *Ibid*, in *H.A.*, pp.48–9, *Amr*, IV, p.108.
- 100. Ibid, in H.A., p.49, Amr, IV, p.108.
- 101. Ibid, in H.A., p.44, Amr, IV, p.108.
- 102. Texts of a number of these may be found in Taṣbīḥ, pp.22-76. Translations of numbers 1, 2, 3 (i.e. 4), 4 (i.e. 5), and 5 (i.e. 6) may be found in Prayers and Meditations, pp.225-30, 59-65, 298-300, 109-112, and 220-25. Another popular devotion may be found in Adī'a, pp.110-14, translated in Bahā' Allāh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh, trans. Shoghi Effendi (n.p. 1949), pp.298-300. See also Salāt wa siyām, pp.17-83.
- 103. Text in Taṣbīh, pp.57-64, Adī'a, pp.121-31; trans. Prayers and Meditations, pp.220-25.

- 104. Aqdas, v.68 (H., p.112; E., p.32); Amr, IV, p.109, H.A., p.67.
- 105. Ibid, v.307 (H., p.124; E., p.59); Amr, IV, p.136.
- 106. Su'āl-wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.135, H.A., p.68.
- 107. Ibid, in Amr, IV, p.135, H.A., pp.67-8.
- 108. Bahā' Allāh, "Lawḥ-i sirāj", in Ishrāq Khāvarī, Mā'ida, VII, p.92.
- 109. Ishrāq Khāvarī, Ganj-i shāyigān (Tehran 124 B.E./1967-8), pp.82-3; Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.171. The full text is given in [Bahā' Allāh], Āthār-i qalam-i a'lā, IV (Tehran 133 B.E./1976-7), pp.75-100. See also part text in Amr, IV, pp.120-34.
- 110. Ishraq Khavari, Ganj, p.83; Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp.176-7.
- 111. Su'āl wa jawāb, in H.A., p.68.
- 112. Sayyid Muhammad, known as Aqa Mirza Aqa and Nur al-Din, was a son of Zuhra Bigum, a sister of the Bab's wife, and Hajj Mirza Sayyid Muhammad, an uncle of Aqa Sayyid Muhammad Rida, the Bab's father. He lived for some years in Port Said, but in 1319/1901 'Abd al-Baha' instructed him to return to Iran to look after the house of the Bab. He actually returned in 1321/1903. For details on him, see Muḥammad 'Alī Faydī, Khānidān-i Afnān (Tehran 127 B.E./1970-71), pp.197-216.
- 113. Letter quoted ibid, p.208.
- 114. For full details, see *ibid*, pp.170-71, 204-12.
- 115. See letters in *Amr*, IV, pp.136-7.
- 116. Ishrāq Khāvarī, *Ganj*, pp.83-4. The full text is printed in Bahā' Allāh, *Āthār*, IV, pp.192-215. For a variant text of the section from p.204, see *Amr*, IV, pp.109-17.
- 117. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.177.
- 118. 'Abd al-Baha', in Amr, IV, pp.119-20, 134; H.A., pp.70-71.
- 119. Gleanings, pp.111-15; the complete text is in Adī'a, pp.97-104 (originally printed in al-Kitāb al-mubīn (n.p. n.d.), pp.225-8).
- 120. Faydī, Ḥayāt-i Ḥaḍrat-i 'Abd al-Bahā' (Tehran 128 B.E./1971-2), pp.331-4.
- 121. See Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp.356-60.
- 122. Letter in Synopsis, p.61.
- 123. On this term, see MacEoin, 'Nakḍ al-mīthāk', Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., VII, p.921.
- 124. For details of this event and its significance in Baha'i belief, see Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp.273-8.
- 125. Aqdas, v.307 (H., p.124; E., p.59); Amr, IV, p.136, H.A., p.246.
- 126. Letter quoted in Amr, IV, p.142.
- 127. For details of most of these developments, see Shoghi Effendi, Bahā'ī Holy Places at the World Centre, ed. The Universal House of Justice (Haifa 1968); Ugo Giachery, Shoghi Effendi Recollections (Oxford 1973).
- 128. Shoghi Effendi, Citadel of Faith: Messages to America/1947-1957 (Wilmette 1965), pp.95-6.
- 129. On these conditions, see Amr, IV, pp.137-41.
- 130. The ziyaratnama for the Bab and Baha' Allah contains excerpts from three tablets of Baha' Allah: (1) A tablet to Aqa Baba; (2) A tablet to an unnamed individual, printed in al-Kitāb al-mubīn, p.327; and (3) A tablet for the wife of the Bab, Khadija Bigum. The text is given in Adī'a, pp.92-7. A

translation appears in Bahā' Allāh, Prayers and Meditations, pp.238-40. The ziyaratnama for 'Abd al-Baha' appears in his Munājāt, pp.72-3, translated in Bahā'ī Prayers, pp.137-8. See also Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.222.

- 131. 'Abd al-Baha', statement in Ishraq Khavari, Ma'ida, II, p.41.
- 132. Letter in ibid, p.88.
- 133. Aqdas, vv.178-9 (H., p.118; E., pp.44-5); Amr, III, p.302.
- 134. Ibid, v.112 (H., p.114; E., p.37); H.A., p.200.
- 135. Ibid, v.173 (H., p.117; E., p.44).
- 136. *Ibid*, v.177 (H., p.118; E., p.44).
- 137. IV, pp.73-4.
- 138. Shoghi Effendi, letter in H.A., p.183.
- 139. Letter in Amr, III, p.62.
- 140. Letter in ibid, p.61.
- 141. Letter in *ibid*, p.62.
- 142. Letter in ibid.
- 143. Text printed in Tasbīh, pp.237-9; trans. Bahā'ī Prayers, pp.24-6.
- 144. Aqdas, v.301 (H., pp.123-4; E., p.58); Amr, IV, p.200, H.A., p.135.
- 145. Aqdas, v.292 (H., p.123; E., p.57); Amr, IV, p.199.
- 146. Aqdas, vv.293-4 (H., p.123; E., pp.57-8).
- 147. Aqdas, v.299 (H., p.123; E., p.58); Amr, IV, pp.199-200, H.A., p.136.
- 148. Bahā' Allāh, Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.200, H.A., p.136.
- 149. Aqdas, v.292 (H., p.123; E., p.57); Amr, IV, p.199, H.A., p.141.
- 150. Ibid, v.302 (H., p.124; E., p.58); Amr, IV, p.201, H.A., pp.141-2.
- 151. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.202, H.A., p.142.
- 152. 'Abd al-Bahā', "Lawh-i ism Allāh", in Amr, IV, p.203, H.A., p.145.
- 153. Shoghi Effendi, letter to Aqa Jamshid Rustam Jamshidi, in H.A., p.145.
- 154. See instructions on this from 'Abd al-Baha' and Shoghi Effendi in Amr, IV, pp.202-3, H.A., pp.142-5.
- 155. Aqdas, v.23 (H., p.110; E., p.25); Amr, IV, p.103, H.A., p.137.
- 156. "Lawḥ-i ṣalāt-i mayyit", in Amr, IV, pp.102-3, H.A., pp.138, 139, Taṣbiḥ, pp.239-41 (and note correction sheet to p.241). A translation is available in Prayers and Meditations, pp.189-9.
- 157. Agdas, v.23 (H., p.110; E., p.25); Amr, IV, pp.103-4, H.A., p.137.
- 158. "Lawḥ-i ism Allāh", in Amr, IV, p.104, H.A., p.140.
- 159. Letter to Jamshid Rustam Jamshidi, in H.A., p.140.
- 160. Bahā' Allāh, Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.104, H.A., p.140.
- 161. 'Abd al-Baha', letter in Amr, IV, pp.204-5; Shoghi Effendi, in Principles of Bahā'ī Adminstration, p.15.
- 162. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Haji Mirza Muhammad Taqi Tabasi, in *Amr*, IV, p.205.
- 163. Shoghi Effendi, letter in Amr, IV, p.204.
- 164. Aqdas, v.107 (H., p.114; E., p.36); H.A., p.145.
- 165. Shoghi Effendi, letter to 'Ali Akbar Furutan, in H.A., p.147.
- 166. On the holding of such gatherings, see 'Abd al-Baha', letter to members of Mahfil-i Khidmat, Tehran, in H.A., p.146.
- 167. Text in  $Ad\bar{i}'a$ , pp.217–85,  $Taṣb\bar{i}h$ , pp.242–70. See also 'Abd al-Baha' in Ishrāq Khāvarī,  $M\bar{a}'ida$ , II, p.12.

- 168. In Majmū'a-yi alwāh, p.123.
- 169. Letter in H.A., p.348; Ishraq Khavari, Ma'ida, II, p.88.
- 170. Letter to Baha'is of Qum, in Ishraq Khavari, Ma'ida, V, p.227.
- 171. Shoghi Effendi, Directives, p.79.
- 172. Agdas, v.143 (H., p.116; E., p.40); Amr, IV, p.160, H.A., p.159.
- 173. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.163, H.A., p.162.
- 174. Ibid, in Amr, IV, p.164.
- 175. Aqdas, v.147 (H., p.116; E., p.41); Amr, IV, p.167, H.A., p.163; "Lawḥ-i Zayn al-Muqarribīn", in H.A., p.164; Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, pp.167-8, H.A., p.164.
- 176. Aqdas, v.143 (H., p.116; E., p.40); Amr, IV, p.173, H.A., p.176.
- 177. Letter in Amr, IV, p.174.
- 178. Letter in ibid, p.175.
- 179. Letter to Mrs Rosenberg, in H.A., p.176. It is worth remarking that this same argument has been used by Muslim apologists with reference to the injunction of Qur'an 4:3. On the latter, Rodinson, Mohammad (London 1973), p.232, sensibly remarks that "what we see here is a typical childish example of apologetic reasoning which, as usual, runs completely counter to the historical spirit".
- 180. Letter to 'Ali Akbar Furutan, in *H.A.*, p.177. For fuller details on this subject, see *ibid*, pp.176-7, *Amr*, IV, pp.173-9.
- 181. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.169, H.A., p.165.
- 182. 'Abd al-Baha', letter in H.A., p.166; letter to Mirza 'Abd al-Majid Furughi, in Amr, IV, p.171, H.A., p.166; letter to Fa'iza Khanum, in Amr, IV, pp.169-70, H.A., pp.166-7.
- 183. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Fa'iza Khanum, in Amr, IV, p.170, H.A., p.167.
- 184. "Lawh-i nikāh", in Amr, IV, p.157, H.A., p.172; see also almost identical passage from Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.158.
- 185. See H.A., p.173: the masculine form is given as  $r\bar{a}d\bar{u}n$  and the feminine as  $r\bar{a}diy\bar{a}t$ ; cf. above, chapter 2, note 208, and Amr, IV, pp.158–9.
- 186. Baha' Allah, letter to 'Ali Qabl Akbar, in H.A., p.172. For the text of the khutba, see Amr, IV, pp.157-8, Taṣbīḥ, pp.205-6. For a translation, see Bahā'ī Prayers, pp.186-7.
- 187. The English text only of this talk is extant. It was first printed in *Star of the West* 11/i (21 March 1920), pp.20-21.
- 188. Aqdas, vv.260-62 (H., p.122; E., p.54); Amr, IV, pp.5-6, H.A., p.404.
- 189. Ibid, vv.258, 263 (H., p.122; E., p.54); Amr, IV, pp.6-7, H.A., p.359.
- 190. Ibid, v.258 (H., p.122; E., p.54); Amr, IV, p.7, H.A., p.369.
- 191. Ibid, v.259 (H., p.122; E., p.54); Amr, IV, p.10, H.A., p.387.
- 192. Letter to Mirza Muhammad Husayn ibn Mirza Ahmad 'Ali Nayrizi, in Amr, IV, p.11, H.A., p.356.
- 193. *Ibid*, in *Amr*, IV, p.11 only.
- 194. 'Abd al-Baha' and Shoghi Effendi, letters in Amr, IV, pp.11-15, H.A., pp.356-9.
- 195. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.6.
- 196. Baha' Allah, letter to Mir Muhammad Husayn Beg Bushru'i, in H.A., p.358; Su'āl wa jawāb, in ibid, p.359; letter in Amr, IV, pp.8-9.
- 197. Shoghi Effendi, in *Principles of Bahā'ī Administration*, p.56.

- 198. B.F., 2:7 (p.30).
- 199. Shoghi Effendi, in Principles of Bahā'ī Administration, p.56.
- 200. Letter in *Makātīb-i 'Abd al-Bahā'*, II (Cairo 1330/1912), pp.137–8, in *Amr*, IV, pp.7–8.
- Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, p.10, H.A., p.387; idem, Lawḥ-i Zayn al-Muqarribīn, in H.A., p.387.
- 202. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mirza Qabil Abada'i, in Amr, IV, p.15.
- 203. Shoghi Effendi, in Principles, p.56.
- 204. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mirza Qabil Abada'i, in *Amr*, IV, p.15. The date 28 Sha'ban 1266/9 July 1850 for the Bab's martyrdom is given by Baha'i histories. Several other sources give the previous day, see Momen, *Bābī* and *Bahā'ī* Religions, p.78, fn.
- 205. Shoghi Effendi, in Principles, p.56.
- 206. Hasan Balyuzi, 'Abd 'ul-Bahā' (London 1971), p.523; 'Abd al-Baha', letter in Amr, IV, pp.16-17; Shoghi Effendi, letter in ibid, p.18.
- 207. Shoghi Effendi, in Principles, p.56.
- 208. Idem, letter in Amr, IV, p.18.
- 209. Baha' Allah, letter in Amr, IV, p.19.
- 210. Shoghi Effendi, letter to Sarkhab Bas Aftabi, in H.A., p.425.
- 211. Text in Ishrāq Khāvarī (ed.), *Ayyām-i tis'a*, 5th ed. (Tehran 129 B.E./ 1972-3), pp.12-15.
- 212. Text in ibid, pp.16-20.
- 213. Texts in *ibid*, pp.92-9, 100-6, 180-83.
- 214. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Ustad 'Ali Fakhkhar, in Amr, IV, p.20, H.A., p.427.
- 215. Aqdas, v.134 (H., p.115; E., p.39); Amr, III, p.138, H.A., p.156.
- 216. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, III, p.138, H.A., pp.156-7.
- 217. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Abu 'l-Qasim Gulistana, in Amr, III, pp.138-9, H.A., p.157.
- 218. 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Khudadad and Baha'is of Khurasan, in H.A., pp.157-8.
- 219. See, for example, 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mason Remey, in Amr, IV, p.139.
- 220. National Assembly of the Baha'is of the British Isles, statement in *Principles of Bahā'ī Administration*, p.52.
- 221. Universal House of Justice, letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the British Isles, in *ibid*, p.56.
- 222. Aqdas, v.67 (H., p.112; E., p.32); Amr, IV, p.147; H.A., p.230. On this subject, see MacEoin, Mashrik al-adhkār, Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., VI, p.720.
- 223. *Ibid*, v.267 (H., p.122; E., p.55); *Amr*, IV, p.147; *H.A.*, pp.230–31.
- 224. Ibid, v.266 (H., p.122; E., p.55); Amr, IV, p.26, H.A., p.188.
- 225. Su'āl wa jawāb, in Amr, IV, pp.26-7, H.A., p.188.
- 226. Letter to Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bushruya, in H.A., p.231.
- 227. Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration*, 5th revised ed. (New York 1945, Wilmette 1960), p.185.
- 228. Aqdas, v.67 (H., p.112; E., p.32); Amr, IV, p.147, H.A., p.230.
- 229. *Ibid*, v.367 (H., p.126; E., pp.64–5); *H.A.*, p.233.

- 230. 'Abd al-Baha', letter in *Amr*, IV, pp.148-9. A brief account of 19th-century Iranian practice is given in R. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram, *Music, Devotions, and Mashriqu'l-Adhkār*, Studies in Babi and Baha'i History 4 (Los Angeles 1988), pp.9-10.
- On the continuity between Islamic and Baha'i devotional forms, see *ibid*, pp.4–5.
- 232. Ibid deals with this topic at length.
- 233. E. G. Browne (trans. and ed.), ['Abd al-Baha'] A Traveller's Narrative written to illustrate the Episode of the Bāb (Cambridge 1891), pp.xxxi, xxxiv.
- 234. Aqdas, vv.381-2 (H., p.127; E., p.66); Amr, III, p.69, H.A., p.191.
- 235. "Lawh-i bishārāt", in Majmū'a-yi alwāh, p.119.
- 236. Letter in Alwāḥ-i mubāraka-yi Ḥadrat-i Bahā' Allāh . . . shāmil-i iqtidārāt wa chand lawḥ dīgar (n.p. n.d.), pp.28-9; also in Amr, III, p.70, H.A., p.191.
- 237. Aqdas, vv.108-9 (H., p.114; E., p.36) H.A., p.313.
- 238. Browne, Traveller's Narrative, pp.xxxi, xxxiv; idem, the Bābīs of Persia. I. Sketch of their History, and Personal Experiences amongst them, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 21 (1889), pp.499-500.
- 239. Letter in Amr, III, p.341.
- 240. Letter in ibid, p.342.
- 241. For some observations on the situation in a part of India, see William Garlington, The Baha'i Faith in Malwa, in G. A. Oddie (ed.), *Religion in South Asia* (New Delhi 1977), pp. 101–17. "... in the 'model villages' visited by the writer, while most declarants adhered to Baha'i social norms within the above mentioned institutions, they also functioned within the Hindu ritual idiom they took part in caste based worship, festivals and rites of passage, adhered to traditional patterns of dining, and married exclusively within their own castes" (p.110). See also p.113.
- 242. There is some suggestion of a recent trend towards greater ritualism in Armstrong-Ingram, *Music*.

# Appendices



I INSTRUCTIONS BY THE BAB FOR THE SPIRITUAL SEEKER

If you should yearn to travel unto God in the land of the Red Sanddune, in the company of the leaders of men  $(al-nuqab\bar{a}')$ , then you must journey on this most mighty Path, the Light of God in the heavens and on earth, unto whom all that are in the heavens and on earth have bowed down, and unto whom they show obedience . . .

After you have completed the noon prayer, recite the word of divine unity [i.e. there is no god but God] 14 times. Pay close attention to your condition wherever you may be, and do not busy yourself with anything whatsoever that may veil you from the mention of God (dhikr Allah). Know that the greatest of devotions is, in the sight of your Lord, no more than a pause in recitation when considered in the light of actual union with Him. These are God's commands unto them that travel within this Land. He who abandons God's commands shall never be able to find a way unto God . . .

When the white stripe [of dawn] shines forth above the black horizon, be assured that the light of your existence has risen from the Morning of Eternity (Subh al-azal). Wherefore, pray the morning prayer upon the temple of your love and during the first prostration recite the Sūra al-Fajr and, during the second, al-Kawthar. Be careful that, in the course of your prayer, you do not go out from the face of your Lord: whoever goes out from the prayer shall take the form of a donkey. As you go up (? fīmi'rājika), do not draw attention to anything but God; pointing out anything but God after you have recited the takbir would bring a charge of deceit against your soul. Fear God and do not include anyone else in your worship of your Lord.

When you have finished [the prayer], sit in the temple of prophethood [a posture], facing the spot where the sun is rising, for the sustenance of men's hearts is divided out at that hour; he who remains asleep shall be deprived of his share. After the dawn prayer, read from the Qu'ran in the accent of its revelation, in a spirit of sadness and tranquillity . . .

Pay heed to the prayers that follow [the *salat*], that are concealed by the truth, and recite the morning prayer ( $Kalimat\ al$ - $sab\bar{a}h$ ) that has been revealed from the tongue of 'Ali<sup>2</sup> . . .

When the sun has risen, rise up from your seat and go with a loving face to your family and to those of your friends who have come to meet with you, and speak with them with kindness and beauty . . .

From the onset of legal maturity, perform a fast according to the decree of your Lord every month for a period of ten days until you reach the age of 30. And when you have attained that age, fast for half the month until you reach the age of 40, after which you should fast for three days every month: the fifth day from 20 and the fourth from the middle.<sup>3</sup> [Continue thus] until you reach the age of 50: at this point, you

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ought not to fast, with the exception of what God has commanded for you in the sacred month, the month of Ramadan, as has been revealed in the Qur'an . . .

As regards your drink, watch carefully and take, by the power and strength of God [upon?] the hands of your soul, at the start of each day a little mastic (kundur: frankincense, gum mastic of juniper gum) and some cloves (qaranful), with an equal amount of pure sugar, and drink a cup of water in which there has been boiled a piece of white paper of Chinese origin.'To drink this is according to the ways of nature: it attracts moisture, closes the paths of allusion (subūl al-ishāra), and enlivens the one who drinks it through meeting with the people of truth; in it there are innumerable benefits for whosoever has openly borne witness to the path of explanation (sabīl al-bayān). If you desire more than a cup, drink only one, for God loves singularity in all conditions. If you like, you may drink some milk along with it, provided it is not cold. Thus has God commanded you concerning what you should drink in the hour following the rising of the sun. Do not drink more than what I have commanded you, nor take anything after it, unless it be light sweets, for the latter are permissible to you under all circumstances. Busy yourself with the condition which has been written down by God.

When sunset approaches, free yourself for your Lord's affair and sleep for an hour before the sun sets. When you rise from sleep... [text unclear], and then purify your body with water and perfume it as far as you are able, then await the call of your Lord.

When the sun has set, magnify God your Lord seven times and say the following words: "Praise be to God and glory be to God, He Who has never taken a companion nor a son, He Who has no partner in His dominion, for Whom there is no associate in ignominy." Magnify Him saying Allahu akbar, and after that recite 12 times the Sūra al-Tawhid. Then perform works of supererogation. For God has promised to him that does such deeds the most great word [kalimat al-akbar — sic]. Should the servant behold the bounty of his Lord, he shall be in the station of supererogation (maqām al-nawāfil): he shall hear with the ear of his Lord, he shall speak with his Lord's tongue, he shall see with his Lord's eyes, and when he gives it shall be as if the hand of his Lord were giving (hukmu yadihi hukmu 'atā'ihi). Whenever he is silent, He shall answer him in secret at once. Fear not, for you are among them that have been brought near to God.

When you have completed these supererogatory works, pray the noon prayer upon the dawning-place of revelation on the horizon of Sinai. Halt there, for it is upon that spot that your Lord is worshipped. Halt and give ear to His voice. Praised be he, sanctified be he, Lord of the angels and the spirit. Bear witness to His beauty in the signs of your ascent (fī āyāt mi'rājika) and do not deprive yourself of your share in the

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pleasure of mentioning Him and coming near to Him. A [reward?] has been written down for them that bow down at the station of nearness to your Lord.

When you have completed the prayer, render praise to God your Lord, with the Prayer of the Great One (Taṣbīḥ al-Kubra), Fatima the Radiant,<sup>4</sup> and then recite the Prayer of Praise (Du'ā al-taḥmīd), which has been sent down in the Ṣaḥīfa.<sup>5</sup> Then stand at once and perform for the sake of God the supererogatory acts of the evening, together with the evening prayer. And observe the laws of the shari'a in all that you do, lest so much as an atom of God's bounties escape you.

And when you have completed your Lord's command, bow yourself down before God for a long time, then return home. Then eat of God's bounties after the evening prayer: seven portions, if you are able, but otherwise 14 portions — but eat no more than that in the paths of your journey unto God, unless you know that it will not harm your spirit. Wherefore, watch over yourself in what you eat, and approach not the tree of what is forbidden (shajarat al-harām) or whatever resembles it. Then sit in your house upon your couch, on the right side, and perform in the path of eating as we have set out. And say "In the Name of God" when you begin and sit in the temple of unity, leaning on your left hand. Do not eat alone, and watch over the person seated beside you. Eat according to the form of your love before the face of God, as though you were seated as a messenger before God Himself. Begin with salted food and finish with sweet, praising God inwardly and outwardly in every [possible] manner. And rest while you are eating, as though you were in paradise and the food were God's bounty. Thus has God explained His verses in His Book, that men may be guided to the meeting with Him.

When you have finished, pick your teeth and then brush them with a small twig. Then busy yourself with that which God has written down for you. Do not neglect any of God's decrees under any circumstances. Whatever befalls you in any situation is a decree from your Lord that is binding on you. Associate no one with God in your worship of Him, and if you have an occupation, fear God in all you do (fī ṣirāṭika). It is obligatory for all those engaged in business to study religious jurisprudence; it is forbidden for those who believe in God to engage in trade unless they have a knowledge of the law.

Know that the greatest perfection in the eyes of your Lord is knowledge of religious law (al-faqāha fi 'l-dīn) and patience in vicissitudes and the calculation of one's livelihood. Thus has God explained His signs ( $\bar{a}y\bar{a}tahu$ ) that men may be sure of the truth of God's verses ( $\bar{a}y\bar{a}t$  Allāh). If you have busied yourself with that which God has decreed for you, rest from your labours ten minutes before sunset in order to free yourself for your meeting with your Lord. Perform the duties of the night and its acts of supererogation according to the decree

of the Family of God [i.e. the Imams]. And when you come down from your rising up (mi'rājika), drink sugared water with fruit juice, as much as you want. Then read from the book of the friends whatever you wish; in it there are gates of good deeds that will open only through what is sent down to you by God's decree. But do not read for more than an hour.

And when three hours of the night have passed, go for your meal and eat 14 portions in tranquillity and dignity, lest you fail to take pleasure in its benefits. When you have finished eating, lie down for an hour after performing your ablutions (? sā'atan bi 'l-wudū'); make use of perfume and rest in the manner God has prescribed for you. Do not rest alone, for God does not desire such a state for you. If you should lie alone, in spite of being able to do otherwise, you will have disbelieved in your Lord and your sin will be unequalled. Observe God's decree concerning women, for they are leaves of the Tree of Sinai. Do not harm them for so much as the blink of an eye, for, according to the decree of the Book, they are not, in the eyes of God, as men think them to be. God is sufficient for you, inwardly and outwardly, as a witness.

Rest for one hour on your couch, for this is an established right for everyone. Then rest from the beginning of the fifth hour until the end of the eighth. And when a third of the night remains, rise up through God's strength and might and clean yourself for the sake of God, your Lord, in spirit and fragrance, and take advantage of the days of meeting with Him. Then busy yourself with His decree concerning the night prayer: it may be that your Lord shall send upon you a praiseworthy rank.

Divide the night into three: one-third for [reading] verses,<sup>6</sup> and one-third for rest before God, gazing towards the beauty of His effulgence, and one-third for taking account of your soul, according to what you have done from dawn until this moment. Take your soul to account, for God has made you a judge and reckoner over yourself on His behalf. This is God's decree unto the people of the Path (li 'l-sālikīn) in all circumstances. Whoever transgresses the limits God has laid down shall not find God faithful to him on the Day of Judgement. This is the Path of God in the heavens and the earth. Cling unto His cord, and know that God is aware of the secrets of the heavens and the earth. God is a sufficient witness and help unto His servants.

The Remembrance [dhikr, i.e. the Bab] of the Name of your Lord has nat tra

you. set out the decrees for them that travel on the Path in this book which

(Ṣaḥīfa bayna 'l-ḥaramayn, CUL Or. Ms. 943, pp.66–84, with omissions)

#### NOTES

- زار الار 1. This is ambiguous. The term Dhikr Allah was one of the early titles of the
- 2. A well-known morning prayer (Du'ā al-ṣabāḥ) on which the Bab later wrote a commentary.
- 3. The text is garbled at this point.
- 4. Possibly a reference to a prayer of the Bab's, known as the Tasbīḥ Fāṭima.
- 5. Probably the first prayer in the Shi'i collection known as al-Sahīfa al-Sajjādiyya, attributed to the fourth Imam.
- 6. Sentence to here appears corrupt.

II TABLES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE 19 HAYAKIL
The following tables set out the names and figures of the 19 hayakil.

(Kitāb-i panj sha'n, pp.432-4)

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III TABLET OF THE BAB ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CIRCULAR TALISMAN (DA'IRA) OF SEVEN CIRCLES

When thou art in need or desirest that a certain one may be raised to life among the people of truth [i.e. be converted to Babism], inscribe upon a sheet of white paper seven circles, concentric and equidistant, with black, gold or yellow ink. Divide this into 19 sections, none less in size than any other, be it even by as much as a hairsbreadth. This should be written with the same ink. After this, write in the most beautiful script, in the naskh style, within the outer circle, 19 exalted words, beginning at "God, there is no God but Him, the Living, the Self-Subsisting" to "and He is the Exalted, the Great" [i.e. the "Throne verse" — Qur'an 2:255]. Then, in the second circle, write the luminous names that form the words of the bism Allah [i.e. the phrase bism Allah al-rahmān al-rahīm], these being birr [i.e. a word beginning with "b"], salām, malik, Allāh, latīf, latīf, hibat Allāh, then Allāh then latīf, then rahmān, then hāmid, then mahmūd, then nūr, then Allāh, then latīf, then rahīm, then halīm, then yad Allāh, then maqsūd. Then add to the beginning of these names the number of their mystery, which is what is in the third circle in the form of the Greatest Name 19 times [i.e. 19 reproductions of the symbol \* Fill \* [. Then, in the fourth circle, the letters of creation, which we shall mention, God willing, in their haykal. These are the following devices:

Then, in the fifth, the letters of the bism Allah, in their well-known shape [i.e. the 19 letters of bism Allah al-rahman al-rahim written separately]. Then, in the sixth, the letters of the six names, the number of which is 19; these are the names of God the Single (al-fard), the Living (al-hayy), the Self-Subsisting (al-qayyum), the Wise [al-hakīm] [this ought to read al-hakam], the Judge, as later in this work: otherwise, the number of letters would be 20], the Just (al-'adl), the Holy (al-quddus), written separately. Then, in the seventh circle, the letters of any verse of the Qur'an, the meanings of which are similar to what you have desired. I have chosen [these] for whosoever wishes to find a path to the Lord of the Throne. Thus, if you wish for the appearance of what God has bestowed upon you, write down "Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds" (Qur'an 1:2). Then, for release from any difficulty, "Thee do we worship and to Thee we turn for assistance"

(Qur'an 1:5). Then, to seek guidance, "Guide us on the right path" (Qur'an 1:6). Then, for glory: "He glorifies whom He wills and makes abased whom He wills" (Our'an 3:26). Then, for approaching whomever you may wish: "The faces humbled themselves before the Living, the Self-Subsistent" (Qur'an 20:111). Then, for deriving benefit from whomever you love, "Do good, then, as God has done good unto you" (Qur'an 28:77). Then, in time of trouble: "God shall make ease after hardship" (Qur'an 65:7). Then, for the destruction of the enemy, on the condition of the good-pleasure of God and His decree: "And death shall come to him from every place" (Qur'an 14:17). Then, for a severe calamity: "There befell them affliction and distress" (Qur'an 2:214). Then, for disunity among the people of oppression and enmity: "He said, this is the parting between me and you" (Qur'an 18:78). Then, for the elevation of station: "Exalted be God, the King, the True One" (Qur'an 20:114 [the present text adds the word mubin, which is not in the Our'an and is unnecessary for the required number of letters]). Then, to request mercy: "Verily, God is Forgiving, Merciful" (Qur'an 4:23, 106, 129; 33:24 [the present text adds at the beginning the letter wāw "and", which occurs in no Qur'anic version and is unnecessary for the required number of letters]). Then, to request wisdom: "Verily, God is Mighty, Wise" (Qur'an 4:56) [the present text adds wāw to the beginning, which is not in the Qur'an and is not required for the correct number of letters]). Then, for the removal of sadness: "The greatest terror shall not sadden them" (Qur'an 21:103). Then, for the provision of sustenance: "Happy with what God has given them of His bounty" (Qur'an 3:170 [this sentence contains 23 letters, some of which may be written together in a single wāhid]). Then, for victory: "Verily, We have opened to you a manifest victory" (Qur'an 48:1). Then, for victory over the enemy: "That God may assist you in a mighty victory" (Qur'an 48:3). Then, for the overcoming of those who are hostile: "Verily, Our host shall conquer them" (Qur'an 37:173). Then, to request knowledge and attainment to the essence [centre] of understanding: "And He shall teach you the book and the wisdom" (Qur'an 2:151). Then, for all the blessings of this world and the degrees of the next, great and small, hidden and manifest, and to request a son: "And your Lord shall give unto you and you shall be content" (Qur'an 93:5).

These are 19 verses [there are actually 20], according to the tradition of the bism Allah: "There are names before the face of God for whatever God has willed". It is incumbent on the believer to read all of these during his life, that God may cause him to attain to the summit of the faith and of the world, through His grace — verily, He is the Powerful, the Lofty, the Merciful, the Gracious. The conditions for using it are these: when you desire to use it, you should begin on the eleventh day of any month, make the circle an indication of your

preservation of it in your goodness (?), then read after every obligatory prayer (kull salāt al-mafrūda — sic.) the six names, by saying "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate: One, Living, Self-Subsistent, Judge, Just, Holy", then the verse you have written in the seventh circle as being related to your purpose — if you wish for the appearance of bounties, just as I have indicated to you: "Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds" 19 times, no more, no less. Then, when you have finished, say: "Lord, bless Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad [i.e. Fatima and the 12 Imams] and the shi'a of Muhammad, then hold open your two palms and face the mid-point of the heavens, that is, the heavens of grace, and say: "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. O God, I beseech Thee by the [letter] fa' of alfardāniyya (singleness) and the rā' of al-rubūbiyya (lordship) and the dāl of dawām al-daymūma (the duration of perpetuity) and the hā' of al-hayāt al-sarmadiyya (eternal life) and the yā of yanābī' al-hikma (the springs of wisdom) and the qāf of al-qudra (might) and the yā' of al-yaqīn (certitude) and the wāw of al-wujūd (existence) and the mīm of al-mulk (dominion) and the 'ayn of al-'ināya (bounty) and the dāl of al-dalāla (guidance) and the lām of al-lutf (graciousness) and the qāf of al-qayyūm (the Self-Subsisting) and the dāl of al-dayyān (the Judge) and the waw of al-wilaya (sovereignty; or al-walaya guardianship) and the sīn of al-sakīna (peace, immanence of God = Hebr. shekina — these initial letters are the letters forming the six names given above) to bless Muhammad and the Family of Muhammad and the shi'a of Muhammad, and to fulfil my need."

Then say: "I have adjured you, O holy and luminous spirits, servants of these mighty letters and verses and of these noble and honoured names to answer my request and confirm my oath and fulfil my need." Then make mention of your need and say: "By the truth of the light of the face of God, the Mighty, the Most Great, and His greatness and His might over you, since those who make descriptions cannot describe His essence, and by His right over you and by His sanctity and power with regard to you, may God bless you." And they shall say: "We have heard and obeyed your pardon, O Lord; in Thee is our end, sufficient for us. What an excellent guardian is He, what an excellent Lord, and what an excellent Succourer. No strength nor power is there save in God, the Exalted, the Mighty. May God bless Muhammad and his Family and their goodly shi'a."

No one shall do this but shall attain his desire and reach his aim, nor shall his prayer be rejected — this is a fixed decree and I am its guarantor. It shall be better for all that possess it than to possess the east of the world and the west thereof. Nor shall this be hard for God. It is a right of mine, by the greatest of rights, over those that follow that shining light that they should make it and should perform what I have

commanded them and never neglect it for a day or a night. In it are concealed the lights of holiness, and in it are hidden the lights of fellowship, and in it are revealed the manifestations of the Holy One . . .

And it is correct to write in the centre of the seventh circle that square figure and to fill its interior with those written figures, as follows: 1114, the shape of this in every house (bayt), with the points necessary in the geometrical figures. That is a mystery, and the seven circles are together the light of the Night of Decree [i.e. night of 26-27 Ramadan], for the geometry of the shape of the Decree is this: 304; and when you put the two of them [i.e. the 3 and 4] together, there appears the number seven. What is written there is what has been decreed here. And these are the gates of all good . . . for the seven letters have been sent down in the four words [? reference to his name 'Ali Muhammad, composed of seven letters, wherefore he refers to himself elsewhere as dhāt-i hurūf al-sab'; what the "four words" refer to is not clear and when you join it there appears the number of the word huwa ["he" = 11 = 7+4], for that is the mention of the seal of the Point from the beginning of its mystery in the letters of the bism Allah until the end of its descent unto its centre, which is the Point itself . . . And I do not count any man among my followers (shī'atī) unless he is in its goodness, as I have commanded him to be, for he that neglects it has neglected all that is good and he that performs it has performed all that is good and is, in my sight, more precious than red sulphur or yellow light . . . Send it in all directions to your brethren and friends that none may be left, whether young or old, man or woman, but shall enter beneath this mercy . . . It is, truly, an amulet from our decree unto our shi'a, to protect them from every evil and harm and to bring them unto every good thing and blessing. Whoever takes hold of it has taken hold of a great portion and a greater share; this, indeed, is the mighty victory.

(Māzandarānī, Asrār, IV, pp.115-20)

# IV PORTION OF A ZIYARATNAMA FOR MULLA MUHAMMAD 'ALI BARFURUSHI QUDDUS, WRITTEN BY THE BAB

Tablet of visitation for the martyrs, on them be peace, who have sacrificed themselves for the Last Name of God, Quddus, Quddus, Quddus. ["The Last Name of God" — ism Allāh al-ākhir — was a title of Mulla Muhammad 'Ali Barfurushi.]

In the name of God, the Most Inaccessible, the Most Holy. Holy, holy, holy (quddūs, quddūs, quddūs). The glory from God, no other god is there but He, rest upon thy heart and the heart of whomsoever is in thy heart, and upon thy spirit and the spirit of whomsoever is in thy spirit, and upon thy soul and whomsoever is in thy soul, and upon thy body and whomsoever is in thy body. Then, the exaltation from God rest upon thy heart and the heart of whomsoever hath been created from the light of thy praise, and upon thy spirit and whomsoever hath been created from the spirit of thy benediction, and upon thy soul and whomsoever hath been created from the soul of thy unification (tawhid — the declaration of God's unity), and upon thy body and whomsoever hath been created from the light of thy glorification. Thou hast been raised up, nor is there above thee anyone possessed of exaltation like unto thee; thou hast come near, nor is there anyone possessed of proximity like unto thine. All created things have given praise in unison out of the essence of thy praise, and all atoms have rendered glorification out of the camphor of thy glorification, and all the psychic entities have extolled the oneness of God in unison out of the substance of thine extolling of His unity, and all the individual realities have lauded the greatness of God in unison out of the absolute reality of thy glorification of His greatness. All render praise unto God through thee, and all sanctify God through thee, and all extol God's singleness through thee, and all magnify God through thee. So great hath been thine affliction that the afflictions of all created things are cut off from any connection with it; the calamity that hath overwhelmed thee hath reached so high a station that no other calamity of any created thing may be mentioned in the same breath as it. By thy glory, there is nothing in existence apart from God that weepeth not sore over thee, that is not established under thy shadow, that doth not praise God with the praise thou didst offer, that doth not sanctify His name with the sanctification thou didst render, that doth not extol the unity of God with the praise of His unity that thou didst utter, and that doth not magnify God with the magnification whereby thou didst honour His greatness. From all eternity and unto all eternity thou hast been in the exaltation of holiness and majesty, and unto all eternity thou shalt be in the height of sanctity and beauteousness. Thou art he that hath become manifest through the manifestation of thy Lord, and kept hidden through the concealment of thy Lord, and

thou art the First, for there is no first save thee, and the Last, for there is no last other than thee. Thou hast ascended through the degrees of creation unto that horizon where none hath gone before thee; and thou hast been raised upon the throne of thy glory on the highest horizon of paradise, higher than which there is nothing whatever in the knowledge of God. I call upon thee and upon all things as witnesses that thy blood is pure, untainted and unsullied, and that through the residue of its very mention the realities of all created things have been made manifest . . . I call upon God and upon all things as witnesses that God hath sanctified thee from all likenesses and hath given unto thee what He hath given unto no one in His creation — not the dominion of earth and all that is on it, but the dominion of paradise and all that dwell therein. Thus, there shall not come into the heart of anyone a mention of grandeur or might, save that he shall come unto thee with a mention of humility and shall descend to the door of thy courtyard in the utmost degree of abasement . . . Verily, I call to witness the angels of the Throne and the Seat and the heavens and the most exalted paradise and the most glorious garden, that circle about thy grave, and ask that they may take the water that poureth from the eyes of whomsoever exhibiteth love for thee and may bring it into the presence of God, thy Lord, and that God may look upon him that hath performed that act of grace and that His paradise may lament over him, and that He may single him out for all His grace and all that He may fashion, for there is no drop of water more loved by God than that which hath flowed out over thy tribulations and hath appeared on the cheek by reason of thy sufferings . . .

(From text in Muḥammad 'Alī Malik Khusravī, Tārīkh-i shuhadā-yi amr, I [Tehran 130 B.E./1973-4], pp.412-14)

#### THE BABI CALENDAR

The calendar system of Babism, known as the Badī' or New Calendar, was introduced by the Bab in several works, including the Persian Bayān (5:3, pp.152-4). Its basis is a solar year broken into 19 months, each of 19 days, the total of 361 equalling the numerical value of the phrase kullu shay', "All Things". There are also four or five intercalary days (whose positioning is a matter of disagreement between the Azalis and Baha'is).

The Bab is also said to have instituted 19-year cycles termed wāḥid. Nineteen such cycles constitute a kullu shay', though it is not clear what further significance this has. Each of the years in a wahid has its own name, as follows:

1	Alif	11	Bahhāj
2	Bā'	12	Jawāb
3	Ab	13	Aḥad
4	Dāl	14	Wahhāb
5	Bāb	15	Widād
6	Wāw	16	$Bad\bar{\imath}`$
7	Abad	17	$Bah\bar{\imath}$
8	Jād	18	Abhā
9	Bahā'	19	Wāḥid
10	Ḥubb		•

Baha'is date the commencement of the Badī' era (B.E.) from the Naw-Ruz preceding the announcement of the Bab's mission in Jumada I, 1260/May 1844 (Browne, *Traveller's Narrative*, I, p.425), but there are indications that the Bab himself intended it to begin in the sixth year after that (see W. McE. Miller, *The Bahā'ī Faith: its history and teachings*, South Pasadena, Calif. 1974, p.63; cf. *H.D.*, pp.5–6).

The Babi months are named as follows:

Bahā', 21 March-8 April 11 Mashiyyat, 27 September-2 Jalāl, 9-27 April 15 October Jamāl, 28 April-16 May 12 'Ilm, 16 October-3 November 'Azamat, 17 May-4 June 13 Qudrat, 4-22 November Nūr, 5-23 June 5 Qawl, 23 November-11 14 Rahmat, 24 June-12 July December 7 Kalimāt, 13 July-1 August Masā'il, 12-30 December 15 Kamāl, 2-19 August Sharaf, 31 December-Asmā', 20 August-18 January 7 September 17 Sultān, 19 January-6 February 10 'Izzat, 8–26 September 18 Mulk, 7 February-1 March 19 A'lā', 2-20 March

Each of the days of the month has its own name, these corresponding to and in the same order as the months themselves. Thus, the first day of the month of Baha' is likewise Baha', its second day is Jalal, and so on.

The days of the week have been named as follows:

- 1 Saturday, Jalāl
- 2 Sunday, Jamāl
- 3 Monday, Kamāl
- 4 Tuesday, Fidāl
- 5 Wednesday, 'Idāl
- 6 Thursday, Istijlāl
- 7 Friday, İstiqlal

### VI AN EXAMPLE OF THE BAB'S INVOCATORY STYLE

(Kitāb-i panj sha'n, p.364)

## VII THE THREE BAHA'I SALATS, TRANSLATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

1 The short salat

I bear witness, O my God, that Thou hast created me to know Thee and to worship Thee. I testify, at this moment, to my powerlessness and to Thy might, to my poverty and to Thy wealth.

There is none other God but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

#### 2 The medium salat

[The two verses for wudu', which appear in the translation, have been omitted.]

Then let him stand up, and facing the Qiblih [sic] . . . let him say:

God testifieth that there is none other God but Him. His are the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation. He, in truth, hath manifested Him Who is the Day-Spring of Revelation, Who conversed on Sinai, through Whom the Supreme Horizon hath been made to shine, and the Lote-Tree beyond which there is no passing hath spoken, and through Whom the call hath been proclaimed unto all who are in heaven and on earth: "Lo, the All-Possessing is come. Earth and heaven, glory and dominion are God's, the Lord of all men, and the Possessor of the Throne on high and of earth below!"

Let him, then, bend down, with hands resting on the knees, and say: Exalted art Thou above my praise and the praise of anyone beside me, above my description and the description of all who are in heaven and all who are on earth!

Then, standing with open hands, palms upward toward the face, let him say:

Disappoint not, O my God, him that hath, with beseeching fingers, clung to the hem of Thy mercy and Thy grace, O Thou Who of those who show mercy art the Most Merciful!

Let him, then, be seated and say:

I bear witness to Thy unity and Thy oneness, and that Thou art God, and that there is none other God beside Thee. Thou hast, verily, revealed Thy Cause, fulfilled Thy Covenant, and opened wide the door of Thy grace to all that dwell in heaven and on earth. Blessing and peace, salutation and glory, rest upon Thy loved ones, whom the changes and chances of the world have not deterred from turning unto Thee, and who have given their all, in the hope of obtaining that which is with Thee. Thou art, in truth, the Ever-Forgiving, the All-Bountiful.

(If anyone choose to recite instead of the long verse these words: "God testifieth that there is none other God but Him, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting," it would be sufficient. And likewise, it would

suffice were he, while seated, to choose to recite these words: "I bear witness to Thy unity and Thy oneness, and that Thou art God, and that there is none other God beside Thee.")

### 3 The long salat

Whoso wisheth to recite this prayer, let him stand up and turn unto God, and, as he standeth in his place, let him gaze to the right and to the left, as if awaiting the mercy of His Lord, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate. Then let him say:

O Thou Who art the Lord of all names and the Maker of the heavens! I beseech Thee by them Who are the Day-Springs of Thine invisible Essence, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, to make of my prayer a fire that will burn away the veils which have shut me out from Thy beauty, and a light that will lead me unto the ocean of Thy Presence.

Let him then raise his hands in supplication toward God — blessed and exalted be He — and say:

O Thou the Desire of the world and the Beloved of the nations! Thou seest me turning toward Thee, and rid of all attachment to anyone save Thee, and clinging to Thy cord, through whose movement the whole creation hath been stirred up. I am Thy servant, O my Lord, and the son of Thy servant. Behold me standing ready to do Thy will and Thy desire, and wishing naught else except Thy good pleasure. I implore Thee by the Ocean of Thy mercy and the Day-Star of Thy grace to do with Thy servant as Thou willest and pleasest. By Thy might which is far above all mention and praise! Whatsoever is revealed by Thee is the desire of my heart and the beloved of my soul. O God, my God! Look not upon my hopes and my doings, nay rather look upon Thy will that hath encompassed the heavens and the earth. By Thy Most Great Name, O Thou Lord of all nations! I have desired only what Thou didst desire, and love only what Thou dost love.

Let him then kneel, and bowing his forehead to the ground, let him say:

Exalted art Thou above the description of anyone save Thyself, and the comprehension of aught else except Thee.

Let him then stand and say:

Make my prayer, O my Lord, a fountain of living waters whereby I may live as long as Thy sovereignty endureth, and may make mention of Thee in every world of Thy worlds.

Let him again raise his hands in supplication, and say:

O Thou in separation from Whom hearts and souls have melted, and by the fire of Whose love the whole world hath been set aflame! I implore Thee by Thy Name through which Thou hast subdued the whole creation, not to withhold from me that which is with Thee, O Thou Who rulest over all men! Thou seest, O my Lord, this stranger hastening to his most exalted home beneath the canopy of Thy majesty and within the precincts of Thy mercy; and this transgressor seeking the ocean of Thy forgiveness; and this lowly one the court of Thy glory; and this poor creature the orient of Thy wealth. Thine is the authority to command whatsoever Thou willest. I bear witness that Thou art to be praised in Thy doings, and to be obeyed in Thy behests, and to remain unconstrained in Thy bidding.

Let him then raise his hands, and repeat three times the Greatest Name. Let him then bend down with hands resting on the knees before God — blessed and exalted be He — and say:

Thou seest, O my God, how my spirit hath been stirred up within my limbs and members, in its longing to worship Thee, and in its yearning to remember Thee and extol Thee; how it testifieth to that whereunto the Tongue of Thy Commandment hath testified in the kingdom of Thine utterance and the heaven of Thy knowledge. I love, in this state, O my Lord, to beg of Thee all that is with Thee, that I may demonstrate my poverty, and magnify Thy bounty and Thy riches, and may declare my powerlessness, and manifest Thy power and Thy might.

Let him then stand and raise his hands twice in supplication, and say: 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!

Let him then raise his hands thrice, and say:

Greater is God than every great one!

Let him then kneel and, bowing his forehead to the ground, say:

Too high art Thou for the praise of those who are nigh unto Thee to ascend unto the heaven of Thy nearness, or for the birds of the hearts of them who are devoted to Thee to attain to the door of Thy gate. I testify that Thou hast been sanctified above all attributes and holy above all names. No God is there but Thee, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious.

Let him then seat himself and say:

I testify unto that whereunto have testified all created things, and the Concourse on high, and the inmates of the all-highest Paradise, and beyond them the Tongue of Grandeur itself from the all-glorious Horizon, that Thou art God, that there is no God but Thee, and that He

Who hath been manifested is the Hidden Mystery, the Treasured Symbol, through Whom the letters B and E (Be) have been joined and knit together. I testify that it is He Whose name hath been set down by the Pen of the Most High, and Who hath been mentioned in the Books of God, the Lord of the Throne on high and of earth below.

Let him then stand erect and say:

O Lord of all being and Possessor of all things visible and invisible! Thou dost perceive my tears and the sighs I utter, and hearest my groaning, and my wailing, and the lamentation of my heart. By Thy might! My trespasses have kept me back from drawing nigh unto Thee; and my sins have held me far from the court of Thy holiness. Thy love, O my Lord, hath enriched me, and separation from Thee hath destroyed me, and remoteness from Thee hath consumed me. I entreat Thee by Thy footsteps in this wilderness, and by the words "Here am I. Here am I" which Thy chosen Ones have uttered in this immensity, and by the breaths of Thy Revelation, and the gentle winds of the Dawn of Thy Manifestation, to ordain that I may gaze on Thy beauty and observe whatsoever is in Thy Book.

Let him then repeat the Greatest Name thrice and bend down with hands resting on the knees, and say:

Praise be to Thee, O my God, that Thou hast aided me to remember Thee and to praise Thee, and hast made known unto me Him Who is the Day-Spring of Thy signs, and hast caused me to bow down before thy Lordship, and humble myself before Thy Godhead, and to acknowledge that which hath been uttered by the Tongue of Thy grandeur.

Let him then rise and say:

O God, my God! My back is bowed by the burden of my sins, and my heedlessness hath destroyed me. Whenever I ponder my evil doings and Thy benevolence, my heart melteth within me, and my blood boileth in my veins. By Thy Beauty, O Thou the Desire of the world! I blush to lift up my face to Thee, and my longing hands are ashamed to stretch forth toward the heaven of Thy bounty. Thou seest, O my God, how my tears prevent me from remembering Thee and from extolling Thy virtues, O Thou the Lord of the Throne on high and of earth below! I implore Thee by the signs of Thy Kingdom and the mysteries of Thy Dominion to do with Thy loved ones as becometh Thy bounty, O Lord of all being, and as is worthy of Thy grace, O King of the seen and the unseen!

Let him then repeat the Greatest Name thrice, and kneel with his forehead to the ground, and say:

Praise be unto Thee, O our God, that Thou hast sent down unto us that which draweth us nigh unto Thee, and supplieth us with every good thing sent down by Thee in Thy Books and Thy Scriptures. Protect us, we beseech Thee, O my Lord, from the hosts of idle fancies and vain imaginations. Thou, in truth, art the Mighty, the All-Knowing.

Let him then raise his head, and seat himself, and say:

I testify, O my God, to that whereunto Thy chosen Ones have testified, and acknowledge that which the inmates of the all-highest Paradise and those who have circled round Thy mighty Throne have acknowledged. The kingdoms of earth and heaven are Thine, O Lord of the worlds!

(Prayers and Meditations, pp.240–48) (Reproduced by kind permission of the Bahā'ī Publishing Trust)

VIII SALAT BY BAHA' ALLAH, TO BE RECITED IN TIME OF NEED

Whenever you wish to reach the summit of grace and to attain unto the most exalted spot, that there may be ordained for you all that is good in the heaven of decree, on the part of your Lord, the Exalted, the Most Glorious, detach yourself from all things and perform ablutions with pure, sanctified water, as you have been commanded in the Bayān on the part of Him Who sends down the verses, the Ancient One. And while you are washing your hands, say: "O Lord, purify me from all save Thee and make me ready for meeting Thee in the day of the manifestation of Thy beauty and the rise of Thy self. Sanctify me, then, from all that has veiled me from Thy resplendent beauty and purge me for the knowledge of Thine exalted and mighty Self."

And while washing your face, say: "O Lord, this is my face which I am washing as Thou hast commanded me with this water. Wherefore, O my God, I ask Thee by Thy name, from which most of Thy servants have been veiled, save those among Thy creatures who testify unto Thy unity, to wash my face with the water of Thy mercy that hath flowed out from the right hand of the Throne of Thy majesty, that it may be made pure for Thy holy, shining, and resplendent Face. O Lord, protect it, then, from turning unto aught save Thee or from facing them that have disbelieved in Thy most great verses at the time of the revelation of Thy lofty and most exalted Self, in Thy name the Most Holy, the Most Inaccessible, the Most Wondrous, the Most Glorious. Deprive me not, O my God, of the glances of the eyes of Thy favour and cause me not to despair of the holy fragrances of Thy bounties. Thou, verily, art He Who answers the prayers of them that pray unto Thee, and art nigh unto those that have sought Thy nearness. Thou art, in truth, the Possessor of great bounty. O Lord, make it, then, illumined in the day whereon faces have been turned black, and resplendent with the lights of Thy bounteous Face." And if you should read this after the washing, it is no matter; this is a favour on behalf of your Lord, the All-Knowing.

And when you have finished this, make use of perfume, then put on your finest clothes, then turn your face in the direction of the sanctuary of God, round which will circle at this moment the spirits of all created things, whether of the seen or the unseen, and the spirits of those who were not given any command but yet turned their gaze unto the Face of your Lord, the Most Exalted, the Mighty, the Inaccessible.

Stand, then, firm upon your place, then raise your hands towards God calmly and with manifest dignity, and say: "Lord, I ask Thee by Thy name whereby Thou didst shine forth upon all created things and didst take possession of all that are in existence, even as Thou hast perfumed me with this scent to perfume me with the holy fragrances of Thy

mercifulness and the sweet-scented breaths whereby Thou dost render fragrant the robe of Thine own Self, the Mighty, the Resplendent, lest anyone should inhale from me aught else save the holy breezes of Thy grace and Thy loving-kindness, and that I may, in my entirety, turn myself unto Thee and detach myself from all save Thee. Thou, verily, art He Who is powerful to do as He pleases, and Thou art, in truth, the Generous, the Merciful. O Lord, O my Beloved and my Hope and the King of my inner being and my soul, send down at this moment upon Thy servant that which beseemeth the power of Thy bounty and Thy generosity and is worthy of the wonders of Thy grace and Thy benevolence. Deprive me not, O my God, of that which Thou hast decreed in the heavens of Thy will and the clouds of Thy volition for Thy holy ones, whom Thou hast singled out for Thine own Self, the Mighty, the All-Beauteous. O Lord, I am the poor one who has clung to the cord of Thy wealth, and I am the wretched one who has taken firm hold of the rope of Thy might and majesty, and I am the weak one that has sought to approach the pavilion of the glory of Thy power and the tent of the splendour of Thy sovereignty and dominion. Here then am I, O my God. I have stood before Thee hoping for Thy grace, forgetful of all save Thee, fleeing from all others but Thee, turning unto the sanctuary of Thy presence and the Ka'ba of Thy good-pleasure. Is there anything in existence save Thee that I may turn my face thereunto, and is there anything manifest save Thee, that I may advance unto it? No, by Thy beauty! Nay, all things that are manifest have been made as nothing before the manifestations of the lights of the sanctity of Thy greatness, and all things that are exalted are extinguished before the forms of the glory of Thy exaltation and loftiness. Send down, then, O my God, upon Thy servant that which shall make him independent of all that hath been created in the heavens and on the earth. Thou art, verily, the Most Merciful of the merciful."

Then take three steps forward, facing in the direction of God, and at the first step say: "O Lord, cause to shine forth upon me in this station that which shone forth upon Moses (al-Kalīm) upon the Paran of Thy love and the Horeb of Thy bounty and the Sinai of the glory of Thy mercifulness, O Mighty and Inaccessible. Detach me, then, O my God, from the names and their kingdom, lest I be veiled by them from Him Who created them by but a command from Him. Thou art, verily, Powerful over all things. Cause me, then, to hear, O my God, Thy call from every tree, as Thou didst cause to hearken to the voice from the Lote-tree of Thy command the servant whom Thou didst choose and whom Thou didst send unto every world of Thy worlds."

And at the second step stop and say: "O Lord, shine forth in this station as Thou didst shine forth upon Jesus  $(al-R\bar{u}h)$ , that I may arise from the praise of Thy Self and may speak forth Thy verses among Thy

heedless servants, that thereby their hearts may be purified from doubt and uncertainty in respect of Thy cause, at which all but a small handful of them that are in the realm of names have fainted away. O Lord, sanctify me in this station from the attributes and their realm, that have come between me and my beholding the lights of the divine Essence. Give me, then, O my God, to drink of the cup of eternity from the hands of the mention of the name of my Lord, the most Exalted [i.e. the Bab] in this second cycle. Thou, verily, art the Possessor of mighty grace. O Lord, give me to taste of the fountain of living waters, that I may be set afire by the heat of Thy love to such a degree that Thy servants may be set aflame through me. Cause there to flow, then, from my mouth the river of knowledge in recognition of Thy Self, the All-Merciful, that through it I may demonstrate Thy proof unto Thy creation who have been shaken in Thy manifest, resplendent, and straight path."

At the third step, stop and say: "O Lord, shine forth in this station as Thou didst shine forth upon Thy prophets and Thy chosen ones that are nigh unto Thee. Detach me, then, O my God, from both this world and the world to come and cause me to enter the paradise of meeting with Thee and the garden of Thine utterance, O Thou Mighty and Resplendent One. O Lord, erase from my heart every mention save the mention of Thee, that I may arise in praise of Thy Self between the heavens and the earth. O Lord, forgive me, then, my mighty sins and my great errors and all that I have neglected in the proximity of my Lord, the Exalted, the Most High [the Bab], and my hesitation upon his path that hath encompassed all the worlds. O Lord, clothe me, then, with the garment of forgiveness and the robe of certitude. Thou, verily, art He that fulfilleth the needs of them that seek Thee."

Then prostrate thyself with thy face touching the earth, and say: "Unto Thee be praise, O my God, for the wonders of Thy lovingkindness and the manifestation of Thy bounties towards me, in that Thou hast shown me the path of Thy knowledge within the ways of Thy guidance. I beseech Thee, then, O my God, by the light of Thy face, through which all created things have been illumined and all beings have been set alight, not to make me one of those that have heard Thy call and have failed to answer Thee, or of those unto whom Thou hast revealed Thyself in Thy most exalted manifestation and Thy most glorious appearance and have failed to obey. Make, then, for me a seat of glory within the precincts of Thy name, the All-Merciful, in the paradise that Thou hast created in the midmost heart of heaven and join me, then, with Thy servants that are nigh unto Thee. Send down upon me, then, every good thing that is in Thy knowledge and cause me to be raised up upon the day of resurrection before the Manifestation of Thy Self, the Exalted, the Lofty, the Powerful."

Then lift up Thy face from the earth, for thou hast completed that unto which thou wast commanded in this manifest tablet. By the life of him whom God shall manifest, whosoever performs these actions in a spirit of utter devotion to the face of his Lord and detached from all else save Him, God shall fulfil his needs and shall cause him to be resurrected on the day of judgement in such a form that the angels nigh unto God shall be struck with amazement. Thus have we taught thee and made mention unto Thee that thou mayest attain unto the presence of thy Lord and may not be deprived of that which is better for thee than the treasures of earth and heaven. If thou dost carry it out, thou shalt have carried it out for thine own sake, and if thou dost neglect it, thy Lord is independent of all the worlds.

(Amr, IV, pp.74-9)

(The text in Ishrāq Khāvarī, Mā'ida, VII, p.135, translates the directions into Persian and compresses them; after the last direction "Then lift up thy face from the earth", it has the instruction "and ask from God that of which you are in need".)

IX PRAYER BY BAHA' ALLAH DESIGNED TO BE READ EVERY MORNING AND EVENING

Read this prayer every morning and evening:

Praise be to Thee, O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Most Great Name, whereby the Sun of Thy Command shone forth above the horizon of Thine inspiration, not to deprive us of the breezes that have wafted from the direction of Thy bountiful grace. Make us, then, O my God, utterly devoted unto Thy face and detached from all save Thee. Cause us, then, to be raised up among those of Thy servants who have not been kept back by human tokens from turning in the direction of the manifestation of Thy oneness. O Lord, cause us to enter beneath the shadow of Thy most great mercy and protect us from Thy servants that have disbelieved in Thy most glorious name. Give us to drink of the pure wine of Thy bounty and the cup of Thy grace and favours. Thou, verily, art Powerful to do as Thou willest and Thou art the Forgiving, the Compassionate. O Lord, cause us to arise in Thy love amidst Thy creation, for this, verily, is Thy greatest bestowal unto Thy servants. Thou, truly, art the Most Merciful of the merciful.

 $(Amr, IV, p.60; Ad\bar{i}'a, pp.210-11)$ 

#### X PRAYERS TO BE SAID AT TABLE

1 Prayer of 'Abd al-Baha' to be recited before eating My Lord and My Hope. Praise be to Thee that Thou hast sent down upon us this spiritual table, this divine bounty, this heavenly blessing. O our Lord, enable us to eat of this food of the kingdom that its subtle essences may pervade the corners of our spiritual being and that there may be produced from that heavenly strength for the service of Thy cause, the spread of Thy revelation, and the adorning of Thy garden with lofty trees bearing branches near at hand, perfumed with fresh breezes. Thou, verily, art the All-Generous. Thou art the Possessor of mighty grace. Thou art the Merciful, the Compassionate.

(Amr, III, p.69)

2 Prayer of 'Abd al-Baha' to be recited after eating My Lord and my Hope. Thanks be to Thee for these bestowals and bounties. Lord, Lord, raise us up unto Thy Kingdom and seat us at the tables of Thy realm on high. Give us to eat of the food of Thy presence and give us to taste of the sweetness of beholding Thy beauty — this, in truth, is our highest wish and Thy greatest bestowal and most mighty bounty. Lord, Lord, make this easy for us. Verily, Thou art the Generous, the Bountiful, and Thou art the Giver, the Mighty, the Compassionate. Upon thee be greetings and praise.

(Amr, III, p.70)

(See also two prayers in Amr, III, p.70.)

XI THE ARABIC "TABLET OF AHMAD", TRANSLATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

He is the King, the All-Knowing, the Wise!

Lo, the Nightingale of Paradise singeth upon the twigs of the Tree of Eternity, with holy and sweet melodies, proclaiming to the sincere ones the glad tidings of the nearness of God, calling the believers in the Divine Unity to the court of the Presence of the Generous One, informing the severed ones of the message which hath been revealed by God, the King, the Glorious, the Peerless, guiding the lovers to the seat of sanctity and to this resplendent Beauty.

Verily this is that Most Great Beauty, foretold in the Books of the Messengers, through Whom truth shall be distinguished from error and the wisdom of every command shall be tested. Verily He is the Tree of Life that bringeth forth the fruits of God, the Exalted, the Powerful, the Great.

O Ahmad! Bear thou witness that verily He is God and there is no God but Him, the King, the Protector, the Incomparable, the Omnipotent. And that the One Whom He hath sent forth by the name of 'Ali (i.e. His Holiness the Bab) was the true One from God, to Whose commands we are all conforming.

Say: O people be obedient to the ordinances of God, which have been enjoined in the *Bayān* by the Glorious, the Wise One. Verily He is the King of the Messengers and His Book is the Mother Book did ye but know.

Thus doth the Nightingale utter His call unto you from this prison. He hath but to deliver this clear message. Whosoever desireth, let him turn aside from this counsel and whosoever desireth let him choose the path to his Lord.

O people, if ye deny these verses, by what proof have ye believed in God? Produce it, O assemblage of false ones.

Nay, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, they are not, and never shall be able to do this, even should they combine to assist one another.

O Ahmad! Forget not My bounties while I am absent. Remember My days during thy days, and My distress and banishment in this remote prison. And be thou so steadfast in My love that thy heart shall not waver, even if the swords of the enemies rain blows upon thee and all the heavens and the earth arise against thee.

Be thou as a flame of fire to My enemies and a river of life eternal to My loved ones, and be not of those who doubt.

And if thou art overtaken by affliction in My path, or degradation for My sake, be not thou troubled thereby.

Rely upon God, thy God and the Lord of thy fathers. For the people are wandering in the paths of delusion, bereft of discernment to see God

with their own eyes, or hear His Melody with their own ears. Thus have We found them, as thou also dost witness.

Thus have their superstitions become veils between them and their own hearts and kept them from the path of God, the Exalted, the Great.

Be thou assured in thyself that verily, he who turns away from this Beauty hath also turned away from the Messengers of the past and showeth pride towards God from all eternity to all eternity.

Learn well this Tablet, O Ahmad. Chant it during thy days and withhold not thyself therefrom. For verily, God hath ordained for the one who chants it, the reward of a hundred martyrs and a service in both worlds. These favours have We bestowed upon thee as a bounty on Our part and a mercy from Our presence, that thou mayest be of those who are grateful.

By God! Should one who is in affliction or grief read this Tablet with absolute sincerity, God will dispel his sadness, solve his difficulties and remove his afflictions.

Verily, He is the Merciful, the Compassionate. Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds.

(Prayers for Special Occasions, pp.47-50) (Reproduced by kind permission of the Bahā'ī Publishing Trust)

XII PRAYER OF BAHA' ALLAH TO BE SAID AFTER DISTURBED DREAMS

It hath been decreed that, if anyone should have a troubled dream and should thereby be grieved and saddened, he may recite this blessed verse: "O Thou through Whose Name the ocean of joyfulness hath been made to surge and the fragrance of gladness hath been wafted, I beseech Thee to cause me to behold, by the wonders of Thy grace, what will render my eyes solaced and my heart joyful. Thou art, verily, the Beneficent, the Merciful." Even in the case of dreams which have not been troubled, it is agreeable for this verse to be recited.

(From the tablet to Muhammad Karim-i 'Attar, in Mā'ida, IV, p.366)

# XIII PRAYER OF BAHA' ALLAH REQUESTING THAT GOD REVEAL MATTERS IN SLEEP

God hath spoken thus in the Tree of Separation: O Friends! Be patient and beware lest ye fail to make mention of us. Make mention, then, of our days in a spirit of love. Say: the Beauty of the Spirit hath vanished, at which all eyes have wept and all hearts have been consumed. Make thou mention, O Rida, of my days and of my melodies and of the glorious and beloved refrains. Think, then, upon the days of the Spirit and of how it appeared among you and was with you for a few years. Protect thyself and those who are in thy house, be they men or women. Know, then, that we have made this tablet a robe for thy self that thou mayest inhale from it the fragrances of God, the Mighty, the Beloved. And we have sent forth from this robe the soft breezes of grace upon all that have put on the garment of existence. Blessed be he that cometh upon it and perceiveth from it that which shall turn him towards the Egypt of a manifest glory. And whosoever reads this tablet while possessing in his heart the love of his Lord, shall behold in his sleep whatsoever he desireth of the meeting with God, the Mighty, the Beloved. Thus have we shown our grace unto thee again that thou mayest be content with us and with thyself in these days unto which the near ones have not attained. Remember, then, on our behalf, all those that are in thy house, that the love of God may be created among them and that they may gather together in their cause. Show kindness then unto her whom God caused to be related to him who went into exile with His Servant; thus have we counselled you in truth, if ye be of them that know. The Spirit be upon you and upon them that rely upon their Lord.

(Adī'a, pp.212–14; Taṣbīḥ, pp.213–15)

# XIV TWO PRAYERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF BEING SHOWN VISIONS IN SLEEP

- 1 When thou desirest and yearnest for meeting in the world of vision, at the time when thou art in perfect . . . and spirituality, wash thy hands and face, clothe thyself in clean robes, turn toward the court of the Peerless One, offer prayer to Him, and lay thy head on thy pillow. When sleepeth cometh, the doors of revelation shall be opened and all thy desires shall become revealed.
- 2 Arise and wash thy body, wear a pure gown, and, devoting thyself to the Kingdom of God, supplicate and pray to Him. Sleep in a clean, well-prepared and ventilated place, and ask for appearance in the world of vision. Thou wilt have visions which will cause the door of doubts to be closed, which will give thee new joy, wonderful devotion, brilliant glory. Thou wilt comprehend realities and meanings.

(No Arabic or Persian text of these is known to the author.)

### XV PRAYER BY BAHA' ALLAH TO REQUEST A CHILD

I ask Thee, then, O God of all existence and King of the Seen and the Unseen, to bestow upon me a healthy child that he may make mention of Thee in Thy earth and may sing Thy praises in Thy lands. Although Thou hast, with this tablet, made me independent of every trace and fruit and mention, yet at this moment my prayer is that which hath been uttered by Thy chosen ones: Lord, leave me not alone; Thou art the best of heirs.

(Amr, IV, p.69)

XVI THE ARABIC "TABLET OF THE HOLY MARINER" (LAWH MALLĀḤ AL-QUDS), TRANSLATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

He is the Gracious, the well-beloved!

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

O Holy Mariner!

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Bid thine ark of eternity appear before the Celestial Concourse,

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Launch it upon the ancient sea, in His Name, the Most Wondrous,

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

And let the angelic spirits enter, in the Name of God, the Most High.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Unmoor it, then, that it may sail upon the ocean of glory,

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Haply the dwellers therein may attain the retreats of nearness in the everlasting realm.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Having reached the sacred strand, the shore of the crimson seas,

Bid them issue forth and attain this ethereal invisible station,

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Around which the Glory of Moses doth circle with the everlasting hosts; Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

May wing through space even as the favoured birds in the realm of eternal reunion;

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

May know the mysteries hidden in the Seas of Light.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

They passed the grades of worldly limitations and reached that of the divine unity, the centre of heavenly guidance.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

"O guardian angels! Return them to their abode in the world below, Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Whereupon the maid of heaven looked out from her exalted chamber, Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

And with her brow signed to the Celestial Concourse,

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

Flooding with the light of her countenance the heaven and the earth, Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

All beings were shaken in their mortal graves.

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Thereupon she summoned unto herself one maiden from her hand-maidens,

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

And kiss their hands and feet for having soared to the heights of faithfulness:

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be my Lord, the All-Glorious!

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

Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!

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

Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!

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

Glorified be our Lord, the Most High!

(Prayers for Special Occasions, pp.51-7) (Reproduced by kind permission of the Bahā'ī Publishing Trust)

### XVII PRAYER BY BAHA' ALLAH

He is God, exalted be He; His condition is that of greatness and might. My God, my God, I give thanks to Thee under all circumstances and I praise Thee under all conditions. In blessings, praise be to Thee, O God of all worlds, and in their absence, thanks be to Thee, O Object of them that know the mysteries. In suffering, praise be to Thee, O Focus of the worship of all that are in the heavens and the earth, and in adversity, glory be to Thee, O Thou through Whom the hearts of them that long for Thee have been ravished. In hardship, praise be to Thee, O Object of them that seek Thee, and in misfortune, thanks be to Thee, O Thou Who art mentioned within the hearts of them that are nigh unto Thee. In riches, Thine is the glory, O Lord of them that are devoted to Thee, and in poverty, Thine is the command, O Hope of them that glorify Thy singleness. In joy, Thine is the majesty, O Thou, no god is there but Thee, and in sadness, Thine is the beauty, O Thou, no god is there but Thee. In hunger, Thine is the justice, O Thou, no god is there but Thee, and in sufficiency, Thine is the grace, O Thou, no god is there but Thee. At home, Thine is the favour, O Thou, no god is there but Thee, and in the land of strangers, Thine is the decree, O Thou, no god is there but Thee. Beneath the sword, Thine are the benefits, O Thou, no god is there but Thee, and in the house, Thine is the perfection, O Thou, no god is there but Thee. In the palace, Thine is the generosity, O Thou, no god is there but Thee, and in the dust, Thine is the bounty, O Thou, no god is there but Thee. In prison, Thine is the faithfulness, O Abundant in benefits, and in confinement, Thine is the eternity, O King of all that has been. Thine is the bounty, O Lord of bounty and Sovereign of bounty and King of bounty. I bear witness that Thou art praised in all that Thou doest, O Source of bounty, and obeyed in Thy decree, O Ocean of bounty, O Origin of bounty, O Place unto which bounty returns.

 $(Ad\bar{i}'a, pp.45-52)$ 

**KVIII LITANY BY BAHA' ALLAH** 

The Beauty of holiness hath risen from behind the veil.

(And this is a wondrous thing.)

And the spirits have fainted away from the flames of attraction.

(And this is a wondrous matter.)

They have recovered consciousness and flown unto the pavilion of holiness on the Throne of Domes.

(And this is a wondrous mystery.)

Say: the Maid of Eternity hath removed the veil from her face.

(Exalted be the new and wondrous Beauty.)

And the lights of her face have shone from the earth unto the clouds.

(And this is a wondrous light.)

And she has cast her glances as shooting stars are cast.

(And this is a wondrous casting.)

And all names and all titles have been set aflame by the fire of her face.

(And this is a wondrous deed.)

And she has cast her glance upon the people of earth and dust.

(And this is a wondrous glance.)

Whereupon the tabernacles of creation shook and then vanished.

(And this is a wondrous death.)

Then there appeared from her a jet-black hair, like the ornament of the spirit in the darkness of torment.

(And this is a wondrous colour.)

And there issued forth from her breezes of the spirit and sweet perfumes.

(And this is a wondrous musk.)

In her right hand ruby wine and in her left a portion of roast sweetmeats.

(And this is a wondrous bounty.)

And her palms were red and stained with the blood of the lovers.

(And this is a wondrous affair.)

And she passed round the living wine in long-necked pitchers and goblets.

(And this is a wondrous fountain.)

And she sang in the name of the Beloved with lute and rebec.

(And this is a wondrous melody.)

Whereupon the hearts melted with fire and flames.

(And this is a wondrous love.)

And the sustenance of the Beauty was given them, with neither balance nor measure.

(And this is a wondrous sustenance.)

And the sword of her flashing eyes was drawn upon the necks.

(And this is a wondrous blow.)

She smiled and there appeared white, shining pearls.

(And this is a wondrous pearl.)

Whereupon the hearts of the possessors of minds cried out.

(And this is a wondrous renunciation.)

And every proud, disbelieving one turned aside from her.

(And this is naught but a wondrous rejection.)

And when she heard this, she returned unto her palace in sadness and affliction.

(And this is a wondrous grief.)

She came and she returned — how exalted her coming and going. (And this is a wondrous decree.)

And she cried out in her heart, a cry that caused all existence to expire and vanish.

(And this is a wondrous sadness.)

And she opened the fountain of her mouth in discourse and in reproof.

(And this is a wondrous stream.)

And she said, "Do not reject me, O People of the Book."

(And this is a wondrous matter.)

Are you the people of guidance and are you the friends?

(By God, this is a wondrous lie.)

And she said, "We shall not return unto you, O companions."

(And this is a wondrous returning.)

And we shall conceal the secrets of God that are in the tablets and the book.

(And this is a command from a Mighty and Generous One.)

And you shall not find me, save when the Promised One appears in the day of return.

(By my life, this is a wondrous abasement.)

 $(Ad\bar{i}'a, pp.153-8)$ 

XIX THE "FIRE TABLET" QAD IḤTARAQA 'L-MUKHLIṢŪN, BY BAHA' ALLAH

In the Name of God, the Most Ancient, the Most Great.

They that are consecrated unto God have been consumed by the fire of separation — where is the flashing of the lights of Thy presence, O Beloved of the Worlds?

They that are nigh unto God have been left abandoned within the shadows of exile — where are the dawning rays of the moon of Thy union, O Desire of the Worlds?

The bodies of the chosen ones have been cast into confusion on the earth of remoteness — where is the ocean of Thy nearness, O Thou that drawest unto Thee the Worlds?

The hands of longing are lifted up unto the heaven of grace and bounty — where are the rains of Thy bestowal, O Thou that answerest the prayers of the Worlds?

The infidels have risen up with violence in every direction — where is the victory of the Pen of Thy decree, O Conqueror of the Worlds?

The barking of dogs hath been raised on every hand — where is the lion of the jungle of Thy power, O Subduer of the Worlds?

All creation hath been overcome with cold — where is the heat of Thy love, O Fire of the Worlds?

Afflictions have reached their height — where are the revelations of Thy gladness, O Joy of the Worlds?

Darkness hath overwhelmed most beings — where are the lights of Thy radiance, O Light of the Worlds?

Necks have grown high with hypocrisy — where are the swords of Thy retribution, O Destroyer of the Worlds?

Wretchedness hath increased to its utmost degree — where are the signs of Thy majesty, O Glory of the Worlds?

Sadness hath overtaken the dawning-place of Thy name, the Merciful—where is the joy of the manifestations of Thy revelation, O Happiness of the Worlds?

All mankind hath been plunged into grief — where are the tokens of Thy rejoicing, O Gladness of the Worlds?

Thou dost behold the dawning-place of the verses behind the veils of vain allusions — where is the finger of Thy might, O Power of the Worlds?

The trembling of thirst hath shaken all in the realm of creation — where are the sweet waters of Thy bounty, O Mercy of the Worlds?

Greed hath taken hold of all in the realm of existence — where are the dawning-places of detachment, O Lord of the Worlds?

Thou seest the Oppressed One alone amongst strangers — where is the host of the heaven of Thy command, O Monarch of the Worlds?

I have been left alone in the land of exile — where are the dawning-points of Thy fidelity, O Constancy of the Worlds?

The agonies of death have taken fast hold of the horizons of the world — where are the waters of Thy living ocean, O Life of the Worlds?

The evil whisperings of Satan have encompassed all that dwell upon the earth — where are the shooting stars of Thy fire, O Light of the Worlds?

Most men have been altered by the drunkenness of desire — where are the dawning-places of piety, O Desire of the Worlds?

Thou seest the Wretched One in the veil of darkness among the people of Syria — where is the glow of the light of Thy morning, O Lamp of the Worlds?

Thou seest me prohibited from speaking — where will Thy melodies appear, O Dove of the Worlds?

Vain superstitions and imaginings have rendered unconscious most of mankind — where are the dawning-places of Thy certitude, O Tranquillity of the Worlds?

Baha' has been submerged beneath the ocean of tribulations — where is the Ark of Thy salvation, O Saviour of the Worlds?

Thou beholdest the dawning-place of Thy verses amidst the shadows of the contingent world — where is the Sun of the horizon of Thy bounty, O Thou Who bestowest illumination on all the Worlds?

The lamps of truthfulness and purity, of zeal and faithfulness have been extinguished — where are the tokens of Thy zeal, O Thou Who settest in motion the Worlds?

Dost thou see anyone who will come to thy assistance or who will ponder on what has befallen thee, out of love for thee? Whereupon the pen hesitated, O Beloved of the Worlds?

The branches of the Lote-tree beyond which there is no passing have been snapped by the blowing of the winds of fate — where are the banners of Thy victory, O Conqueror of the Worlds?

My face has remained upon the dust of false accusations — where are the breezes of Thy mercy, O Thou that showest compassion to the Worlds?

The hem of the robe of holiness hath been sullied by the people of deceit — where is the ornament of Thy purification, O Thou that adornest the Worlds?

The ocean of bounty hath been stilled by what the hands of men have wrought — where are the billows of Thy grace, O Aim of the Worlds?

The Gate of Meeting hath been locked by the tyranny of the people of enmity — where is the key of Thy favour, O Thou that openest the Worlds?

The leaves have turned yellow with the poisonous winds of treachery—where are the heavy rains of the clouds of Thy bounty, O Thou art bountiful to the Worlds?

The entire creation hath been covered in the dust of rebellion — where are the breezes of Thy forgiveness, O Thou Who forgivest the Worlds?

The Youth hath been abandoned in a barren land — where are the showers of the heaven of Thy grace, O Thou that sendest rain upon the worlds?

O Most Exalted Pen, We have heard thy most sweet call from the kingdom of eternity. Give ear, then, to that which the Tongue of Grandeur speaketh, O Wronged One of the Worlds.

Were it not for the freezing cold, how should the heat of thine utterance be manifested, O thou that givest explanation unto the Worlds?

And were it not for affliction, how should the Sun of thy patience rise above the horizon, O Perplexed One of the Worlds?

Grieve not over the wrongdoers, for thou wast created to be long-suffering, O Patience of the Worlds.

How sweet is thy shining forth above the horizon of the covenant among the people of treachery, and your longing for God, O Love of the Worlds.

Through thee, the ensign of independence was lifted up upon the highest mountains and the sea of bounty surged, O Passion of the Worlds.

Through thy oneness, the Sun of divine unity shone forth, and through thy banishment the homeland of divine singleness was adorned — wherefore be patient, O Stranger of the Worlds.

We have made abasement the robe of glory and affliction the ornament of thy tabernacle, O Pride of the Worlds.

Thou beholdest the hearts filled with rancour, but it is for thee to show forbearance, O Coverer of the sins of the Worlds.

Shouldst thou behold the sword, advance towards it; and should an arrow be let fly, turn your steps in its path, O Sacrifice of the Worlds.

Is it thou who lamentest, or is it I? Nay, I cry out aloud for the fewness of them that have lent thee their aid, O thou through whom hath been raised the lamentation of the Worlds.

I have heard thy cry, O most glorious Beloved. Whereupon, the face of Baha' hath been set aglow with the heat of tribulation and the lights of Thy luminous words, and he hath risen up with the utmost faithfulness in the place of martyrdom and sacrifice, gazing unto Thy good-pleasure, O Thou Who appraisest the Worlds.

O 'Ali Akbar, give thanks unto God for this Tablet from which you may

discover the fragrance of the wrongs I have suffered and that which I have endured in the path of God, the Object of the devotion of the Worlds.

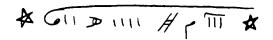
Should all my servants without exception read it and meditate upon it, there shall be ignited in every vein of their bodies a conflagration that shall set ablaze the Worlds.

(Tasbīḥ, pp.219–24; Adī'a, pp.169–79)

### XX SIX BAHA'I TALISMANIC PRAYERS

1 He is the Glory of the Most Glorious!

Make this land, O my God, blessed and secure for me. Guard me, then, O my God, at the time of my entering into it and my going out from it. Make it, then, a fortress for me and for whomsoever worships Thee and bows down before Thee, that I may be protected therein through Thy bounty and kept safe within it from the darts of those who have disbelieved in Thee, through Thy strength. Thou, verily, art the Potent, the Mighty, the All-Powerful, the All-Merciful.



(Baha' Allah, in Amr, IV, p.67)

2 In His Name, the All-Glorious, the All-Glorious.

Say: whosoever desires to protect himself, let him read this verse at night and at morn:

"O God, my God, I ask Thee by Thy name whereby Thou didst protect Abraham from the fire and Moses from Pharaoh and Baha' from Yahya, to guard me from the wicked ones among Thy servants. Thou, verily, art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Forgiving."

(Baha' Allah, in Amr, IV, p.68)

### 3 4484137 He is the Glorified 137444

Praise be to Thee, O my God, I and all created things bear witness that Thou art God, no god is there but Thee. From all eternity Thou hast been sanctified from the mention of all things and unto all eternity Thou shalt be as Thou hast ever been, no god is there but Thee. In Thee is our final destination. I ask Thee, O God, my God, to protect the bearer of this white page from all evil and affliction, from every plague and pestilence. Thou, verily, guardest whomsoever Thou willest and Thou, truly, hast encompassed all things in Thy knowledge.

(Baha' Allah, in Amr, IV, p.68)

4 In the Name of God, the High, the Exalted, the Most Lofty.
Praise be unto Thee, O God, my God, my Lord and my Master, My

Reliance and my Hope, my Refuge and my Light. I beseech Thee by Thy hidden and inviolate name that none knoweth but Thee, to protect the bearer of this page from every affliction and pestilence and from every Satan, whether man or woman, and from the evil of the wicked and the plotting of the unbelievers. Protect him also, O my God, from every pain and sickness, O Thou, in Whose hand is the Kingdom of all things, Thou art, verily, Powerful over all things. Thou doest as Thou wishest and decreest what Thou willest, O King of Kings, O Sovereign of grace, O Ancient in Thy loving-kindness, O Possessor of bounty and generosity and graciousness, O Healer of ills, O Sufficient in time of need, O Light of Lights, O Light above all light, O Manifestation of all that is revealed, O Merciful, O Compassionate. Have compassion, then, on the bearer of this page, through Thy Most Great Mercy and Thy Most Mighty Bounty, O Bountiful, O Gracious; and guard him through Thy protection from all that his heart detests. Thou, verily, art the Most Powerful of the Powerful. The glory from God be upon thee, O rising sun! I bear witness unto that which God hath borne witness for Himself, that there is no god but Him, the Mighty, the Beloved.

(Baha' Allah, in Adī'a, pp.206-8)

## 5 152 [i.e. Bahā']

Praised be Thou, O my God, I and all things bear witness that Thou art God, no god is there but Thee. From all eternity, Thou hast been sanctified from the mention of all things, and unto all eternity Thou shalt be as Thou hast ever been, no god is there but Thee. In Thee is our final destination. I ask Thee, O God, my God, to protect the bearer of this white page from evil and affliction, from plague and pestilence. Thou, verily, guardest whomsoever Thou willest and Thou, truly, hast encompassed all things in Thy knowledge. I have placed my Self under Thy protection and Thy custody. Guard it, then, O Protector of the worlds.

(Baha' Allah, in Adī'a, pp.208-9)

## 6 Prayer for the protection of whomsoever wishes to carry it.

Lord, Thou knowest that the souls are encompassed by calamities and misfortunes and surrounded by afflictions and disasters. Every affliction circles about man and every catastrophe leaps upon him like the assault of a serpent. No refuge or sanctuary is there for them save Thy protection and custody, Thy guard and Thy defence. O Merciful Lord, make Thy protection my shield and Thy defence my paradise and the courtyard of the gate of Thy oneness my refuge, and Thy guard and protection my fortress and sanctuary. Protect me from the evil of self

and desire and guard me from every affliction and disorder, from every trial and hardship. Thou, verily, art the Protector, the Guardian, the Custodian, the All-Sufficient, and Thou art, truly, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

('Abd al-Baha', Munājāthā-yi 'Abd al-Bahā', p.66)

XXI THE LONG HEALING PRAYER (ANTA 'L-KĀFĪ)

A literal translation of the opening verses, designed to show the technique of the original:

By Thee, O 'Alī, by Thee, O Wafī, by Thee, O Bahī. Thou arte the Kāfī and Thou art the Shāfī and Thou art the Bāqī, O Bāqī. By Thee, O Sulṭān, by Thee, O Raf'ān, by Thee, O Dayyān. Thou art the Kāfī and Thou art the Shāfī and Thou art the Bāqī, O Bāqī. By Thee, O Aḥad, by Thee, O Ṣamad, by Thee, O Fard (? Farad). Thou art the Kāfī and Thou art the Shāfī and Thou art the Bāqī, O Bāqī. By Thee, O Subḥān, by Thee, O Qudsān, by Thee, O Must'ān, Thou art the Kāfī and Thou art the Shāfī and Thou art the Bāqī, O Bāqī. By Thee, O 'Alīm, by Thee, O Ḥakīm, by Thee, O 'Azīm. Thou art the Kāfī and Thou art the Shāfī and Thou art the Bāqī, O Bāqī.

The official English translation of these verses is as follows:

He is the Healer, the Sufficer, The Helper, the All-Forgiving, the All-Merciful.

I call on Thee O Exalted One, O Faithful One, O Glorious One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!

I call on Thee O Sovereign, O Upraiser, O Judge! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!

I call on Thee O Peerless One, O Eternal One, O Single One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!

I call on Thee O Most Praised One, O Holy Cne, O Helping One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One! I call on Thee O Omniscient, O Most Wise, O Most Great One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!

> (Bahā' Allāh, Lawḥ-i mubārak-i Anta 'l-Kāfī, English trans. The Healing Prayer, pp.2-3) (Reproduced by kind permission of Bahā'ī-Verlag)

LAWḤ-I ISM-I A'ZAM BY 'ABD AL-BAHA', ON THE MEANING OF THE "GREATEST NAME"

As regards the explanation of Monsieur Angelmann (?) concerning the writing of the Greatest Name on the ringstone, although it is fairly close to the truth, yet he should ponder the matter most deeply and meditate thoroughly upon it. It is made up of two letter  $b\bar{a}$ 's and four  $h\bar{a}$ 's. The interpretation of the  $b\bar{a}$ ' has been written in explanation of the words Bism Allah al-rahman al-rahim; since it is a very detailed explanation it is unnecessary to repeat it here — you must refer to it. The repetition of the  $b\bar{a}$ ' indicates the station of the Hidden and Manifest. As for the four  $h\bar{a}$ 's, these are the pillars of the Temple of Unity, and together add up to ten, for one and two make three, three and three six, six and four ten; this station is referred to in the verse of the Qur'an: "We completed them with ten" (Qur'an 7:142: "And We appointed a meeting with Moses for 30 nights, which We completed with ten other nights, so that his whole time with his Lord amounted to 40 nights").

Moreover, the numerical equivalent of the letter  $h\bar{a}$  [itself] is five. This  $h\bar{a}$  is the  $h\bar{a}$  of the reality (huwiyyat) and essence of the Most Merciful, which is manifest and clear in the number five, which is the numerical equivalent of the word  $B\bar{a}b$ . Therefore, in the Greatest Name as it appears on the ringstone symbol, the  $b\bar{a}$  has been joined with the  $h\bar{a}$ .

Likewise, the Greatest Name is manifest in that symbol, its numerical equivalent being nine, for nine is the numerical equivalent of  $Bah\bar{a}'$ . Multiply it by the word  $B\bar{a}b$ , which equals five, that is nine times five, which makes 45. In the same manner multiply the five, which is the number of  $B\bar{a}b$ , by nine, which is the number of  $Bah\bar{a}'$ —that is 45. This number is the numerical equivalent of the word  $\bar{A}dam$  (Adam).

Likewise, when you add together the units which make up the number nine, they equal 45— one and two is three, three and three is six, six and four ten, ten and five 15, 15 and six 21, 21 and seven 28, 28 and eight 36, 36 and nine 45. In the same way, if you add up the units in the number  $B\bar{a}b$  [5], they come to 15— one and two make three, three and three make six, six and four ten, ten and five 15, which is equivalent to the number of  $Haw\bar{a}$  (Eve), which is in agreement with the tradition "I and 'Ali are the parents of this people".

The meaning of Adam is the reality that bestows bounties, is manifest and active, for in him are comprised the outward manifestations of the divine names and attributes, and the various states of the All-Merciful. Eve is the reality that is dependent, on which bounties are bestowed, which is subservient and influenced, for it is under the influence of all the divine names and attributes. This, then, is nearer to the inner mystery of the arrangement of the ringstone symbol.

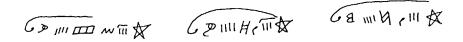
Know also that the three horizontal lines represent the World of God, the World of Command, and the World of Creation, for they are the sources of the [divine] influences. The World of God is the source of the grace of the Almighty; the World of Command is the pure and refined mirror in which the Sun of Reality is manifested; and the World of Creation is the source of the acquisition of effulgences which appear through the medium of the Most Great Channel, that is the recipient of the grace of God and the bestower of grace upon created things.

Since the true  $b\bar{a}$ ' which is the universal reality passes down through the three grades from the highest summit to the lowest centre and shines forth in each grade, it is the unifier and revealer of all the worlds. On the horizon of ancient grandeur, two brilliant stars are shining and luminous: one star is on the right, the other on the left. And this great mystery is the two shapes that have been drawn upon the left and right of the Greatest Name on the ringstone symbol. The mystery concerns the manifestation of Baha' Allah and the Bab. Although the two shapes on right and left are in the form of a star, they refer nevertheless to the Temple of Man, which consists of a head and arms and two legs. Upon thee rest the Glory of Glories.

(Ishrāq Khāvarī, Mā'ida, II, pp.101-3)

XXIII SOME BAHA'I AND SHAYKHI INTERPRETATIONS OF "THE MYSTERY OF INVERSION"

At least three other forms of the devices given on pages 23 and 50 may be found:<sup>1</sup>



This cipher is frequently encountered as a representation of the greatest name in works on Islamic magic by both Shi'i and Sunni authors. As is commonly the case in such matters, attempts have been made to demonstrate the orthodoxy of the cipher by tracing it back to holy individuals from the early period. Thus, for example, Ahmad al-Buni, who describes it in detail, cites the authority of 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas, a cousin of the Prophet frequently referred to as the source for ahadith, for the actual form of the cipher. He goes on to give statements about it and its efficacy from Dhu 'l-Nun al-Misri, Abu 'l-Darda', Ibn al-Warraq, and 'Ali. Leaving aside the probably insoluble question of the actual origin of this figure, it seems likely that most of the variants found in different works are based on a poem attributed to 'Ali and quoted by al-Buni. The poem is as follows:

Three sticks in a row after a seal; above them the semblance of a straightened lance

A blind *mīm* without a tail, then a ladder unto all that is hoped for, but which is not a ladder

Four things like fingers in a row, pointing to good deeds, but without a wrist

And a  $h\bar{a}$ ' that has been split, then an inverted  $w\bar{a}w$  like the syphon of a phlebotomist, but not a blood-letting cup

This is the name whose worth is magnified; if you were ignorant of it before, know it now

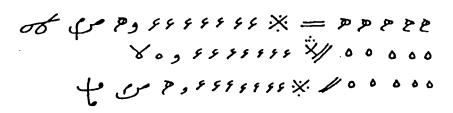
O bearer of the great name, take sufficiency in it — you shall be preserved from misfortunes and shall be kept safe

It is the name of God, may His glory be gloried, unto all men, be they Arab or non-Arab.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the three Arabic letters  $m\bar{i}m$ ,  $h\bar{a}'$  and  $w\bar{a}w$ , it seems likely that the symbols employed in the cipher are, like the letters in most Islamic "magic alphabets", ultimately derived from real or supposed

characters from pre-Islamic Arabic scripts such as Lihyanite, Thamudic and Safaitic, or from the Berber tifinagh script.<sup>3</sup> This is not, of course, to suggest direct conscious or knowledgeable borrowing of the type which would enable us to "decipher" the name, but to indicate its probable relationship to other alphabetic systems used in Islamic magic. Many of the symbols used in Babi talismans and the Baha'i ringstone symbol are based on characters from these magical alphabets, in particular the "spectacle letters" that are one of the basic elements of them.

The cipher already reproduced above (see p.50) also appears in variant forms, mainly because it too is based on reported verbal descriptions. The main alternatives are:



These last two forms are mentioned by Shaykh Taqi al-Din Ibrahim ibn 'Ali al-Kaf'ami (d.900/1495) in his commentary on a work entitled Janna al-amān. In a discussion of the third of these ciphers, Karim Khan Kirmani states that he knows of no evidence for its having originated with one of the Imams, and that it is clear from al-Kaf'ami's description that it is intended to be written on the palm of the left hand as a cure for colic and flatulence (?); it is nothing more than a medical charm of uncertain antiquity.<sup>4</sup>

There is, as we have noted, a complex interpretation of the letter waw which is seen with its tail stretched back over the other elements of the first series of devices, thus:

This interpretation is based on part of a letter from Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, which is cited in the Lawḥ-i qinā', a letter from Baha' Allah to Hajj Mulla Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani, the Shaykhi leader. This letter is virtually incomprehensible without some kind of commentary and my translation is, for that reason, more than usually tentative.

Baha' Allah introduces his quotation of al-Ahsa'i's letter by explaining that, when he was in Iraq, Mirza Husayn Qummi brought him a copy of it and stated that the Shaykhis (? of Karbala) had requested him to explain its meaning. He refused to do so other than allusively, however, on the grounds that he could find no one truly seeking divine knowledge. He now challenges Kirmani either to provide an interpretation or to seek one from him. The letter, he states, was written in answer to a question regarding the words "the Qa'im [exists] in the loins". 6 He

begins his quotation at the point where al-Ahsa'i commences his explanation:

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. I reply that it has been transmitted that, after the expiry of alif lām mīm sād by alif lām mīm rā' the Mahdi shall arise, upon him be peace. And the alif has come upon the end of the sad and the sad is with you, wider than the two thighs, and how can it be one of the two? And also, the waw is [composed of] three letters, six and an alif and six. 7 Six days have elapsed and the alif is the completion, no more need be said, and the [other] six refers to the other days. Otherwise, why was the going back produced, for it is the mystery of inversion for the cipher of the chief (sirr al-tankīs li-ramz al-ra'īs)? And if there should be acknowledgement on the part of someone else to the remaining six, the matter will end in the Proof and the greatest name will appear in the two alifs standing upright in the word which is two letters from God, for they are both 11 and with them [i.e. the two alifs] they are 13. And there has appeared the waw which is ha', and where is the division? But the unit between the six and the six is decreed for the expiration of the mim sad by the mim ra' and the secret of the six and the 60 has appeared in a sixth of it, which is a quarter of it, and all of the sixth which is the quarter with the alif both inserted in it. And its mystery is the descent of the alif from the wide point with the six and the six, and the second descended in the blessed night with the 11, which [? the night] is that which is the mystery and the first concealed name manifest in the mystery of Thursday; and the mystery shall be completed on Friday. And the pure water shall flow forth upon the day when the sky shall come with manifest smoke. All of this is in the waw inverted from the mumbled ha', so where is the union before the confirmer of the disjunction? There is no other in the single nor between it, otherwise it would be other than single. And we make such parables for the people, but only the knowledgeable shall comprehend them.

This passage, together with a number of others from Shaykhi literature, has been understood by later Baha'i writers to encode a prophecy relating to the date of the appearance of the Qa'im and has been interpreted accordingly.

According to Aqa Mirza Haydar 'Ali Isfahani, the words "And the alif has come upon the end of the sad, and the sad is with you, wider than the two thighs, and how shall it be one of the two?" may be interpreted as follows: in the abjad system, the letter sad belongs to the tens (it equals 90) and alif to the units (it equals 1). When the alif comes

to the end of the sad (i.e. 99), the hundreds are reached (100). When the letters lam, mim and sad are calculated, they add up to 160, and when we add the previous 100 to this, we get 260. "The two thighs" are a reference to the units and tens, since a standing man takes the shape of the number 11 (which contains both tens and units). So al-Ahsa'i is saying that the sad must be made to go beyond the units and tens and must be given the rank of the hundreds (i.e. it becomes 900). Since he said at the beginning "the alif has come upon the end of the sad" (now 999), this raises the whole thing to 1000. And when 260 is added to 1000 it becomes 1260, "the year of the appearance of the promised one" (i.e. 1260 A.H./1844 A.D.). Al-Ahsa'i says "how can it be one of the two?", meaning how can the sad be accounted as belonging to the units or the tens, "because if it does not reach the stage of the hundreds, the purpose in constructing the year of the manifestation would not be attained."

The following sentence, beginning "and also the waw is [composed of] three letters . . ." is interpreted on the basis of various Baha'i scriptural texts as follows: the waw as pronounced has three letters, a waw = 6 (which refers to the "six manifestations" before the Bab—according to the Twelver Shi'a, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad); an alif (which refers to the appearance of the Bab, the Qa'im of the House of Muhammad); and a waw = 6 (which refers to the universal manifestation of Baha' Allah, which appeared after the alif). The "mystery of inversion" refers to the appearance of the second waw after the first waw; that is, after the first six manifestations the alif "rising up at the command of God" will arise, and after it the universal manifestation of God will appear in the form of waw with the numerical value of six, which indicates that the manifestation of Baha' Allah will be the equivalent of all past manifestations.

In a letter to an individual called "Asad" (Asad Allah), Baha' Allah relates the idea of the first waw being completed by the alif to the Quranic verse "We created the heavens and the earth in six days" (50:38; cf. 7:54; 10:3; 11:7; 25:59; 32:4; 57:4), stating that the (first) heaven and earth had been folded up like a scroll, that is the heavens raised in the Qur'an, together with their suns, moons and stars (which are the 'ulama', mystics, laws and religious systems (sharayi') have all ended with the alif between the two waws.<sup>10</sup>

The "mystery of inversion (sirr al-tankis)" itself is related in several Baha'i texts to the Islamic tradition (obviously an echo of Matthew 19:30; 20:16; Mark 10:31; or Luke 13:30) "He shall make the highest of them the lowest and the lowest of them the highest", the understood meaning being that, in the new creation, the true worth of men will be the inverse of their outward rank. A further meaning is given by 'Abd al-Baha' in a letter to Mu'awin al-Tujjar Naraqi, that all the revolution-

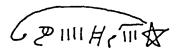
But many that are Fig. 2 Sharles

ary events of the past would be reproduced exactly in the subsequent revelation. 12 The word "chief" (al-ra'is) in the following phrase is interpreted by 'Abd al-Baha' as a direct reference to Baha' Allah. In the exordium to a tafsīr written by him on the Quranic verse "He knows the unseen and reveals not His unseen to anyone" (72:26), he refers to the letters of the title Baha' and continues: "he desired to free them from vain fancy and to draw them nigh unto the known; he sent down to them the explanation and gave them tidings of the "remaining six" and their appearance in the realm of creation and explained to them the mystery of the inversion and the appearance of the chief; and when he appeared, all created things were thrown into confusion . . ."13

The basic Baha'i interpretation of the first part of this text owes something to statements made by al-Ahsa'i himself and by Sayyid Kazim Rashti. Although it is clear that there is some relationship between al-Ahsa'i's original theory and later Baha'i use of it, his intentions have been distorted by some modern writers. <sup>14</sup> One of the main points at issue is the idea that the waw refers to three days: al-dunyā, al-ūlā and al-qiyāma al-kubrā. This is discussed by al-Ahsa'i in a letter written in 1226/1811, in which he deals with the topic of the waw in the greatest name, in the course of answering a question on the nature of the Imam's existence in the realm of hurqalya. The relevant passages are as follows:

The days are [to the number of] three. He said, exalted be He, "remind them of the days of God" (Qur'an 14:5). The first day is the World (al-dunya), the second is the Primal (al-ula), which is the day of his rising up (qiyām) and his return (raj'a) with his fathers, on them be peace, and their followers (shi'a), and the third is the day of the great resurrection (al-qiyama al-kubra). In the Ziyāra al-jāmi'a [are the words] "the proofs of God unto the people of the World (al-dunya) and the Hereafter (al-ākhira) and the Primal (al-ula)." And that Time is subtler and its people are subtler and its places are subtler to the extent that, at its end, the subtlety of his Time shall be 70 times greater than that of this Time. And this is the meaning of my statement that he is in hurqalya and that he is in the eighth clime . . .

... And when the World ends, its last minute shall be the first minute of the Primal. 'Ali, on him be peace, referred to this in his *khutba*, when he said, "I am he that stands between the two gulfs (*al-tutunjayn*)". 15 and in the blessed name transmitted from him, which is this:



The inverted waw is the Qa'im, on him be peace, and his being inverted is a reference to his return, while his being a waw is a reference to his form. They have [? he has] said that the first waw is a reference to the six days in which al-dunya was created, while the second waw is a reference to the days in which al-ula was created, and the alif between them is a reference to the fact that he is the Qa'im [rising up] between the two rivers. The Qa'im, on whom be peace, shall return in al-ula, not in the archetypes and, as regards his departure [? from hurqalya], he will . . . [take on the nature of each of the realms he passes through]. The birth of the shi'a and their marriage and life are in the true bodies and the independent souls, the truth and independence of which reside in their relationship to the truth of these true bodies . . . The truth of al-dunya with regard to al-ula is like that of the shadow with regard to the one who casts it. God guides to the straight path. 16

One of the main problems in commenting on this concept is the absence, as far as I am aware, of any later treatment of it in Shaykhi literature. Al-Ahsa'i himself does not appear to have elaborated upon the idea, though he does discuss the meaning of the principal terms in his commentary on the Ziyāra al-jāmi'a (mentioned above), which is sufficiently close to the schema proposed in al-Risāla al-Rashtiyya to allow us to grasp the main trend of his thinking. He begins with a presentation of the fundamental meaning of the phrases "people of [this] world (al-dunya) and the last (al-akhira)", in which the concept of this "material world" is contrasted with the "hereafter". The definition of al-ula, however, is more problematic: "the meaning of the first (al-ula) is the return (raj'a) of the Family of Muhammad [i.e. the Imams], or the rise of their Qa'im, or [the rise of] most of them. It is called al-ula (the first, the primal) in relationship to al-akhira (the last)."

Having given these basic definitions, he immediately turns to consider how "these three days are called al-dunya and al-ula and al-ukhrā [f. of al-ākhar, the other; also used to mean "the hereafter"]". In order to demonstrate that these are three distinct periods, he cites two traditions commenting on the Qur'anic verse "and remind them of the days of God" (14:5). The first is from (Hashim ibn Ahmad) Muthanna 'l-Hannat: "I heard Abu Ja'far [i.e. Muhammad al-Baqir, the fifth Imam] say: 'the days of God [consist of] the day on which the Qa'im shall arise, and the day of the return (al-kurra), and the day of resurrection". The second is in the tafsir of 'Ali ibn Ibrahim: "the days of God are three: the day of the Qa'im, and the day of death (al-mawt) and the day of resurrection (al-qiyama)."

Al-Ahsa'i notes that, in these traditions, the rise of the Qa'im or the return (al-raj'a) is treated as a day distinct from the day of resurrection

(yawm al-qiyama), which latter is referred to as al-akhira, and distinct also from al-dunya. This day (of the rise of the Qa'im or al-raj'a) cannot properly be termed al-dunya because this latter is expressed as "nearer" than the return (of the Imams) or the rise of the Qa'im. Nor can it properly be termed al-akhira, because the qiyama is after it and the qiyama is al-akhira. In the traditions, there are references to al-dunya or to al-raj'a and the rise of the Qa'im, or to al-akhira. In the interpretation of the words "the days are three", only the rise of the Qa'im, al-raj'a, and al-akhira were mentioned, but not al-dunya. The reason for this is that the Imam was threatening the punishment that would befall men; this punishment can occur in the first three days mentioned, because al-dunya is the place where warning (of the punishment) takes place (i.e. not the punishment itself).

He himself, however, has stated that "the days are three: al-dunya, the rise of the Qa'im or al-raj'a or the return of most of them (the Imams), and al-akhira." This is because the rise of the Qa'im and al-raj'a are one in nature (in respect of justice, the establishment of the truth, the removal of iniquity, and the destruction of the barrier of taqiyya). They only differ with respect to the return of the Imam of the Age (i.e. the rise of the Qa'im), inasmuch as "return" refers to (new) life after death, whereas the Qa'im is still alive (i.e. he does not need to return from the dead since he is not dead but only in occultation).<sup>17</sup>

It is, obviously, pointless to try to develop an entirely consistent schema out of the above. At its most basic, it would seem that al-Ahsa'i thought in terms of three days or ages, the first the present state of things (al-dunya), the second the day of the appearance of the Qa'im and the return of the Imams (al-ula), and the third the last, general resurrection (al-qiyama; al-akhira). To this extent, there is some justification in the Baha'i interpretation of the inverted waw referred to in his letter as a reference to three ages. But it is also, I think, apparent from the foregoing and from a wider reading of al-Ahsa'i's writings on related subjects (as, for example, his discussion of the meaning of the creation in six days)<sup>18</sup> that he did not conceive of a rather crude, linear movement of three successive ages, but a much more sophisticated system in which concepts of time, space, movement and so forth are elaborately interrelated. There is, in general, a tendency in Baha'i writing to oversimplify the often highly complex theories of al-Ahsa'i, most notably in references to his rejection of "physical resurrection" in favour of "spiritual resurrection" or a "physical mi'raj" in favour of a "spiritual mi'raj". 19

It is also unclear how far al-Ahsa'i's scheme of three ages is to be related to the perception of immediate or imminent events. Sayyid Kazim Rashti also refers to this concept of "three days" in his Sharh al-khutba al-tutunjiyya, but he does not seem to have connected this to

contemporary developments. These latter he interprets instead in terms of a scheme of two cycles (dawratān) of Islam, one an age of outward observance, the other an age of inward truth. This second age he believed to have begun at the commencement of the thirteenth Islamic century and to be connected with the appearance of al-Ahsa'i. Many early Babis also adopted this latter schema or variants of it.<sup>20</sup>

#### NOTES

- 1. For a fuller treatment of this topic, see MacEoin, Some Bahā'ī and Shaykhī interpretations of "the mystery of reversal", Bahā'ī Studies Bulletin 1/i (1982), pp.11-23.
- 2. Shams al-ma'ārif al-kubrā wa laṭā'if al-'awārif, quoted in Anawati, Le nom suprême de Dieu, see pp.23-8.
- 3. For a comprehensive list, see Ibn Waḥshiyya, Kitāb shawq al-mustahām fī ma'rifa rumūz al-aqlām, in J. Hammer, Ancient Alphabets and Hieroglyphic Characters Explained (London 1806) and S. Matton, La magie arabe traditionelle (Paris 1977), pp.129ff.
- 4. Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani, letter to Hajj Mulla Mahdi Khurasani, in *Majmū'a al-rasā'il* 67 (Kirman n.d.), p.236.
- 5. Printed in Majmū'a-yi alwāḥ-i mubāraka, pp.85-6. On the Lawḥ-i qinā', see Māzandarānī, Asrār al-āthār, IV, p.519.
- 6. It was, in fact, written in 1197/1783 in response to a request from Shaykh Musa ibn Muhammad al-Sayigh. See full text in Ḥajj Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kirmānī, Risāla fī jawāb al-Shaykh Ḥusayn ibn al-Shaykh Muhammad al-Mazīdī, in Majmū'a al-rasā'il 61 (Kirman n.d.), pp.51-3.
- 7. I.e., when the letter w is written out as a word it becomes wāw; the abjad values of w is 6, thus six followed by alif followed by six.
- 8. Letter cited by Ishrāq Khāvarī, *Raḥīq-i makhtūm*, I (Tehran 130 B.E./ 1973), pp.679-80.
- 9. Interpretation given by Ishrāq Khāvarī, Raḥīq, I, pp.680-81; cf. letter from Shoghi Effendi to Khāvarī in idem (ed.), Mā'ida-yi āsmānī, III, pp.4-5; letter of Baha' Allah to "Asad" in ibid, I, pp.15-17 and Raḥīq, I, pp.686-8; idem, letter in Mā'ida, I, pp.12-13, Raḥīq, I, pp.684-5.
- Mā'ida, I, p.16, Raḥīq, I, p.687; cf. letter to Mulla Ahmad Hisari in Mā'ida,
   I, pp.14-15, Rahīq, I, pp.685-6.
- 11. See Baha' Allah, letter in Mā'ida, I, pp.12-13, Raḥīq, I, pp.684-5; idem, letter to Mulla Ahmad Hisari, in Mā'ida, I, pp.14-15, Raḥīq, I, pp.685-6; idem, letter to "Asad", in Mā'ida, I, p.16, Raḥīq, I, pp.687-8; idem, letter in Mā'ida, I, p.14; Raḥiq, I, p.690; 'Abd al-Baha', letter to Mu'awin al-Tujjar Naraqi, in Mā'ida, II, pp.19, 34, Raḥīq, I, p.688.
- 12. In Mā'ida, II, pp.19, 34, Raḥīq, I, p.688.
- 13. In *Rahīq*, I, p.682.
- 14. This is substantiated in MacEoin, "Baha'i and Shaykhi interpretations".
- 15. This is the sermon generally known as al-Khutba al-tutunjiyya, the authenticity of which is sometimes questioned. The tutunj is here glossed as khalīj or gulf, and lower down in the same passage as nahr or river. Elsewhere, al-Ahsa'i provides a significantly different interpretation of this phrase,

explaining the words as referring to man as standing midway between the higher and lower worlds, see *Sharḥ al-fawā'id* (Tabriz 1272/1856), p. 286.

- 16. Al-Aḥsā'ī, al-Risāla al-Rashtiyya, in Jawāmi' al-kilam, I/2 (Tabriz 1273/1856), p.103. A similar interpretation of the waw in the greatest name is given by Rashtī in his Sharḥ al-khuṭba al-tuṭunjiyya, see Māzandarānī, Asrār, V, p.240. On al-Ahsa'i's views on the nature of man, see MacEoin, Aḥsā'ī, Encyclopaedia Iranica, I, pp.674-9 and idem, Cosmogony and cosmology vii, in Shaikhism, Encyclopaedia Iranica, VI, pp.326-8.
- 17. Al-Aḥṣā'ī, Sharḥ al-ziyāra, I, pp.159-61.
- 18. See his Sharh al-fawa'id, pp.135-58.
- 19. See, for example, H.M. Balyuzi, The Bab (Oxford 1973), p.3.
- 20. For details of this theory, elaborated in Rashti's Sharh al-qasīda, see MacEoin, From Shaykhism to Babism: a study in charismatic renewal in Shī'ī Islam, pp.212-14.

# PASSAGE FROM SURA AL-HAJJ ON THE RITES OF THE SHIRAZ HOUSE, BY BAHA' ALLAH

O Muhammad, when the fragrances of holiness have drawn thee unto them and turned thee unto the land of the All-Merciful that thou mayest discover the breezes of divine praise, go forth then by permission of Thy Lord, the Generous, unto the spot around which circle the angels that are nigh unto God, they that sing His praises about the Throne. At the moment when thou arisest from thy place, seeking to turn in the direction of God, thy Lord, take off from thy body the robe of self and desire and from thy feet the sandals of sin and wickedness, for thou art entering the spot that none may reach save he that casteth behind him all that are on earth and in the heavens, wherein naught but the greatest righteousness shall be accepted, if thou art of them that comprehend, and around which circle the Mount of Command and the Land of Holiness and the Sinai of Glory and the hearts of them that ascend at all times unto the heaven of nearness. None other shall ever attain unto it nor be mentioned by God as having reached it, even should he dwell there for a thousand years as you number them.

And when thou hast journeyed from thy self and from the world and its people and hast travelled unto God, thy Lord, and hast reached the spot at which thou beholdest the outskirts of the city, dismount and stop where thou art and say: "Spirit and light and glory and praise be upon thee, O City of God, O dwelling-place of His names, O treasury of His attributes, O source of His bounties, O mine of His grace, O place of the manifestation of His effulgences that have encompassed all creation. I bear witness that from thy outskirts appeared the Primal Point 1i.e. the Bab] and the ornament of pre-existence and the eternal mystery and the universal word and the fixed decrees and the hidden secrets. Thus hast thou surpassed all others in receiving grace from God, the Protector, the Self-Subsisting."

Lift up, then, your hands unto God, thy Lord, with humility and self-effacement, with submission and pleasing contentment, and say: "O Lord, praise be to Thee for the wonders of Thy gifts and the graces of Thy bestowals. How can I give thanks to Thee, O my God, for having provided me with the visitation of Thy House and having honoured me with it and having chosen me for this bounty in which none hath preceded me and having taught me what none hath known but Thee? Wherefore, O my God, I have fled from the house of my self and taken refuge in the place in which Thy most exalted Self hath been established; I have taken flight from whatever hath kept me back from drawing nigh unto Thee and gone for protection unto the precincts of Thy most great mercy. Deprive me not, then, O my God, of that which belongeth unto Thee and cause me not to be occupied with any but

Thee. Thou, verily, art the Mighty, the Forgiving. O Lord, make me steadfast in Thy love and in the love of Thy friends, and cause me not to be of them that have disbelieved in Thy verses after they were sent down, them that have mocked them after their perfumes had encompassed all created things and all that was brought into existence in the visible and the invisible worlds. O Lord, send unto me the rod of Thy grace and bounty that I may cleave therewith the sea of self and desire, pass over it, and reach the pavilion of the glory of Thine exaltation and the tabernacle of the holiness of Thy protection, lest there be made manifest from me that which Thy good-pleasure abhorreth. Thou, verily, art He that doeth as He willest, and Thou art, in truth, the Lord of this firmly builded House."

Ride on, then, until thou reachest a spot at which there shall be between thee and the city only a thousand steps, be it more or less. Whereupon, dismount and immerse thyself in water, as thou hast been commanded in the Book of God, the Protector, the Exalted, the Self-Subsisting. And when thou comest forth from the water, trim thy moustache, then clip thy nails, then shave thy head, then make use of the best of perfumes, then put on the best clothes you are able to afford. And if thou art not able to perform that which we have commanded thee, be thou not saddened, for God hath pardoned thee; He, verily, is the Powerful, the Forgiving, the Pardoner. Strive, then, within thyself that, at the moment thy eye falleth upon the city and thou comest close to it, thy heart may be purified from the mention of all things in such wise that thou mayest cast behind thee all that hath been created between the earth and the heavens, for thou art at that moment walking before the King of all creation, thy Sovereign of names and attributes. Thus instructeth thee the Pen of God, thy Lord and the Lord of all things, if thou art of them that know.

And when thou hast performed that which we have commanded thee, rise from that spot and turn your face towards the House. Then stop, then raise your hands in humble devotion to God, the Powerful, the Protector, the Beloved, and say: "O my God, this is the spot through which the eyes of them that desire Thee have been solaced and the hearts of Thy lovers have been attracted; this is the utmost goal of them that seek Thee and the highest desire of them that yearn for Thee. This is the spot wherein the eyes of them that know Thee have rained tears in their separation from Thee and the faces of them that have attained unto Thee have turned yellow in their longing for Thy beauty. I beseech Thee, O my God, by it and by the effulgences of the lights of the glory of Thy oneness and the flashes of the manifestation of the holiness of Thy divinity, to release me from the fire of my self and to sanctify me from all that is unworthy of Thy sovereignty. Thou, verily, art the Protector, the Self-Subsisting."

Lower, then, thy hands until they reach the level of thy cheeks, then magnify God (with the phrase Allahu akbar) nine times, then raise thy hands yet again unto God, thy Lord and the Lord of all that hath been and all that is, and say: "O my God, this is the city wherein Thy sovereignty was made manifest and the signs of the glory of Thy grandeur appeared and Thy verses were sent down and Thy word was completed and Thy might was exalted and Thy proof shone forth and Thy mercy encompassed all things and all that is in the heavens and the earth. There beareth witness unto this my self and my heart and my tongue and beyond them blessed servants. Whereupon, I beseech Thee, O my God, by it [the city] and all that hath been manifested in it to remove that which hath kept me far from the shore of the holiness of Thy mercy and bounty and shut me out from the precincts of the outpouring of Thy grace and bestowal. Clothe me, then, O my God, in the robe of Thy graciousness and bounty. Thou willest and Thou art, truly, the Mighty, the Exalted, the Beloved. Give me, then, to drink, O my God, from the fountain of the glory of Thy knowledge and the living waters of the holiness of meeting with Thee, waters which, were but a drop from them to be sprinkled upon all created things, they would be raised to eternal, everlasting life, standing before Thy face and the manifestations of the flashes of the lights of Thy countenance. Thou, verily, art the Mighty, the Exalted, the Holy."

Lower, then, thy hands and walk upon the ground with the dignity of God and His tranquillity. And as thou walkest proclaim the singleness of thy Lord (with the phrase "there is no god but God") then proclaim His greatness (with the phrase Allahu akbar), then His holiness (with the phrase Allahu aqdas), then His majesty (with the phrase Allahu amjad). Follow, then, in the ways of the messengers and the manners of them that are near to God, saying: "Here am I, O my God, here am I; greetings unto Thee, and the light be before Thee." Repeat these words as much as will not cool down the fire of thy ardour and passion. Thus we have instructed thee in truth that thou mayest be of them that act in accordance with what they have been commanded. Know, then, that thou didst answer thy Lord with these words when He ascended the Throne and called upon all created things with His words "Am I not your Lord?" Those words are the secret of those others, if ye be of them that ponder upon the mysteries of their Lord. Indeed, shouldst thou behold with the eye of thine inner being, thou shalt at that moment behold Him raised upon the thrones of all created beings, crying: "No god is there but Me, the Protector, the Self-Subsisting." Know, then, O pilgrim, thy value and station at that moment. Give thanks, then, to God that this has been bestowed upon thee and that He hath aided thee therein. Verily, there is no god but Him; creation and command are His and all act according to His bidding. Blessed art thou, O servant, in that thou hast entered the land of holiness, the Paran of the Spirit, and the Sinai of Command. Yea, shouldst thou make sharp thy sight, thou wilt behold all about thee circumambulating. By God, O servant journeying from thy home, should God open thy vision and shouldst thou turn thy gaze above the head unto the heavens, thou wilt behold the sanctuaries of holiness, the habitations of loving-fellowship, the people of the pavilion of the heavenly kingdom, the inhabitants of the thrones of the kingdom of might, the bodies of the holy ones among the manifestations of the realm below and the kingdom above all moving in the heaven of holiness above thy head, extolling with thee the unity, the greatness, the holiness, and the majesty of the Lord of the City and of him that appeared from it and arose therein. Thus shalt thou behold the matter, if thou art of them that see with the eyes of the spirit.

And when thou reachest the spot at which thou art come nigh unto the gate of the city at a distance of 20 paces, stop at the command of God, thy Lord, the Lord of all things, and the Lord of this praiseworthy scene. Extol, then, the greatness of God 19 times, then address the city on my behalf, saying: "May God curse a people that have interposed themselves between us and the lights of thy holiness, O City of God, and who have kept us back from inhaling the fragrances of the holiness of Thy oneness and from dwelling within the precincts of the glory of Thy mercy and from standing in the courtyard of the gate of the outpouring of Thy compassion." Turn, then, thy gaze unto the most great spectacle, in the direction of the wall of the city and whatsoever hath been created therein and hath existed within it, for upon all of these hath fallen the eye of God, the Mighty, the Protector, the Self-Sufficient. Say: "O wall of the City! Blessed be thou, inasmuch as there shone forth above thee the lights of the sun of thy Lord, the Exalted, the Most High. O trees of the City! Blessed be ye, inasmuch as the breezes of holiness have been wafted upon you from the direction of eternity. O air of the City! Blessed be thou, inasmuch as the breath of God, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Beloved, was spread within thee. O earth of the City! Blessed be thou, inasmuch as the feet of thy Lord, the All-Merciful, have walked upon thee and the form of the Praised One hath passed over thee in the days when all were wrapped in the veils of their own selves."

Walk, then, until thou reachest the city; and when thou hast attained its presence and arrived at its gate, place thy face upon the dust of the gate, that thou mayest discover the fragrance of thy Lord, the Exalted, the Most High and may be of them that are nourished with the water of life. Know, then, that from its dust is manifested the decree of water, and from its water the decree of air, and from its air the effect of fire, and from a torch ignited from it hath appeared the decree of 'B' and 'E' [hukm al-kāf wa'l-nūn—i.e. kun, "be"], if thou art of them that know.

This is how we have described it unto thee in the land and among these people that are unconscious in the drunkenness of self. Otherwise, by Him in Whose hand is my soul, an atom of its dust is more glorious in the sight of God than all that hath been created in the meadows of eternity and all that hath been decreed in the tablets of destiny within the mystery of fate in the realm of the divine decree. Thus do we cast upon thee the secrets of the cause, that thou mayest be of them that comprehend.

When thou hast kissed the dust and derived a blessing therefrom, raise up thy head, then stand and magnify God (with the phrase Allahu akbar) 19 times, then walk with the dignity and tranquillity of God and with His grandeur and majesty until you arrive before the House. Then stop and say: "I bear witness by my tongue and my soul and my spirit and my body that this is the spot whereon prostrate themselves the inhabitants of the empyrean realm and the denizens of the kingdom of God's decree and they that inhabit the highest mansions of eternity behind the veils of grandeur. Through it all things have been made manifest and through it the breezes of bounty have blown upon the forms of all the worlds. And this is the spot whence the inhabitants of the Concourse of Eternity derive their blessings and the hearts of them that are established between earth and heaven obtain their illumination. Every day the dwellers of the crimson chambers sweep its courtyard and the angels that are nigh unto God brush it with the tresses of the spirit. And this is the spot wherein the Beauty of the All-Merciful appeared and in His own person ascended the Throne of Forgiveness and decreed that which He willed for all creation. He, verily, is the One that doeth as He willeth and decreeth as He desireth and performeth whatsoever He wisheth. I bear witness that, from a handful of this dust, the first Adam was created, wherefore was he named "the father of man" (Abu 'l-Bashar) in the kingdom of names, and God made him His remembrance amongst all created things."

Bow down, then, with thy face upon the dust, then place thy right cheek upon it and say with my tongue: "Praised be Thou, O God, my God. This is Thy servant that hath detached himself from all directions, turning in the direction of Thy oneness, and hath freed his soul from all apart from Thee, and hath clung to the cord of the bounty of Thy grace, and hath come in his completeness unto the meadows of the glory of Thy forgiveness. Cause to blow, then, O my God upon my heart the breezes of the glory of the holiness of Thy bounty and upon my inner being the fragrances of the majesty of the glory of Thy favours. Cast me not away disappointed, O my God, from Thy gate or despairing from the manifestations of the sun of Thy bounties. Thou, verily, art the Powerful over what Thou willest and Thou art the Protector, the Mighty, the Powerful."

Then stand and turn to the right of the House, in the direction of thy Lord, the Exalted, the Mighty, the Wise. Raise, then, thy hands unto God, the Exalted, the Most High and say: "Praised be Thou, O God, my God. I have raised the hands of my hope unto the heaven of Thy bounty and grace, and I have fastened the fingers of my reliance upon the cord of Thy grace and favours. I beseech Thee by him through whom Thou didst clothe all created things with the robe of Thy guidance and didst raise to life all existence from the power of Thy compassion and generosity, not to lock the door of Thy knowledge upon the face of my heart nor the door of Thy mercy upon my soul. Cause me, then, O my God, to be such as will be worthy of the power of the glory of Thy singleness and the majesty of the holiness of Thine eternity. Thou, verily, art the Gracious, the Bestowing, the Mighty, the Generous. And I, O my God, have become detached from mine own self, hastening unto Thy Most Exalted Self, and have fled from mine own abode and stood before Thy most pure and most glorious House. Wherefore, I beseech Thee not to leave me unto myself nor unto them that keep back mankind from the love of Thy beauty and debar Thy servants from Thy mighty and unbending path."

Circle, then, about the House on my behalf seven times. Thus commandeth thee the Ancient Beauty and teacheth thee what none in all the worlds doth know. And at the time when thou art circumambulating the House of the Lord, make mention of Him in thy heart and upon thy tongue and turn within thyself unto the direction of the mighty Throne. And when thou hast completed thy circumambulation, present thyself within the first portico, before the door of the sanctuary, then, stand, then raise thy hands unto the heaven of the outpouring of the grace of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Inaccessible. And I counsel thee that. at that time when thou dost raise up thy hands, raise them with such yearning that thereby the hands of all beings may be raised up towards the heaven of the grace of thy Lord. And when thou desirest to call upon God, thy Lord, call upon Him with such devotion that thereby the tongues of all atoms may utter the praise of thy Creator and may make mention of Him that brought thee into existence, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Wondrous. And if thou be not thus, it is not fitting for thee to stand in the spot whereon have stood the bodies of the holy ones and them that are nigh unto God. Nor art thou worthy of thy relation unto my Self nor thy habitation beneath the shadow of my love, which God hath made a cutting sword whereby to separate the unbelievers from them that extol His oneness. And when thou hast raised thy hands unto the clouds of the mercy of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Knowing, the All-Informed, say: "I bear witness that no god is there but He; He is alone, no companion is there for Him nor likeness nor deputy nor comparison nor rival nor equal nor similitude for His sovereignty, the Exalted, the

Inaccessible, the Most High. From all eternity He was one in His Essence and one in His attributes and one in His deeds and unto all eternity He shall be as He hath ever been in the glory of His majesty and the sovereignty of His sublimity, such that the mystic knowers have confessed their inability to attain unto the meadows of the holiness of His knowledge and the devoted ones have admitted their powerlessness to ascend unto the heaven of His mention and His praise. He, verily, is the Protector of all things and He, in truth, is the Mighty, the All-Generous. I bear witness that the Primal Point [the Bab] our Lord the Exalted, the Most High is, truly, His Manifestation in the realm of the empyrean and His Appearance in the kingdom of the decree and His Dawning-place in the domain of destiny. Through him all created things are brought to life and all existence is renewed and the balance of justice hath been set up upon the station of praiseworthy glory. Through him the Bird of the Throne hath crowed and the Dove of Glory hath warbled and the resurrection of the command hath come to pass and all that lay hidden in the treasuries of hidden glory hath been made manifest. Through him the heavens of pre-existence were raised up and the clouds of bounty were elevated unto this most holy and most notable sky and the sun of grace and beneficence shone forth from the horizon of resplendent holiness. Through him the oceans of verses surged in the kingdom of names and attributes and the time set for the command arrived with that which was decreed in the tablets of inaccessible majesty. And I bear witness that, through him, the veil of mystery was removed from the beauty of grandeur and the secrets of the unseen were revealed in the kingdom of the divine decree, and that through him every poor and needy one ascended unto the heaven of riches and every transient one rose up unto the dwelling-places of eternal life and every sick one was raised to the abodes of healing within pavilions of shining light. And I bear witness that this is the spot wherein Thou didst ascend the Throne of the glory of Thy unity and didst bring into being all creation, both former and latter, through the power of Thy will and Thy desire, and wherein the clouds of Thy grace rained down upon all created things.

"Wherefore, I beseech Thee, O my God, by Thy hidden and most great name and Thy concealed and most perfect word whose manifestation Thou didst promise unto Thy servants at the time of *Mustaghāth* [i.e. at the time of the appearance of him whom God shall manifest], to bring me unto the shore of the ocean of Thy forgiveness and to erase all that I have enumerated of my most great sins and my most mighty transgressions; then forgive, O my God, my father and my mother and my family and those whom I have related unto myself, them that have believed in Thee and Thy signs. Make, then, for me, O my God, a seat of truth by Thy side and cause me to be united with those of Thy

servants that are nigh unto Thee. I ask Thee, then, O my God and my Beloved, not to make me to be one of them that circle about Thy House in Thy land and deny Thy sacred House within the Manifestations of Thy Self and the Dawning-places of the glory of Thy Self-Subsistence and the Locations of the glory of Thy Lordship. Thus, O my God, is my utmost wish and desire. Thou, verily, art the Sovereign, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Wise. I ask Thee, then, O my God, by Thy beauty whereby the suns of the glory of Thy bounty have been made luminous and the rays of the lights of the holiness of Thy generosity flashed forth, to cause me not to be distressed upon the day whereon every soul shall be distressed, on which the possessors of pomp and leadership shall be puffed up with pride, on which the feet of them that have attained shall slip, on which the lamentation of all things shall be raised, and on which every resplendent and shining light shall be darkened. Take hold, then, of my hand, O my God, with the hand of Thy grace and favours and deprive me not on that day of the fragrances of the glory of Thy holiness nor from hearkening unto the melodies of Thy new creation, and cause me not to follow upon that day behind every croaking, sinful one. Open my eyes through Thy grace that I may recognize Thee by Thine own Self, not by that which is other than Thee, and that I may behold the wonders of the lights of Thy Beauty by what Thou hast bestowed upon me through Thy bounty, not that which belongeth unto men. For Thou hast not created any proof for Thyself save Thine own Essence, nor any evidence save Thy signs. Thou, verily, are He that ariseth, the Ruler, the Knowing, the All-Informed. Praise be to God, Lord of all the worlds."

Whereupon, end thou thy pilgrimage, for we have not permitted anyone to approach closer than this unto the sanctuary, for before that spot shine the lights of the Essence from behind the names and the attributes. And, apart from that, courtesy must be observed, for that is one of the best of all attributes in the sight of God, King of the earth and the heavens. Thus have we sent down upon thee the command with a shining and manifest proof. It is our desire that, from every city, one should go forth on my behalf and for his own sake to visit the House of God and that he may be a pilgrim. By God, at every step mercy and grace shall descend upon him from the heaven of resplendent holiness, and at the same time when he raises his foot for the first step and sets it down, God shall forgive his sins and the sins of his mother and his father and all that are related unto him. Thus hath the grace of thy Lord encompassed all created things, whether of the first or of the last. By God, whosoever visiteth the House, it is as if he hath visited God within the pavilion of the glory of meeting with Him and the tent of the majesty of His Beauty. Thus do we inform thee of the call that is mighty by the side of the Throne.

Whosoever visiteth the House as we have commanded him, God shall raise him up after his death within the paradise of majesty and grandeur in such a beauteous form that the dwellers of the Concourse on High shall be illumined by the lights of his face, and all that are in the exalted heavens shall be commanded to appear before him and to circle about him and to make their pilgrimage unto his beauty every morning and evening. O trustees of God upon the earth, strive unto the most great mention, and cast away all that is in your hands and turn your faces unto the Abode of God, the Mighty, the Powerful, the All-Knowing. Be ye steadfast, O people, in this station that, if all that are on earth should rise up against you, ye would not pay the least attention to them and would remain firm in the faith of God. The unbelievers shall prevent you performing what God has sent down upon you on account of the rancour that is in their breasts. But God shall do as He willeth through His word; He, verily, is the Powerful, the Mighty.

Know, then, that we have written concerning pilgrimage to the House detailed and vast tablets, but we have not sent them until now. If God wills, we shall send them in truth. He, verily, is the Guardian of the messengers. That which we have sent is what was sent down from the kingdom of divine power in a brief form, for the angels that are nigh unto God and the inhabitants of the Exalted Concourse love to be brief in their outward acts. And inwardly, let there be at all times those that perform the pilgrimage. Thus have we taught thee and made known unto thee the paths of holiness and guided thee unto the shores of manifest grace.

(Amr, IV, pp.120-33)

# XXV PASSAGE FROM THE SURA AL-HAJJ ON THE RITES OF THE BAGHDAD HOUSE, BY BAHA' ALLAH

He is the Everlasting, the Manifest. It is incumbent on whomsoever desireth to turn to the most holy direction, to come into the presence of God, the Mighty, the Knowing, to hearken unto the call of God, to behold His beauty, and to inhale the perfume of God, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Exalted, the Great, that he should go forth from his house, journeying unto God, until he entereth the city that hath been named "the Abode of Peace" [Dar al-Salam - Baghdad]. And when he arriveth there, let him magnify God (with the phrase Allahu akbar), his Lord, with the tongue of his heart and with his outward tongue until he cometh unto the river. And when he reacheth it, let him put on his best clothes and then perform ablutions as God hath commanded him. And when he washeth his hands, let him say: "O Lord, this is water that Thou hast caused to flow forth through Thy command in the neighbourhood of Thy sacred House (baytika 'l-harām). As I have washed my hands with it, O my God, at Thy command, wash me, then, from every stain and sin and omission and from all that Thy good-pleasure abhorreth. Thou, verily, art the Mighty, the All-Powerful."

Then let wash his face, saying: "O Lord, this is my face that Thou hast purified through Thy will. I beseech Thee, then, by the power of the glory of Thy singleness and the wonders of the names of the manifestations of Thy cause, to cleanse it of all save Thee. Guard it, then, from turning to any but Thee or from beholding them that have failed to seek Thy manifest, spotless, mighty, and generous Beauty."

Let him, then, cross the bridge with the dignity and comportment of God, magnifying God (with the phrase Allahu akbar) until he reaches the end of the bridge. Then let him turn in the direction of the House, saying at his first step: "O Lord, this is the first step that I have set down in the path of Thy good-pleasure and the first pace that I have taken though Thy will. I have fled, O my God, from all directions in the direction of Thy grace and favours, and I have taken flight from myself and my desires and from all save Thee in the direction of Thy bounty and blessings. O my God, disappoint not them that have hoped for the clouds of Thy mercy and shut not out them that have sought the showers of the glory and generosity. Here am I, O my God! I have sought Thy House, the House round which circle the dwellers of the Celestial Concourse and beyond them the souls of them that are nigh unto Thee among the holy ones. I beseech Thee by the former and by the latter not to prevent my eyes from beholding the wonders of the lights of the holiness of Thy beauty, nor to withhold from my face the manifestations of the breezes that blow from the dawn of Thy meeting, nor to keep back from my heart the fragrances of the glory of Thy revelation and inspiration. Thou, verily, art the Possessor of bounty and might, of grace and mercy and sovereignty, and Thou, truly, art the Possessor of power and strength and grandeur, and Thou, in truth, art near to answer them that pray to Thee."

Then let him glorify God (with the phrase Allahu abha) and begin to perform the circumambulation. Let him circle about the House seven times, and, when he has completed this action and is come before the door of the House, let him stand and beg forgiveness from God 70 times. Then let him say: "O my God and my Lord. Praise be unto Thee for having shown Thy kindness and generosity to me in that Thou hast caused me to stand in the spot wherein naught is seen but the tokens of the glory of the sovereignty of Thy oneness and naught is witnessed save the flashes of the lights of the sun of Thy beauty. I beseech Thee by Thee and by Thy Self to purify me from the mire of the world and from its vanities and to burn from the surface of my heart the veils that have kept me back from entering into the floods of the oceans of the glory of Thy unity and have shut me out from entry into the fields of the holiness of union with Thee and meeting Thee. O Lord, turn me not back disappointed from the gate of Thy mercy and send me not away in loss from Thy House. O Lord, forgive me and my parents and my brethren and my family and my kinsfolk, those of them that have believed in Thee and in Thy most great verses in the manifestation of Thy most exalted Beauty. Thou, verily, art the Mighty, the Beneficent."

Let him, then, walk with the utmost gravity and glorify God (with the phrase Allahu abha) until he reacheth the gate, then let him stand and say: "O my God, this is the spot wherein Thou didst lift up Thy voice and in which Thy proof was made manifest and Thy signs shone forth and Thy beauty rose above the horizon and Thy verses were sent down and Thy command was made visible and Thy name was raised up and Thy mention was spread abroad and Thy power was made perfect and Thy sovereignty was exalted above all that are in the heavens and the earth."

Let him, then, address the House and its land and its walls and all that is upon it, saying: "Blessed be thou, O House, inasmuch as God hath made Thee the spot whereon His feet have trodden. Blessed be thou, O House, inasmuch as the glances of the glory of His greatness have fallen upon thee. Blessed be thou, O House, inasmuch as God hath singled thee out and made thee a dwelling-place for His own Self and a location wherein to establish His sovereignty. No earth hath surpassed thee, unless it be the earth that God hath chosen above all the shrines of the world, by that which hath been written down by His Pen, the Preserver. Blessed be thou, O House, inasmuch as through thee God distinguish between the fortunate and the wretched from this day unto the day whereon the All-Merciful shall shine forth with the lights of a wondrous

holiness. Blessed be thou, blessed be thou, inasmuch as God hath made thee the balance for them that believe in His unity and the uttermost abode of them that know Him, and hath sanctified thee from the knowledge of them that hate Him and them that disbelieve in Him, in such wise that none may enter thee save the believer whose heart God hath tried in its faith, nor may any be able to approach thee save him from whom there are wafted the breezes of the praise of God. Blessed be thou, inasmuch as God hath singled thee out for them among His servants that are nigh unto Him and them among His creatures that are devoted to Him. None may touch thee save them that have utterly detached themselves from all that are in the heavens and the earth, in whose hearts there is naught but the radiance of the lights of the glory of His oneness and in whose inner beings there is naught but the manifestations of the effulgences of the holiness of His eternity. This is a station for which God hath chosen thee, wherein thou shouldst pride thyself above all the worlds. Blessed be thou and him that built thee and raised thee up and served thee and carried water unto thy roses, and blessed be he that hath entered thee and he that hath gazed upon thee and he that hath discovered from thee a breath of the robe of the Joseph of God, the Mighty, the Powerful. I bear witness that he that hath entered within thee, God shall cause him to enter the holy sanctuary on the day whereon the Beauty of the Essence shall be established upon a mighty throne, and He shall forgive the sins of him that taketh refuge in thee and entereth beneath thy shadow, and shall fulfil his needs and shall raise him up on the Day of Resurrection with such beauty that his kindred of both past and future shall be illumined by it."

Let him, then, prostrate himself with his face upon the dust of the gate and call upon his Lord like one that is detached and repentant, relating himself to God and saying: "O Lord, I am he that hath acted wrongly towards Thee and rejected Thy beauty, for my self and my desires preoccupied me. Thou, verily, art the Knowing, the All-Informed. O Lord, since I have recognized Thy Self, I seek pardon for my former state and for whatever appeared from my tongue and went forth from my mouth and entered into my thoughts. I have returned unto Thee with all my being; Thou, verily, art the Forgiving, the Compassionate. O Lord, when Thou didst make known unto me the places of Thy command and didst awaken me from my sleep and my heedlessness, I set forth from my house in the direction of Thy House, turning my eyes towards Thy bounty and Thy forgiveness. Thou, verily, art the Most Merciful of the Merciful. O Lord, I have come unto Thee with that sin that was heavier than all that is in the heavens and the earth and greater than the creation of all existence, until I have stood before the gate of Thy House, from which no sinner hath been turned away disappointed; I have bowed myself down upon its dust, humbling myself

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before Thy beauty, abasing myself before Thy sovereignty, and making myself as nothing in Thy presence. O Lord, have mercy on me through Thy compassion and graciousness and ordain, then, for me a seat of truth by Thy side. Make me, then, one of Thy servants that have turned in repentance unto thee. O Lord, forgive me my sins and my transgressions and all that my hands have committed. Thou, verily, art the Mighty, the Generous."

Then let him raise his head and seek forgiveness from God with this mighty, this great invocation: "O Lord, I seek forgiveness from Thee by my tongue and my heart and my soul and my mind and my spirit and my body and my corporeality and my bones and my blood and my skin. Thou, verily, art the Forgiving, the Merciful. And I seek forgiveness from Thee, O my God, by the invocation whereby the fragrances of mercy have blown upon the people of rebellion and through which the sinful have been clothed in the beauteous garment of Thy forgiveness. And I seek forgiveness from Thee, O my King, by the invocation whereby the power of Thy clemency and Thy grace is made manifest and whereby the sun of loving-kindness and bounty shineth forth above the forms of the sinful. And I seek forgiveness from Thee, O Forgiver of my sins and my Creator, by the invocation whereby the wrongdoers hasten in the direction of Thy pardon and graciousness and through which the seekers stand at the gate of Thy mercy, O Thou the Merciful and Compassionate. And I seek forgiveness from Thee, O my Lord, by the invocation that Thou hast made a fire that burneth away all sins and rebelliousness from every one that hath repented and returned to Thee, regretting what he hath done, weeping over his actions, and secure in Thee, and through which the bodies of all created things are purified from the defilement of sins and wrongful actions and from all that Thy mighty and all-wise Self abhorreth."

Then let him enter into the House with dignity and tranquillity, as if he beholds God in the realm of His command and the kingdom of His House, until he enters the courtyard (al-ṣaḥn) and comes before the qibla that was singled out for the raising up of the throne of might upon it. The let him raise his hands and turn his gaze in the direction of His bounties and say: "I bear witness in this place where I stand that there is no god but Him alone; no companion is there for Him nor likeness nor peer nor rival nor deputy nor equal nor similitude; and that the Primal Point (nuqṭa al-ūlā [sic], the Bab) is His servant, His glory, His might, His greatness, His reality, His power, His sovereignty, His majesty, His kingship, His strength, His honour, His nobility, His benevolence, and that through him His beauty shone forth and His face was purified and His proof rose above the horizon and His evidence was perfected and His argument was completed and His signs were made luminous, and through him all that are in the heavens and on the earth were raised

to life and they that are in the kingdom of command and creation were resurrected, and through him the breezes of holiness were wafted upon all the worlds. And I bear witness that he whom God shall manifest [i.e. Baha' Allah] is the truth, no doubt is there concerning him; he is come with the lights of a wondrous holiness, and through him are recreated the heavens and the earth and the people of the former and the latter generations. Blessed is he that hath attained unto his days and that entereth his gate and is honoured with meeting him and circleth around him and prostrateth himself before him and visiteth the dust of his feet and standeth in his presence and is of them that arise."

Then let him say: "O Lord, this is Thy House wherein the breezes of Thy bounty and generosity have wafted and wherein Thou hast shone forth in the innermost heart of mystery upon all the manifestations of Thy names and the dawning-places of Thine attributes. None is informed of this save Thee, the All-Knowing. O Lord, this is Thy House from which the signs of Thy grace have been made manifest unto all the worlds and wherein there befell Thee what befell Thee on the part of them that believed and them that disbelieved. Thou, verily, wast patient in all this, notwithstanding Thy power and Thy sovereignty. Thou, truly, art the Knowing, the Wise, the Mighty, the Powerful. O Lord, this is the spot whereon Thou didst walk with Thine ancient feet and wherein Thou didst raise up Thy voice and Thy melodies and didst make heard Thy call and Thy singing, with wondrous and honeyed tones. O Lord, this is the spot wherein Thou didst sit upon the Throne of all created things and didst exalt Thyself through the tongue of Thy power above all that are in the heavens and on earth. O Lord, this is the spot wherein Thy gaze was turned in the direction of Thy bounty and wherein the oceans of power surged within Thy hidden and concealed and guarded word. O Lord, this is the spot wherein was Thy cause within the mystery of mysteries, and wherein Thou didst not move Thy lips as Thou didst wish, and wherein Thou didst conceal Thy radiant face, and wherein Thou wast hidden in the most utter concealment and behind the densest of veils, in such wise that none among all creation recognized Thy Self. O Lord, this is Thy House that was shamed after Thee by Thy servants, who looted whatever was therein and plundered all that was within it; thus did they dishonour Thee and make war against Thee in their heart of hearts and break Thy covenant and shatter Thy bond; yet didst Thou conceal all this and didst pass over them through Thy wondrous bounty. O Lord, divest me not of the bounty of Thy protection, nor take from me the garment of Thy favour and pardon, nor cause me to be far removed from the precincts of Thy mercy, nor deprive me of the fountain of Thy exalted grace. O Lord, sanctify me from all save Thee and bring me near unto Thy Self and honour me with meeting Thee. Thou, verily, art the Powerful, the Knowing, the Understanding, the

Bringer to life, the Vivifier, the Slayer. O Lord, cause me to attain unto that which Thou hast willed for those of Thy servants that are nigh unto Thee. Ordain, then, for me the best of what Thou hast ordained for the sanctified among Thy chosen ones."

Let him then be silent within himself and be at rest in his innermost being. Then let him turn in his heart and with his hearing in the direction of the House. If he should discover the fragrance of God and hear His call, he may be assured within himself that God has forgiven him his sins and has passed over him and relented towards him and beholdeth him as on the day whereon he was born of his mother. But if he should not discover the fragrance of God, the Mighty, the Powerful, let him perform again the ritual on this day or one another day until he discovereth it and heareth [the call]. This is that which hath been decreed by the pen of a glorious and wise one upon the tablets of a hidden holiness. Thus doth God open the gates of grace and bounty unto the face of the heavens and the earth, that perchance men may not deprive themselves of the mercy of God and His bounteousness. This, verily, is true guidance and a remembrance from us unto all the worlds.

(Amr, IV, pp.109-17)

# XXVI THE LAWH-I NAQUS BY BAHA' ALLAH He is the Mighty.

This is the Garden of Paradise, wherein hath been raised the melody of God, the Protector, the Self-Subsisting. Wherein have been established the maidens of eternity whom none has touched save God, the Mighty, the Holy. Wherein the Nightingale of Eternity hath warbled upon the branches of the Lote-tree beyond which there is no passing, with a melody that hath filled with astonishment the minds of all men. Wherein is that which bringeth the poor ones nigh unto the shores of the ocean of wealth and guideth mankind unto the word of God. This, verily, is a manifest truth.

In Thy name "He", for Thou art, verily, "He", O "He".

O monk of divine unity, toll the bell, for the Day of God hath been made manifest and the Beauty of the All-Glorious hath been established upon the Throne of manifest holiness.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Hud of the decree, blow upon the trumpet in the name of God, the Mighty, the Generous, for the tabernacle of holiness hath been established upon the throne of inaccessible glory.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Countenance of Eternity! Strike with the fingers of the spirit upon the rebec of a wondrous holiness, for the Beauty of the Essence hath appeared clothed in a robe of shining silk.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O angel of light, blow into the horn in this revelation, for the letter  $h\bar{a}'$  hath come riding upon a letter of ancient majesty.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Nightingale of Splendour, warble upon the twigs in this garden, singing the name of the Beloved, for the Beauty of the Rose hath appeared from behind a heavy veil.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Songbird of Paradise, trill thou upon the branches in this wondrous age, for God hath shone forth upon all that dwell in the kingdom of earth.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Bird of Eternity, soar in this sky, for the bird of faithfulness hath winged its flight in an atmosphere of blessed nearness.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Inhabitants of Paradise, sing and chant in the most melodious and charming of voices, for the song of God hath been raised behind pavilions of exalted holiness.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Inhabitants of the Kingdom, intone the name of the Beloved, for the Beauty of the Cause hath shone forth from behind the veils adorned with a shining spirit.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Names, bedeck the farthest reaches of heaven, for the Greatest Name hath come riding upon the clouds of a mighty holiness.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Attributes upon the most glorious horizon, make yourselves ready to enter the presence of God, for the breezes of holiness have breathed from the Spot wherein His Essence is hidden, and this is, verily, a manifest grace.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Paradise of oneness, rejoice within thyself, for there hath appeared the paradise of God, the Exalted, the Powerful, the Knowing.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Heaven of Glory, give thanks unto God in thine essence, for the heaven of holiness hath been lifted up in the sky of a gracious heart.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Sun of the kingdom of the world, cover thy face, for the Sun of Eternity hath shone forth from the horizon of a resplendent dawn.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O earth of knowledge, swallow all that you know, for the Earth of Knowledge hath been spread out within the Self of God, the Exalted, the Mighty, the Generous.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Lamp of the kingdom of the world, extinguish thyself, for the Lamp of God hath shone within the niche of eternity and the peoples of the heavens and the earth have been illumined by it.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O oceans of the earth! Cease ye the rolling of your waves, for the Red Sea hath surged at a wondrous command.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Peacock of Oneness, cry out amidst the bushes of the heavenly kingdom, for the melody of God hath appeared from every direction, near at hand.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Bird of Eternity, crow in the thicket of the kingdom on high, for the Herald of God hath cried out from every unapproachable direction.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O Concourse of lovers, rejoice in your souls, for the days of separation are come to an end and the appointed time is come wherein the Best-Beloved hath appeared in the Beauty of an inaccessible glory.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

O People of mystic knowledge, be ye glad in your inmost beings, for the days of parting are past and certitude is come and the Beauty of the Youth hath shone forth with the ornament of holiness in the paradise of a mighty name.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

Praised be Thou, O my God, I beseech Thee by Thy Day, whereon all days have been resurrected, and by Thy enumerating from it both former and latter times.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

And by Thy Name which Thou hast made a monarch in the kingdom of names and a ruler over all that are in heaven and on earth.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

That Thou mayest make these souls independent of all save Thee and bring them nigh unto Thee and cause them to be detached from all others save Thee. Thou, verily, art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Compassionate.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

Make them, then, O my God, among those who testify to Thy oneness and among those who submit their selves to Thy singleness, in such wise that they may behold none else but Thee and gaze upon none save Thee. Thou art, verily, Powerful and Mighty to accomplish this.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

Create, then, in their hearts, O my Beloved, the fire of Thy love, to such an extent that the mention of all save Thee may be consumed by it, that they may witness within their selves that Thou hast ever been in the loftiness of eternity, and that there has never been anything with Thee, and that Thou art as Thou hast ever been; no god is there save Thee, the Generous, the Mighty.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

For, should Thy servants who seek to ascend unto the heights of Thy oneness, establish themselves in the mention of aught else save Thee, the decree of unity shall have no validity in respect of them, nor shall the title of singleness find any conformation in them.

Praised be Thou, O He; O He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

And Praised be Thou, O God, my God. Since this is how matters stand, send down from the clouds of Thy compassion that which shall cleanse the hearts of Thy lovers and sanctify the breasts of them that adore Thee. Raise them up, then, through Thy exaltation and cause them to be victorious over all that dwell on earth. This is that which Thou didst promise Thy friends by Thy unerring words: "We desire to show Our grace unto them that have been made wretched on the earth and to make them leaders and to make them Our heirs."

Praised be Thou, O He; He that is He; O He that there is none other than He.

(Adī'a, pp.141-53; Ayyām-i tis'a, pp.100-6)

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