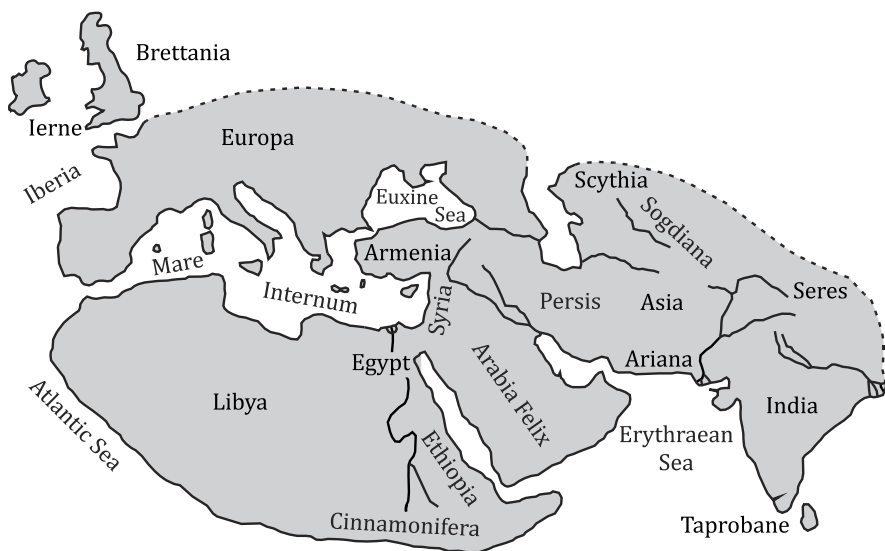


The Apocalypse Unsealed



The world of the first century

The above map, adapted from the writings of the ancient geographer Strabo, represents the extent of knowledge of the world at the dawn of the Christian Era.

The Apocalypse Unsealed

Based in part upon the Writings of
The Báb
Bahá'u'lláh
'Abdu'l-Bahá
and
Shoghi Effendi

Compiled and interpreted by
Robert F. Riggs

Philosophical Library, N.Y.

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To
Dorothy*
Gift of God

* Dorothy Riggs died 14 December 2006.

Preface

The interpretation of *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* presented in this volume is based on the writings and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, a religion founded by Mírzá Ḥusayn 'Alí, known as Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God.

The Bahá'í Faith grew out of the Bábí Faith that was founded in 1844 by the Báb, Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad of Shíráz, Persia. The Bábí teachings emphasized the forthcoming appearance of "*The One Whom God will Make Manifest*", a new Prophet or Manifestation of God. The Bábí Faith stemmed from Shí'a Islám which taught the forthcoming return of the Twelfth Imám, Muḥammad's Successor, Who would renew religion and guide the faithful. "This messianic view was the basis of the teachings of the Shaykhí sect, so named after Shaykh Aḥmad." The teachings of this sect gave allegorical interpretations to doctrines such as the resurrection, the Last Judgement and the return of the Twelfth Imám.

When the Báb announced in 1844 that He was the channel through which grace from someone as yet veiled from men was to flow, it caused considerable excitement among His fellow Persians. Many people became followers of the Báb, but the Persian government and clergy were opposed to His new doctrines and eventually the Báb was executed and with Him a large number of His followers, the Bábís.

Among His followers was a man of wealthy background Who was incarcerated in Tíhrán for allegedly attempting to kill the Sháh of Persia. It was while this man was in prison that He learned from God of His unique station. His name was Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, and He was the Messenger God had chosen to carry His Message for this Era to all mankind. Long years of exile saw Bahá'u'lláh banished from Persia and sent

* Firuz Khazemzadeh, "The Bahá'í Faith", *World Order*, Spring, 1974, p. 10.

throughout the Ottoman Empire until, at last, He was sent to the prison fortress at 'Akká. Notwithstanding the attempts of governments, clergy, and individuals to halt His teaching, Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed to the people of the world God's Message for this time. By His death, in 1892, the Bahá'í Faith had spread "beyond Persia and the Ottoman Empire to the Caucasus, Turkistán, India, Burma, Egypt, and the Sudan."*

To preserve the unity of the Bahá'í community after His passing, Bahá'u'lláh appointed His son 'Abdu'l-Bahá as leader of the community and authorized Interpreter of His writings. This appointment, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's subsequent appointment of Shoghi Effendi Rabbání, His grandson, as sole Interpreter of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and Guardian of the Cause, ensured that the writings of the Faith and, indeed, the Faith itself would be free from the dangerous schisms and taints of personality that had harmed the Faiths of previous Manifestations of God. Clearly, Bahá'u'lláh intended to secure for His followers a single, unquestioned interpretation of His words and teachings.

In His writings, Bahá'u'lláh has unsealed the meanings of the Books of the Bible that were sealed in the time of Jesus Christ until man should be of sufficient spiritual maturity to understand what is in them. In the case of *The Revelation of St. John the Divine*, a book that has been interpreted by numerous worthy scholars, Bahá'u'lláh's interpretation is deeply symbolic but clear and concise within the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

Using the words of Bahá'u'lláh and the interpretations of His teachings as a base, the writer has carefully gone through each verse and revealed the meaning that lies richly within, waiting to illumine the eyes of mankind and fulfil the promises made to him by God through His Manifestations.

Melissa Tansik
10 November CE 1975
8 Qudrat BE 132

* Kazemzadeh, p. 11.

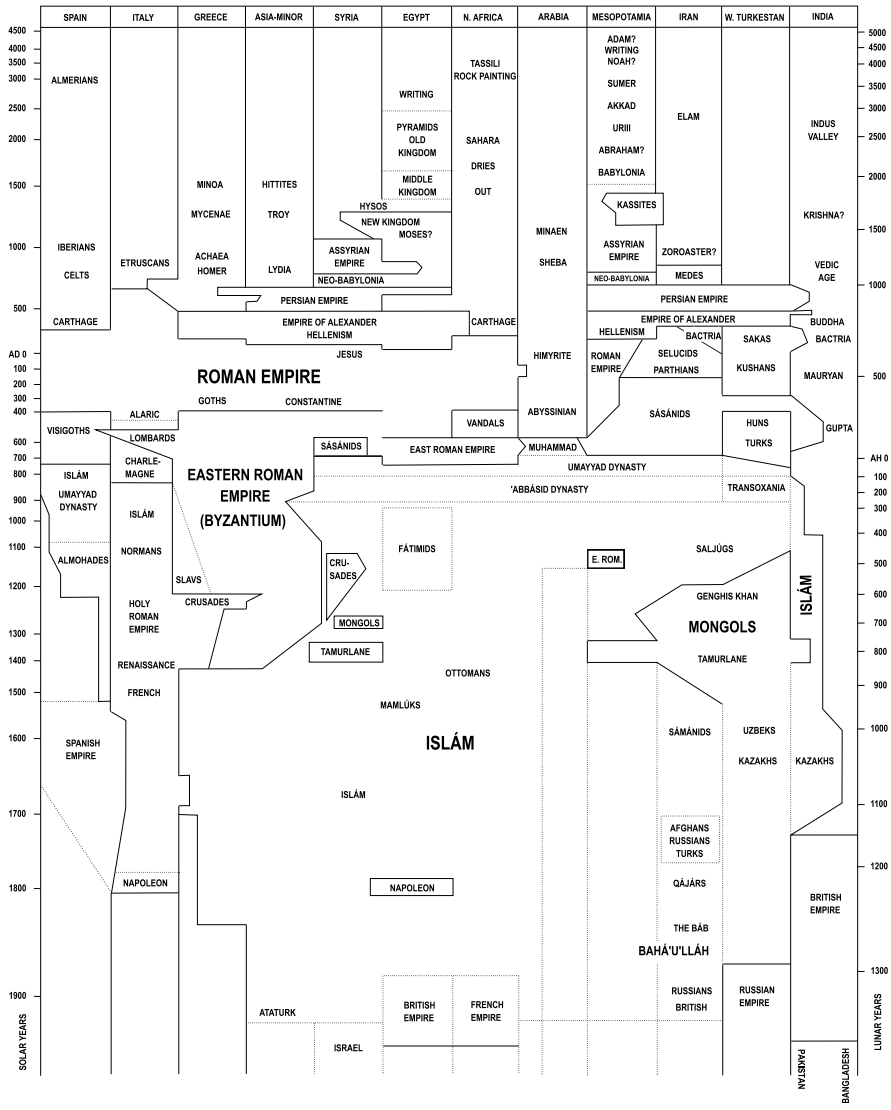
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The time and space of the Apocalypse

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Later during the research, it was my very good fortune to have the invaluable assistance of Marion Hofman, who alerted me to additional source material, and, by her critical analysis of the manuscript, led me to a re-examination of certain aspects of my text.

Melissn Tansik wrote the Preface and offered valuable suggestions

in matters of style and grammar, suggestions that, unfortunately, were not always followed. Bette and John Alden Decker were responsible for most of the art work. Typing assistance was sometimes given by Shirley Johnson.

Tireless patience, encouragement and understanding were the major contributions of my beloved Dottie, who also helped in typing and offered numerous suggestions to improve the style. And, most of all, the writer wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the Master, His Holiness 'Abdu'l-Bahá, without Whose gentle whisperings the writer would not have passed the first alpha.

R. F. R.
Charlottesville, Virginia
7 October, CE 1979
11 Mashíyyat, BE 136

Part I
Introduction

The sources

The Revelation of John, also known as the Apocalypse, or simply Revelation, has been the subject of controversy since early Christian times. The controversy is still active, many doubting its authenticity, others doubting its originality. There can be no doubt, however, that the book has been widely known and accepted in the West since the second century after Jesus Christ.

The book purports to be a revelation to a certain John, possibly the Apostle, given to him through an angel by Jesus Christ. The language of the book is highly allegorical and has defied all attempts at interpretation until the present time. Like all prophetic books, it has been “sealed” and has awaited the time when the One worthy of unsealing it has made His appearance on the stage of history. That One was Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, and the Manifestation of God in our time.

Bahá'u'lláh unsealed the Apocalypse in two ways. Firstly, His Advent fulfilled many prophecies in the book, thus making them comprehensible and permitting the remaining portion to be filled in by scholars. Secondly, Bahá'u'lláh revealed with His own pen the meanings of many important symbols used in this and other prophetic writings. Without these symbols being explained it would be impossible to find a rational interpretation of the Apocalypse.

Bahá'u'lláh was assisted in unsealing the books by His Fore-

* See Daniel 12:4, 8–9; John 16:12–13; I Corinthians 13:8–12.

runner, the Prophet-Herald Mírzá 'Alí-Muḥammad, the Báb. He too fulfilled many important prophecies in the book. The work of unsealing the books was continued by the son of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, designated as the Centre of the Covenant by Bahá'u'lláh and the Interpreter of the Bahá'í Revelation. For the first time in nearly two thousand years, 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed the meanings of whole chapters of the Apocalypse in a language that was clear, unambiguous and convincing. In particular, He revealed in totality the meaning of Chapter 11 and part of Chapter 12, probably the most difficult and the most crucial for the interpretation of the remaining chapters. These and other revelations are found in *Some Answered Questions*.^{*} Following the death of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi Rabbání, the great-grandson of Bahá'u'lláh and a relative of the Báb, continued the work by revealing the meanings of certain important symbols in the Apocalypse. These are found principally in his masterpiece, *God Passes By*.

In addition to these authentic sources, various additional material was used. Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Bahá to private believers were very useful, as were transcriptions of conversations between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and visitors to the Holy Land. One example of the latter was a transcription of a conversation purported to have occurred between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shahnáz Waite. The title of this item is *The New Jerusalem and its Twelve Foundation Stones*. Its content deals exclusively with subject matter in Chapter 21 of the Apocalypse. Although it contains errors in transcription and typing, its style and depth are clearly that of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and this writer adapted its contents as if they were authentic, although the obvious errors were corrected.

The remaining sources have no authenticity whatsoever in terms of the Bahá'í Revelation. They were used only when they seemed to concur with and to amplify the authentic sources. As for the remaining bulk of the material in this book, it must be

* A list of references can be found at the end of this book.

confessed that it is largely the result of the writer's own research, intuitions, and deductions. Consequently, they should not be considered the official view of the Bahá'í Universal House of Justice nor any other official organ of the Bahá'í Administration. However, the writer has written nothing that is contrary to his own convictions as a Bahá'í.

Does this book succeed in reconstructing the original meanings in the Apocalypse? The answer to this question must rest with each individual reader. It is the writer's opinion that, as a whole, it represents a fair approximation to the original meanings. As a Bahá'í, I accept the total validity of those passages that have been specifically revealed by the Prophets and Interpreters of the Bahá'í and Bábí Faiths, but beyond being a matter of faith, their interpretations are totally convincing from a rational point of view. Furthermore, their interpretations compel the seeker to go beyond well-travelled roads of scholarship and to explore the intellectual life of the ancients, an exploration that proves to be a rewarding adventure. Modern man has little use for ancient numerology, gematria, and other obscure literary devices. But even the casual seeker will soon realize that an understanding of the ancient allegorical method is absolutely essential to understanding the Apocalypse. If he chooses to pursue the study, he will discover that modern science and mathematics rest upon hypotheses that are basically identical to those of the ancient Pythagoreans. The particular numbers and geometry that are held to be significant in the construction of the universe are, for the most part, different from those held to be significant in the first century, but a number-geometrical rationality or logos underlying the apparent chaos of nature is still hypothesized by the modern natural philosopher. The seeker will also discover that ancient symbolism, long assumed to have no relevancy to modern man, may still exist in the collective unconscious and manifest itself in dreams, art-forms, and modern religious practices.¹

One point needs to be emphasized. *The Revelation of John* belongs to a former Era. Its significance to the Bahá'í Era is that it accurately prophesies historical events between the first century and modern times. The culmination of the prophecy has been the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh and the beginning of a new cycle of human events. It is, therefore, a further proof of the validity of Bahá'u'lláh as the Messenger of God in this Day. The principal value of this book, if it has any, will be as a teaching aid. Hopefully, it will help to correct certain fallacious notions held by some modern theologians concerning the nature of the Second Coming of Christ and the events that are to attend the Coming. These fallacious notions have been serious impediments to a truly constructive and realistic understanding of progressive revelation and the roles played by the many Messengers of God throughout history.

The allegorical method

The prophet who has had a vision of the future course of events cannot reveal the vision undisguised. To reveal it in direct and unambiguous language would automatically preclude the prophecy from coming true. For if past experience proved that a prophet's predictions were unambiguous and perfectly reliable, would not man seek to avoid the dire consequences of some future catastrophe by avoiding the events leading up to it? For example, if a man knows for certain that he will die by an aeroplane accident, surely he can thwart fate by the simple ploy of travelling by train or ship.

But there is another reason for using symbol and allegory.² The prophecy becomes a test of one's spiritual acuity. To the sceptic who denies the existence of anything beyond that which can be touched or measured, the prophecy is nothing but meaningless, even laughable, nonsense. To the gullible and the superstitious, the prophecy is to be taken literally, regardless of how absurd such an interpretation may be. Neither of these attitudes will lead to understanding. The sceptic avoids the necessity of understanding by denying the existence of the spirit. The super-

stitious avoids the necessity of understanding by playing it safe and denying nothing.

The true road to understanding lies somewhere between these extremes. The true seeker must admit the reality of things spiritual but must not accept a theological assertion that does not seem reasonable and in agreement with common sense. The bridge to salvation is as fine as a thread and as narrow as a blade. But the bridge must be crossed and the risks of disaster must be accepted.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá explained the need for allegory in these words, “... the revelations of the prophets can never be adequately translated owing to the poverty and imperfection of our language. Their thought is so lofty that human minds do not grasp it. Hence the use of allegories. Parables make men ponder and pray for enlightenment that they may understand the hidden meaning. Search for truth deepens man’s capacity, clarifies his vision without engendering intellectual pride.”³

To the modern intellectual, conditioned by a world of scientific exactitude, the allegorical method is frustratingly inexact. A symbol is somewhat like a variable in a mathematical equation—it may assume any one of several values depending upon the context. But there are bounds beyond which the symbol cannot vary, and when found, the correct value has the ring of truth. More than that, an incorrect interpretation in one section of the prophecy has a way of refusing to fit somewhere else. To use a modern analogy, the *Book of Revelation* is something like a gigantic crossword puzzle: although a word with the correct number of letters may be found that seems to approximate the intended meaning, it may later prove to be the wrong word when the rest of the blocks are filled in. It is for similar reasons that, when correctly interpreted, the entire prophecy will hang together and become a convincing whole.

Symbolism, by virtue of its flexibility and its inexactness, allows the prophet to extend the meaning of a prophecy to include more than one event. Thus a passage of prophecy may refer to several events, some immanent, some in the distant

future. Consequently, the use of symbolism permits the prophet to reveal some universal principle whose validity is independent of time and place. It is for this reason that numerous interpretations have been found for various passages in the Apocalypse and more will be found in the future. The pursuit of the “beast whose number is 666” has occupied biblical hunters for centuries with many unpopular candidates being caught in the net.

The prophet was able to find symbols everywhere, in nature, in historical and contemporary events, and even in everyday mundane experience.

Arising in the morning, the glorious sunrise reminded him of the dawning of a new Day of God, a new Dispensation whose Lord was the Manifestation of God for that Day. The dawning place of that sun had a zodiacal sign, and the slow Precession of the Equinoxes reminded him of the long duration of a Day of God compared to a day of man. Almost certainly, the early Christians must have noticed that their symbol for Jesus, the Fish, coincided with the zodiacal sign of their age—Pisces. They may also have noticed that the preceding zodiacal ages of Aries the Ram and Taurus the Bull had been dominated by priesthoods characterized by those symbols. And perhaps even earlier under the age of Gemini the Twins, there may have been a priesthood memorialized by the Cain and Abel story.*⁴

To the prophet, the warmth and life-giving power of the sun⁵ suggested the spiritual light and life-giving power of God. Sometimes the light was direct. Sometimes it was reflected off of man-made structures. In this way, the mirror became like the Prophet Who reflects the attributes of God clearly and without distortion. Reflected off other objects, it became the earthly church, imperfect and corruptible.

The night was watched over by the moon that reflected the light of heaven onto the earth. Here the moon in its various phases also resembled the Prophet, or some other great religious

* See below, “Astrological Symbolism”.

leader of the Church. The star became other members of the hierarchy. The morning star became the Herald of a new Day of God. Other stars were fallen stars and thus fallen from heavenly grace. Still others were brilliant and constant; in this way they also symbolized important spiritual leaders, prophets, or Revelators from God.

Besides the days and nights, there were the seasons. The seasons suggested the birth, growth, flowering and decay of a religion or a society. Sometimes there were clouds that obscured man's vision of the sun and were like veils between man and God. At other times they were clouds of glory, or became sources of rain—heavenly bounty that caused the living things of the earth to offer praise and gratitude to the Creator. Rain was sometimes destructive too, especially when accompanied by high winds and lightning-fire from heaven. At other times the winds became gentle breezes wafting the Word of God over mankind.

Destructive rains were sometimes followed by a rainbow. Its multi-coloured iridescence reminded the prophet that God speaks to man in many ways. The arc of the rainbow was a bridge between heaven and earth and was like the Covenant between God and man.

Walking through the forest, the prophet saw the whole world of man in allegory. Herbs, flowers, and grass were rooted in the soil, like the great masses of mankind. Towering above the herbs were the magnificent trees reaching towards heaven like great leaders of men, sometimes spiritual, sometimes secular. The fauna of the forest were particularly expressive, some animals being like vicious men, others being gentle and loving. Birds, because of their curious shapes and voices, seemed to be like men's souls that wing their ways to heaven, or to express special attributes often found in men. Slithering among the herbs and flowers there was the serpent—kingly in appearance, cunning, often deadly. Because it shed its skin it also seemed to express the principle of immortality and healing.

Coming across stones of curious shapes reminded him of the

solidity of truth* or of the concepts of God sometimes held by men. But when one discovered a gem, a divine principle might become crystallized, uniquely combining pure spirit and matter to express some abstract thought in solid form. Larger rocks became places of refuge, especially when they enclosed caves or places of hiding. And when he saw mountains and valleys covered with trees, rocks, flora and fauna, they were like nations and great religions. Some mountains were towering bulwarks of strength, some seemed to reach towards heaven, and many mountains were sacred places where man might make contact with God Himself. Other valleys and mountains had been places of conflict and suffering and attained special significance of their own.

But what could be more refreshing to the spirit than some clear, pure spring or brook? Water became something to purify the soul, spiritual knowledge and insight—the renewal of spiritual life itself. The springs and running brooks emptied into great rivers, the mainstreams of spiritual guidance. From thence the rivers emptied into the seas of the spirit. Men, like fish, inhabited the seas, and their numbers were as the sands. The sea of the spirit was sometimes a turbulent place, and men had to find refuge on island-churches or by riding ships upon the waves. If that failed, the seas might turn into death-blood and no escape was found.

The world built by man had its significance too. There were holy cities, like Jerusalem, where the Law of God prevailed in pristine purity. Then there was Babylon, morally corrupt, materialistic, like the Law of God corrupted by a selfish and egotistical priesthood. Babylon was populated by whores, evil purveyors of false doctrine—prostitution of the Word. But Jerusalem had streets of golden virtues, and had gates that could be entered only by those with the innocence of pearls. The garments worn by the inhabitants of the cities reflected their white-purity or their opulent-corruption. And like a holy temple, the very dimensions of the Holy City symbolized its sacred meaning.

* As if "chiselled in stone!"

Besides these sources of symbol, the prophet could draw on other devices to test the reader's spiritual acuity. A word that seemed to have a familiar meaning might have a deeper meaning when its roots were investigated. *Diabolos* (Devil) became the "Deceiver". *Apollyon* became the "Destroyer". This literary device is familiar enough to modern readers, but another used by the prophet is almost totally unfamiliar. That device is called the gematria,⁶ and its importance to understanding the Apocalypse cannot be overstated.

Gematria

Consider the possibility of using the ordinary letters of the English alphabet to denote numbers. This possibility would not be too remote if the Arabic system of numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0) had not been invented. Assuming that we did so, we might assign the value 1 to the letter A, the value 2 to the letter B, and so on. Then a curious thing would result—all words would also have numerical values and some numbers would spell words. The possibility of giving a second meaning to a word or to a number would be rather obvious. This is precisely the origin of gematria.

Since the Greeks did not have separate number symbols, they resorted to the use of their alphabet for that purpose. By the first century CE, the numerical equivalence of the Greek alphabet had evolved into the following:

Table 1
The Greek Gematria

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Α α	Β β	Γ γ	Δ δ	Ε ε	Ζ ζ	Ζ ζ	Η η	Θ θ
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
Ι ι	Κ κ	Λ λ	Μ μ	Ν ν	Ξ ξ	Ο ο	Π π	Ρ ρ
100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900
Ρ ρ	Σ σ/ς	Τ τ	Υ υ	Φ φ	Χ χ	Ψ ψ	Ω ω	Ͱ ͱ

Certain symbols* for 6, 90 and 900, though still used in numerical work, had fallen into literary disuse, and their values were formed through a combination or modification of other symbols. Other ancient peoples employed equivalent systems. In Arabic, it was known as the abjad.

The value of a word or a combination of words was equal to the sum of its elements. Thus either $\alpha\omega$ or $\omega\alpha$ had the value 801.

The letter-numbers 1 (α) through 9 (θ) of the upper row of Table 1 were considered as archetypes, while their decadal successors in the columns below were considered as representing those same archetypes raised to higher degrees. Thus the archetype of 800 (ω) was 8 (η).

The archetype of a large number was obtained by successive addition of its elements until the archetype was discovered. To discover the archetype of 832 ($\omega\lambda\beta$) for example, we first add the archetypal values of its elements $8+3+2$ to obtain 13. Next, we add the resulting elements, $1+3$ to obtain 4. Hence the archetype of 832 is 4 (δ).

The process of obtaining the archetype of a letter-number is sometimes called cabalistic contraction or reduction.[†] In this book the archetype of a letter-number will be called its archetypal value in contrast to its literal value. For example, the literal value of Ιησοϋς Jesus is 888. The archetypal value is six.⁷

Returning to the main course of the argument, the prophet was able to enlarge the meaning of a word or a phrase by giving it a value by gematria equal to another word or phrase. This second word or phrase might have a meaning that would give a profound implication to the first. The power of this literary device will become apparent as the reader enters the Apocalypse.⁸

* Usually called stigma, goppa, and sampi respectively. Ref. 53, pp. 11, 25.

† The archetype of a number is called the digital root in the parlance of modern mathematics.

In a similar way, the literal value of a word or number can be given a further profound meaning with its archetypal value is investigated. To understand the import of the archetypal value, one must be familiar with some of the rudiments of ancient number symbolism.

Number symbolism

There is no doubt, certain numbers such as π (3.1415926535 ...)* and e (2.71828 ...) are important building blocks of pure mathematics. In the realm of physics, man may have discovered many important fundamental constants. One of these is the ratio of subatomic particle action to radiation action. The ratio has the value 137. Then there are the so-called “magic numbers” (2, 8, 20, 50, 82, 126) of nuclear physics that define the number of neutrons in the closed shells of stable atomic nuclei.

The imagination is excited by the meanings that might lie hidden in these discoveries. The ancient natural philosophers, whose scientific resources were probably less developed than our own, found similar excitement in the possible meanings that lay hidden behind special numbers.⁹ Certain of these numbers, such as π (3.14159 ...) and the Golden Number Φ (1.61803 ...) are still considered important to an understanding of the universe.¹⁰ Other numerological speculations of the ancient philosophers are out of vogue, at least for the present, but we must investigate some of the meanings that the first century philosophers may have ascribed to the special numbers of the Apocalypse to obtain a fuller understanding of the author’s intent.

The literature of ancient numerology is extensive, and the concepts underlying the subject have been confused by centuries of speculation, especially during the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, it is possible to reconstruct the probable meanings originally intended by ancient philosophers and theologians as understood in the first century.¹¹

* not to be confused with $\pi = 80$ of the gematria.

The numbers that have the greatest significance in the Apocalypse are: 2, 3, 4, 7, 9 and 12. The significance of other numbers will be explained in the main text. To the list above we might include 22, the number of chapters in the Apocalypse. This is also the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and the 22 chapters means that the book is complete and finished.

The significance of the remaining numbers is arrived at in the following way:

The concept of God as being One leads to His symbol the Monad 1. In this form God may also be represented by a Pillar¹² or Sacred Pole. But in this form He is alone and without His creation. Consequently, He formed the Dyad 2, the principle of opposition or duality.¹² At this stage one can think of the equivalent Chinese concept of Yang and Yin (Figure 1), the dualistic principle of male and female, positive and negative, the container and the contained, thesis and antithesis, life and death, etc. It was through the principle of duality that matter was created.¹³

The next phase is the reconciliation of duality to form the Triad 3, containing an ordering or uniting principle connecting the two opposites. At this level God is conceptualized as abstract Divinity, the Creator. In the words of Plato,¹⁴ "First, out of the Indivisible (the Same) and the Divisible (the Other), God made Essence. He then took the three elements of the Same, the Other and the Essence, and mingled them into one form, compressing by force the reluctant and unsociable nature of the Same and of the Other. When He had mingled them with the Essence and out of the three made one, He again divided this whole into as many portions as was fitting, each portion being a compound of the Same, the Other, and the Essence."

The geometric symbol for the Triad is the triangle since it is formed from three points. The ancient triangular Hindu symbol for the all-seeing Eye of Brahma (Figure 1) persists on the Great Seal of the United States and is printed on the reverse side of the one dollar bill. The Star of David is composed of two triangles; the Bahá'í Star [actually, the unity star. Ed] is composed of three.

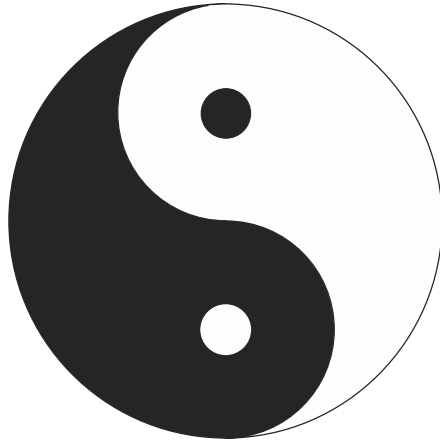


Figure 1a
The T'ai-Chi, or Yang-Yin symbol of China

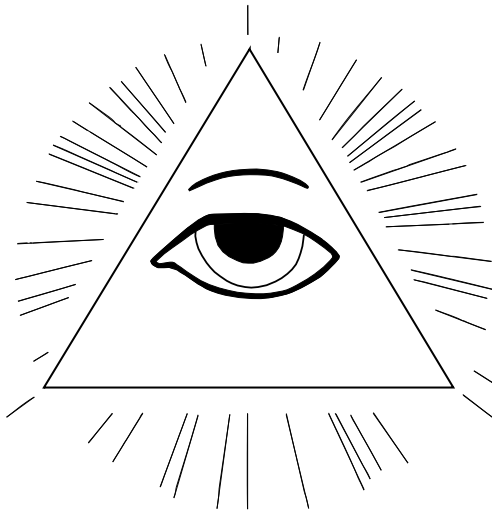


Figure 1b
The all-seeing eye of Brahma

Some examples of the use of the Triad 3 among the ancients to symbolize abstract divinity are:

Memphian	Ptah, Sekhet, Nefer-Tem
Theban	Amon-Ra, Maut, Khonsu
Abdyan	Osiris, Isis, Horus
Sumerian	Enki, Emlil, An
Orphic	Phanes, Uranus, Chronos
Zoroastric	Ormand, Mithras, Ahriman
Hindu	Brahma, Vishnu, Siva
Taoist	T'ien-pao, Ling-pao, Shen-pao
Cabric	Axercos, Axiokersa, Axiokersos
Phoenician	Ashtraroeth, Milcom, Chemosh
Tyrian	Belus, Venus, Thammuz
Grecian	Zeus, Poseidon, Demeter
Roman	Jupiter, Neptune, Pluto
Eleusinian	Iacchus, Persephone, Demeter
Platonic	Tagathon, Nous, Psyche
Celtic	Hu, Ceridwen, Creirwy
Teutonic	Fenris, Midgard, Hela
Gothic	Woden, Friga, Thor
Scandinavian	Odin, Vile, Ve
Mexican	Vitzliputzle, Kaloc, Tescalipuca
Gilbert and Ellice Islands	Nareau, Nikikitea, Nareau Te Rabakau
Buddhist	Personality, Church, Law
Judaean	He Who was, Who is, Who always will be; Three Heads of the Holy Ancient
Christian ¹⁵	Father, Son, Holy Ghost
Gnostic	Divine triads (various)
Muslim	Essence, Creator, Creatures

'Abdu'l-Bahá explains the correct meaning of the Trinity in *Some Answered Questions* (pp. 127-9) as the One God, His Holy Spirit, and His Manifestation.

The next development is the Tetrad 4. It is the “crossing” or product 2×2 and represents the formation of the world of man from combinations of the Dyad.¹⁶ One geometric symbol of the Tetrad is the square since it is formed by 4 points. Another symbol of the Tetrad is the cross. 4 also symbolizes solidity or volume, since 4 points are the minimum number required to define a volume, that is, a tetrahedron or triangular-based pyramid. Bahá'u'lláh employed the Tetrad in His Tablet, *The Four Valleys*, in which He describes the 4 types of mystical wayfarers.

The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 were combined in the Tetraktys of Pythagoras, a sacred symbol of certain ancient mystery cults (Figure 2).

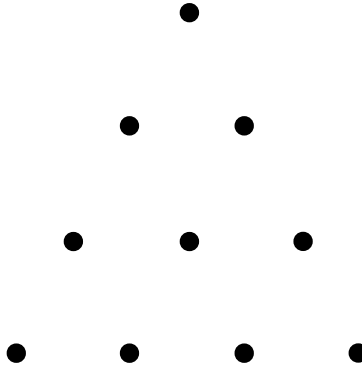


Figure 2
The sacred tetraktys of Pythagoras

This symbol was treated as the key to understanding the whole of life. Theou of Smyrna (first century CE) enumerated ten sets of four things that the Tetraktys was held to symbolize.¹⁷

Numbers:	1, 2, 3, 4
Magnitudes:	point, line, surface, solid
Elements:	fire, air, earth, water

Simple bodies:	pyramid, cube, octahedron, icosahedron
Living things:	seed, growth in length, growth in breadth, growth in thickness
Societies:	man, village, city, nation
Faculties:	sensation, opinion, knowledge, reason
Seasons:	spring, summer, autumn, winter
Ages:	infancy, youth, manhood, old age
Human being:	body, mind, soul, spirit

The next development is the 7. Being the sum of 3 and 4, it can represent the union of heaven and earth. 7 was the number of the known planets. Among the ancients, 7 was also the number of opportunity, "because in nature the times of fulfilment with respect to birth and maturity go in sevens. Take man, for example. He can be born in 7 months, cuts his teeth after another 7, reaches puberty about the end of his second period of 7 years, and grows a beard at the third.—Aristotle¹⁸

On the other hand, 7 was the symbol of expansion and sacrifice among the Babylonians and ancient Hebrews. For example, animals entered Noah's ark by sevens (Genesis 7:2-3); Jacob spent 7 years in servitude for Leah and 7 years more for Rachel (Genesis 29); 7 years was the legal limit of slavery under Mosaic law. 7 was also the number of trial and punishment. The Ark of the Covenant was in the land of the Philistines for 7 months (1 Samuel 6:1), and the Israelites were in bondage for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11, 29:10).

The repeated use of 7 in the Apocalypse can mean all of these things. The book represents a prophecy of 7 progressive Revelations (training) and 7 punishments of mankind through various tests and plagues. But man is also given the opportunity (7) to recognize the Christ Returned, Bahá'u'lláh, symbolized by 9, through Whom heaven and earth will be united (7).

Other examples of the use of the 7 symbol among the ancients are:¹⁹

Chinese:	7 days of creation
Persian:	7 steps of progress toward heaven
Hindu:	7 mansions, abodes of created spirits
Judean:	7 days of fasting, sacrifice, and prayer
Roman:	7 planets (Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Saturn, Jupiter, Venus)
Gnostic:	7 Greek vowels arranged in cabalistic manner to signify the Creator
Japanese	7 household gods

Bahá'u'lláh used the 7 in His Tablet, *The Seven Valleys*, describing 7 stages of spiritual development.

The use of the 9 in the Apocalypse is indirect and hidden, which may be considered remarkable in itself, since 9 was considered supremely sacred, being the Perfected Triad or the Trinity of Trinities, that is, 3×3 . Its complete absence as a literal number in the Apocalypse is another clue to the seeker as to its importance. However, 9 appears with high frequency in the archetypal values of various numbers and phrases as will become clear in the text. The significance of 9 is that it is the number of Bahá,²⁰ the Greatest Name of God, and was used as a seal by Bahá'u'lláh, His Manifestation. The numerical value of Bahá is derived from the Arabic equivalent of the gematria, the abjad.

Since 9 equals 3×3 , it also symbolizes the union and reconciliation of all mankind's concepts of God.²¹ Being the largest number less than the decad, 9 also represents the highest unity.²²

A second way of combining 3 and 4 is by taking their product 12. Thus 12 is another symbol of the union of heaven and earth on a still higher order than 7. The number 12 became a symbol for the universe, containing both matter and spirit. As the 12 signs of the zodiac, 12 represents the precession of epochs.²³ It was the perfect measure since it is divisible by 2, 3, 4 and 6, and has been handed down to us as the dozen, the 12 months of the

year, the 12 hours between sunrise and sunset, and, of course, the 12 signs of the zodiac. By cabalistic contraction, 12 becomes 3 and is, therefore, a holy number. 12 was also the original number of significance and completion.

Astrological symbolism

In *Hamlet's Mill*,* Professors de Santillana and von Dechend present an impressive body of evidence that the ancients were not only very familiar with the dawning places of the sun at different seasons of the year, but, more significantly, were well aware of the phenomenon now called the Precession of the Equinoxes. In order to appreciate the awesome effect the knowledge of this phenomenon must have had in antiquity, we must review the model of the cosmos as conceived by the ancient cosmologists and astrologers.

According to Professor de Santillana, the model of the cosmos resembled the system shown in Figure 3. The extremity of the cosmos was regarded as a great crystalline sphere, that is, the firmament, on which were placed the milky way and the constellations of fixed stars. A band of stars, called the zodiac or "circle of beasts", delimited the paths of the sun and the other moving heavenly bodies, that is, the planets or "wanderers". The earth was placed at the centre of this sphere, its axis inclined $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees with respect to the axis of the celestial sphere. The spinning of the celestial sphere or the earth on its own axis might account for the days and nights. The tilt of the earth's axis with respect to the sun's journey of 365 days through the "houses" of the zodiac accounted for the seasons.²⁴

Various models were proposed to account for the brilliance and motions of the stars and planets. One model was that of Ptolemy, providing seven concentric crystalline "heavens"[†] for the seven planets. In popular myth, the planets were considered

* Reference 58.

† II Corinthians 12:2

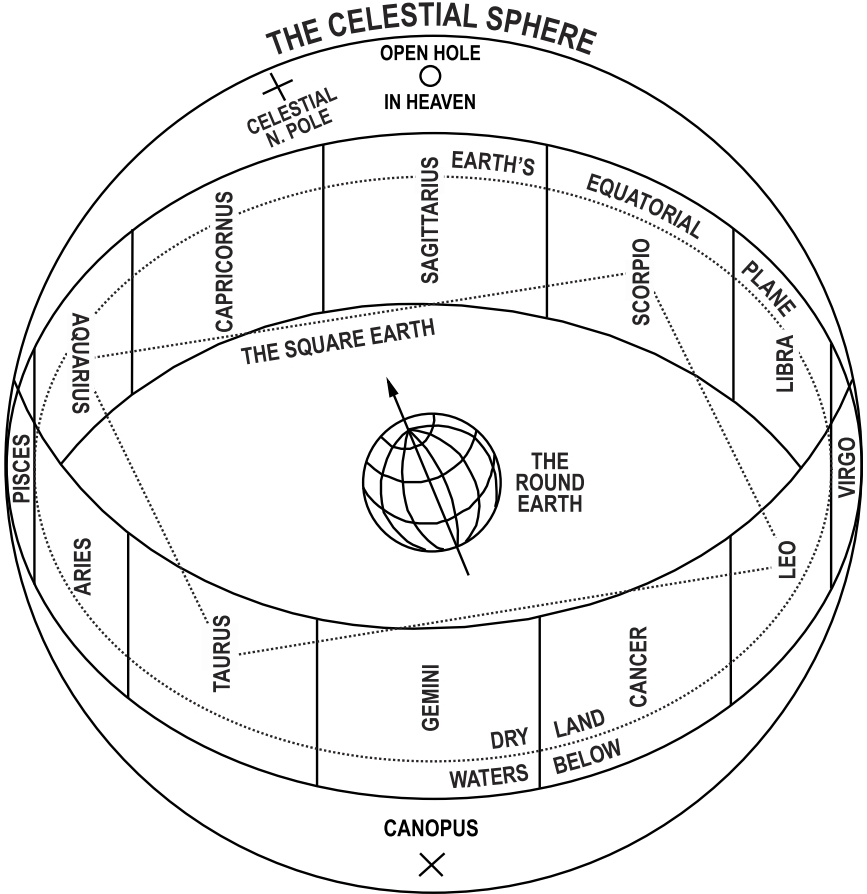


Figure 3
The ancient cosmos
The oval zodiacal ring is the earth's equatorial plane.

to be shining gods, or perhaps lamps carried across the firmament by gods or angels.

Regardless of the model, the regularity of planetary movements and the spectacular panorama of the skies led men to consider the hand of the zodiac to be the “true earth”. The stars and planets, the inhabitants of the true earth, became the true lords of time and the originators of history, with man at the heavy earthbound centre of the system taking on the role of mere spectator to “earthshaking” cosmic events over which he had little or no control.

Thus was born the royal science, astrology, and it became a matter of great importance for men to know when the stars showed good or bad aspects. The band of the zodiac was divided into twelve principal constellations, and various names and attributes were assigned to them for the purposes of divination. Because the stellar constellations occupied unequal spaces along the celestial sphere, astrologers eventually found it convenient to separate the zodiacal band into twelve “signs” of equal length as an aid to astrological computations. The signs and constellations of the zodiac within recent millennia have been called by the following names:

Zodiacal order	Precession order	Sign or constellation	English name
1	1	Aries	Ram
2	12	Taurus	Bull
3	11	Gemini	Twins
4	10	Cancer	Crab
5	9	Leo	Lion
6	8	Virgo	Virgin
7	7	Libra	Scales
8	6	Scorpio	Scorpion
9	5	Sagittarius	Archer
10	4	Capricornus	Goat
11	3	Aquarius	Water Bearer
12	2	Pisces	Fishes

The zodiacal order corresponds to the dawning time of the sign during the solar year commencing with the Vernal equinox. The Precession order is reversed from the zodiacal order since the sun appears to slowly retrogress through the zodiacal houses.

There is a considerable disagreement among modern astrologers concerning the starting point of the age of Aquarius and, indeed, of any of the zodiacal ages. The disagreements stem from such questions as the historical origin of the zodiac, whether certain specific stars, the sign or the constellation is to be used as a reference, and when the signs were exactly aligned with the constellations. The least trenchant view is that there are no clear starting points, and the ages, like the earthly seasons, are gradually transformed into one another.

Returning to the celestial sphere of Figure 3, it was recognized that the earth's axis, being tilted with respect to the celestial system, was directed at a northern point that was not coincident with the true axis of the celestial sphere. It was common to consider the celestial sphere as having an open hole or "door" at the northern end of the celestial axis, while the star Canopus marked the terminus of the southern axis. The great circle (not shown in Figure 3) tracing the centre of the zodiacal band is called the celestial equator. The "dry earth" was the ideal plane passing through the celestial equator. The plane of the earth's equator extended to the celestial sphere also had significance. The earth's equatorial plane divided the zodiac into "dry land" and the "waters below". "Fire" (not shown in Figure 3) was the name of a great circle passing through the north and south poles of the celestial sphere.

We are now in a position to understand the "square earth" and the Precession of the Equinoxes. The equinoxes are the two days during the calendar year when the days and nights are of equal twelve hour duration. The solstices, also important to astrological symbolism, are the two days of the year corresponding to the longest and shortest days. The approximate dates of these four events are

21 March	Spring or Vernal equinox, equal day and night.
21 June	Summer solstice, longest day [southern hemisphere winter].
21 September	Autumnal or Fall equinox, equal day and night.
21 December	Winter solstice, shortest day [southern hemisphere summer].

Originally among the pastoral peoples of the Middle East, the sun rising in the triangular-shaped constellation of Aries the Ram marked the Spring equinox. That is why, to this day, it is said that the Spring season always appears under the sign of Aries. But it was discovered over a long period of observation that the *constellation* of Aries gradually began to lag behind the true beginning of the Spring season. Thus the Spring season is usually ushered in by a constellation other than Aries. Indeed, the constellation that ushers in the Spring will be different from “age to age”, and it is customary to name the “age” of historical man to agree with the zodiacal constellation at the Spring equinox.

The gradual shifting of the constellations, which we now know is caused by a gyroscopic precession of the earth’s axis, is called the Precession of the Equinoxes. The Precession of the Equinoxes is extremely slow, requiring 72 years to precess only one degree along the celestial sphere, requiring 25,920 years to complete a full cycle in which the sun returns to its original “house” in Aries at springtime. The 25,920 year cycle is called a “Great year” or a “Platonic year”. One twelfth of the Platonic year, a period of 2160 years, is called a “Platonic month”. Some idea of the slowness and the majesty of this phenomenon can be understood by referring to Figure 4. The figure shows the appearance of the zodiac as it is seen today and as it appeared 4,500 years ago. During all those millennia, the zodiac has shifted a mere 60 degrees!

The Precession of the Equinoxes is accompanied by another phenomenon, the dislocation of the north pole or Precession of the Poles. The north celestial pole, located near the star beta Ursae Minoris at the beginning of the Christian Era, now lies near alpha Ursae Minoris. In another twelve thousand years the north polar star will be Vega.

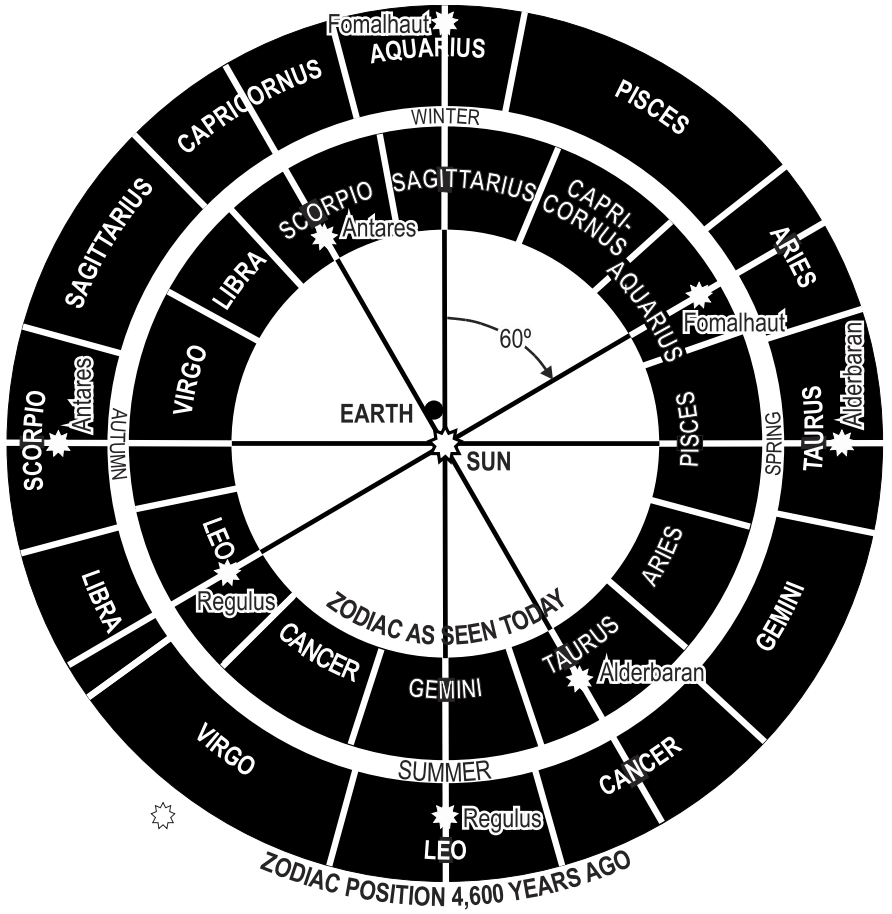


Figure 4
The precession of the equinoxes

In ancient times, the constellations in which the sun rises at the equinoxes and solstices were conceived of as four “pillars” or “corners” of the “true earth”. Connecting the four “corners” with straight lines generates the “rectangular” or “square earth”. In Figure 3 are shown the four corners corresponding to the age of Aquarius, the zodiacal age into which we are now entering. These four corners were Pisces, Sagittarius, Virgo and Gemini.

Thus we see that the Precession causes a major reorientation of the ancient cosmic system on an average of once every 2,160 years; the shifting of the rising points of the sun in the houses of the zodiac, the dislocation of the north polar star, the “shaking of the corners of the earth”, a “twilight of the gods”.

Since the astrological theories of antiquity correlated stellar phenomena “above” with worldly historical events “below”, the Precession took on a profound significance. The appearance of a new constellation at the Spring equinox portended a “new heaven and a new earth”, a new Message from God, and world-wide cataclysmic physical and historical events. Old religions and governments could be expected to topple, flood and fire (symbolically) might be counted on to destroy the gods and records of the dying civilization. But God “shall live as long as the sun endures, long as the moon, age after age.”—Psalms 72:5.

It is clear from a careful reading of the Holy Books that astrological symbolism was a common literary device in antiquity. For example, consider the correlation of the twelve sons of Jacob with the signs of the zodiac. A hint that the twelve sons might be correlated with astrological influences is given in Genesis 37:9 where Joseph has a dream of “the sun, moon and eleven stars bowing down to him”. The dream turns out to be a prophecy that Joseph’s family, including his eleven brothers, will later bow down to him in Egypt (42:8). The correlation becomes even more interesting when it is discovered that it is possible to correlate all thirteen children of Jacob, including his daughter Dinah, with the astrological signs. For later, in Genesis 49, we

find the famous blessings of Jacob on his sons that are highly suggestive of the signs of the zodiac.

Reuben	“boiling over with water”, is Aquarius the Water Bearer.
Simeon & Levi	“the brethren”, are Gemini the Twins.
Judah	“the Lion’s whelp”, is Leo the Lion.
Zebulon	who “shall dwell at the breach of the sea”, is Pisces the Fishes.
Issachar	“a strong ass crouching down between the sheep folds”, is Taurus the Bull.
Dan	“a serpent in the way”, is Scorpio the Scorpion.
Gad	“a troop shall press upon him, but he shall press upon their heel”, is Aries the Ram, leader of the flock. (Aries, being the first sign of the zodiac, “presses on their heel”, in the circular zodiac.)
Asher	the weigher of bread, is Libra the Scales.
Nephtali	“a hind let loose” is Capricornus the Goat.
Joseph	whose “bow abides in strength”, is Sagittarius the Archer.

The remaining signs of the zodiac are not so readily identified. One argument goes that Benjamin, Jacob’s youngest son, corresponds to Cancer the Crab, since it is a “young” constellation formed many years after the other eleven. Presumably the Crab is as “ravening as a wolf, devouring his prey by morning, dividing the spoil at night.” Dinah, the only daughter, is assigned to Virgo.

Be that as it may, the Twelve Tribes were required to carry standards or family signs (Numbers 2). The four chief tribes and their zodiacal signs were: Judah—a lion, Reuben—a man (Aquarius), Ephriam—a bull, and Dan—a scorpion, the sign formerly called the Eagle in very ancient times. These particular four signs will prove to be very interesting in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Apocalypse and are also found in Ezekiel.

In Ezekiel’s vision, Chapters one and ten, we find a remarkable description of the cosmic mechanism* resembling the

* These verses are often quoted by UFO buffs as evidence of flying saucer sightings in ancient times.

mechanical models proposed by the ancient Greek Ionian and Milesian philosophers such as Anaximander. Ezekiel's zodiac (1:10–19) emphasizes the same four zodiacal signs corresponding to the four chief tribes—man, lion, ox, and eagle. The zodiac has “rims high and dreadful” and the four chief signs have “their rims full of eyes (start) round about. And when the living creatures (zodiacal beasts) went, the wheels went beside them, and when the living creatures were lifted up (dawned) from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.” It will become obvious in Revelations 4 and 5 that Ezekiel's vision parallels that of John, and that the “glory of the Lord” sitting on the throne in Ezekiel 1:24–28 is Bahá'u'lláh.

Geometric symbolism

Certain geometric symbols or mandalas must be explained before we enter the Apocalypse. We have already noted that the Tetrad 4 symbolizing the world of man can be represented by a square or cross. Extending the square into a volume results in a cube, another symbol for the world of man.

One symbol for heaven, the realm of the spirit (and hence heavenly virtues) is the circle. The circle is the perfect figure, having neither beginning nor end; thus it can represent eternity and infinity. A source of ambiguity enters here. Since the perimeter of a circle is roughly 3 times its diameter, 3 can sometimes represent the realm of heaven, heavenly virtues, and so on, in addition to representing the Holy Triad. Spinning the circle about its diameter generates the sphere, another symbol for heaven. In analogy to the addition of 3 and 4 to obtain 7, circles, crosses, spheres and cubes can be combined in various ways to symbolize the union of heaven and earth. The squared circle mandala is called the *quadratura circuli*, examples of which are shown in Figure 5. The *quadratura circuli* has appeared in many forms such as oriental mandalas, the swastika, and the Latin cross with the circle of eternity. It is still a powerful determinant in our unconscious life. By comparing Figures 3 and 5, it can be seen that the *quadratura circuli* is latent in the ancient cosmological model.²⁵

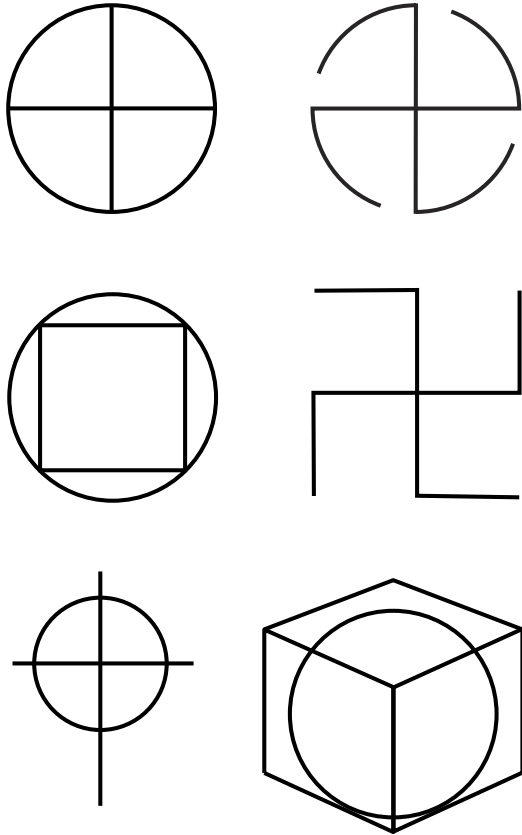


Figure 5
Examples of the quadratura circuli

The best known of all geometric symbols is the Great Pyramid of Giza. It apparently represents a squared circle since the perimeter of its square base equals the altitude of the pyramid multiplied by 2-times the circular π . The sum of the diagonals of the base of the Great Pyramid is 25,827 pyramid inches, a very close approximation to the number of years in the Great year of the Precession.

By inference, the Great Pyramid can be considered as another model of the cosmos and a symbol of the union of heaven and earth. However, there is a considerable controversy concerning the purpose of the pyramids.²⁶

Further literary devices

Another literary device used by the prophet that must be understood is the reiterated prophecy. It is a further method of disguising the prophecy and testing the seeker's spiritual acuity. In this style, the same prophecy is repeated two or more times using different allegorical or literal expressions to amplify its meaning in different ways. To the reader who assumes that the account must follow a lineal sequence of events, the account will be confusing and impossible to reconcile. A related technique is to tax the reader's memory by scattering crucial but related bits of information throughout the prophecy.

Nor is every event in the Apocalypse to be taken allegorically. The test of acuity goes both ways. The events are occasionally accurate in a literal sense and act as guideposts to the seeker to assure him that he is on the right path. A general rule to follow is first to decide whether the passage is reasonable when taken literally. If not, look for an allegorical meaning that is in accord with reason and common sense. That failing, the passage may be assumed to have a transcendental meaning.

The time and space of the Apocalypse

From the outset the Apocalypse has staggering dimensions. The Revelators and peoples of seven Faiths are specifically addressed, and these are the Divinely revealed Faiths of the

region called Asia* as understood by the first century reader. But the major portions of the Apocalypse are more limited, being primarily directed to the early Christians and to the peoples of the future Faith of Islám. In the closing chapters the prophecy describes world-wide events and a message is given to the whole of mankind warning of the Advent of the Return of Christ, Bahá'u'lláh. Who will come to reap the harvest of mankind at the end of the Age of Prophecy.

The time span covered by the prophecy is also impressive, covering the period from about CE 100 until the present time and at least a thousand years into the future. Here, however, the major portions of the prophecy end with the events that are happening in our own century.

It is important to understand the shifting emphasis that occurs throughout the Apocalypse. For instance, the "whole world" may mean the Middle East at one time but may mean the twentieth century world at another. The changes in the dimensions of the prophecy roughly correspond to the level of the intended reader's awareness of a humanly populated world, that is, an *oikumene*, as the Greeks called it.

Future scholarship

Some promising fields for future research appear to be in the realms of music and psychology. Professor McClain's recent book *The Myth of Invariance* (Reference 56) develops the close relationship between ancient musical scales, cosmology and numerology, with prime emphasis on the *Rig Veda*. Since much of the ancient number symbolism was common to the whole Eurasian continent, Egypt, and possibly Middle America, it is

* The region of Asia extended from the Hellespont to Africa in the south and the Bay of Bengal in the east. It included India but did not include modern Asiatic Russia and the Far East. (See frontspiece.) The Roman Province of Asia (129 BCE) as distinguished from the region of Asia, corresponded roughly to modern Turkey or Asia Minor. The name of the Province of Asia became "Asia" in much the same way that the United States of America has become "America".

obvious that the Apocalypse is a fertile field to explore for further correlations. In Chapter 15, Note 9, will be found a reference to ancient musical scales that tie in with certain “tones” of the “new song” of the Apocalypse. One wonders whether the remaining tones of the scales have meaningful correlates hidden by gematria.

The student of psychology will be struck by the many archetypal symbols of Jungian psychology that are found throughout the Apocalypse. Examples of these symbols and some of their psychological interpretations are listed below:

Rock (Stone)	the life force, completion, invariance, the Eternal, God.
Precious gems	the union of opposites, the fusion of matter and spirit, the ordering principle.
The Philosopher’s Stone, the Pearl of Great Price (the White Stone)	God in matter, the Eternal.
The helpful animal (good beast)	the instinctual basis for the Self.
Quadrangular mandala	conscious realization of inner wholeness.
Circular mandala	the inner wholeness itself.
Temple	logic, reason.
Miraculous child	the Redeemer.
Priestess (Bride)	the anima, the female element in the male psyche.
Harlot	the negative anima.
Gate	hope.
Shepherd’s hook	authority.
Horse	uncontrollable instinctive drive erupting from the unconscious.
Sea	the unconscious.
Cloak, robe	outer mask or persona.
City	completion of the Self.
Bird	transcendence, intuition.

The perennial appeal of the Apocalypse can, no

doubt, be ascribed to the use of such archetypal symbols. One might wonder whether the archetypes of the collective unconscious may not, in turn, have been formulated to some extent by the Apocalypse itself. The investigation of these and related questions is beyond the scope of this book.

The work of presenting a detailed and thoroughly satisfactory explanation of the Apocalypse has only begun. The achievements contained herein are feeble compared to that which remains to be done. We must remember that the source of this revelation is Jesus Christ Himself, and the subtleties and levels of meaning that are contained in the book permit man to have but a hint of the power and sovereignty of God's Manifestation. Without the corporal assistance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the work will be slow and prone to error.

It is for that reason that the writer has chosen to include in the same volume the unmodified King James Version (KJV) of Revelations for direct comparison with the interpretation. Since it is an interpretation, it is not a substitute, and it would be sacrilege to present the interpretation without giving the reader the opportunity to challenge and to disagree. In this way the writer hopes to avoid the accusation that he has, himself, become guilty of the very thing the Apocalypse condemns, that is, of corrupting the Word of God. (See Chapter 22, verses 18, 19.)

The use of the King James Version as the baseline was based upon the following considerations: It is by far the most familiar version in the English speaking world and at the same time is considered to be one of the most accurate translations. However, the Revised Standard Version (RSV) was used to resolve obscurities in the text of the King James Version. The careful reader will find it instructive to compare several translations of the Sacred Texts. Sometimes differences will arise from nuances of the individual translators; at other times from variations in the original sources.

Notes

After thousands of years of neglect and purposeful suppression, we can only discern a small portion of the elaborate letter-number symbolism that pervaded the ancient mystical texts. Letter-number symbolism lends itself to endless speculation, and it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to deduce all of the correctly intended meanings that may lie hidden in a number or a phrase. The writer has avoided the temptation to introduce improbable speculations, no matter how attractive, unless these speculations open up possibilities for research by future scholars. It is in this spirit that many of the conjectures in the Notes have been proffered, and it is hoped that their improbable nature will not prejudice the reader against the more certain inferences in the main text.

- ¹ See References 1, 2, and 64.
- ² The allegorical method was used by the Greek philosophers, especially the stoics, to reconcile the ancient pagan religious beliefs with enlightened philosophy. The method was also used by Jewish, Gnostic and Christian writers and was very popular during the first century. See Ref. 3, p. 91. Also see, e.g., I Corinthians 2:13-14, 4:20, 10:1-4, 14:15-20; Galatians 4:21-26; Mark 4:10-12, 34; II Corinthians 4:18; Matthew 13:10-23, 36-43, 15:8-20, 16:11-12, 17:11-13, 22:29-32, 26:26-28.

Jewish mystics used four methods of interpreting Scripture: literally (*Peshat*), allusively (*Remez*), allegorically (*Derush*), and mystically (*Sod*). See Reference 4, pp. 49-50.
- ³ See *The Hidden Words*, p. iv.
- ⁴ The importance of the Twin symbol in the history of civilization is explained by Otto Rank in Reference 7.
- ⁵ Solar worship originating in Syria had become almost a state religion under the Roman Caesars. The cult was characterized by a hierarchy of the sun, moon, and stars in descending order of eminence. See Reference 3, p. 255.
- ⁶ Gematria, once widely used, was one of several kinds of letter-mysticism practised by ancient mystical writers. Two others less frequently used were *notarikon* and *temurah*. In *notarikon*, new words were made up of the first and last letters of other words. In *temurah*, a new word was created by transposing the letters of the original word. See Reference 4, p. 49.

7 Cabalistic contraction is still practised by serious cabalists and by modern numerologists in “fortune telling”. In the view of ancient mysticism, the letter-numbers 1 to 9 were considered as archetypes of abstract principles. Their higher decadal successors, e.g. :1:10:100 or 2:20:200, etc., represented those archetypes raised to higher spheres of emanation, roughly equivalent to the positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of comparison in the English language.

The number symbolism described herein was largely Hellenistic. A mystical Jewish interpretation can be found in Reference 8.

Cabalistic contraction can be a useful tool in simple arithmetic problems. Consider a problem in addition:

Nos	Archetypal values
213	6
427	4
619	7
<hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black;"/> 1,259	<hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black;"/> 17 = 8

A quick check will show that the archetypal value of 1,259 is also 8, since $1+2+5+9 = 17$, and $1+7 = 8$. Analogous procedures can be used to verify the results of problems in subtraction, multiplication and division. This procedure is sometimes called “casting out of nines” because the same answer will be obtained if the nines are excluded from the calculation.

- 8 Entertaining and provocative discussions of gematria can be found in References 9 and 46. A scholarly treatment can be found in Reference 4 that also contains a good bibliography. See also Reference 47, 48, 49 and 50.
- 9 The ancients believed that the numbers had formative powers. See Reference 4, p. 47. Pythagoras is reputed to have declared “Number rules the universe.” Plato said, “God ever geometrizes.” The modern mathematician Jacoi expressed his own belief with “God ever arithmetizes.” See Reference 10, pp. xix, xxi.
- 10 See References 6, 44, 61.
- 11 The concepts elucidated here are based principally upon Plato’s *Timaeus* and upon those of Nichomachus of Gerasa (c. CE 100) as reported by Martianus Capella (fl. CE 410–429) in his book *De Naptius*. The reader is also referred to References 11 and 12.
- 12 God as the Monad may be the subject of Genesis 28:18. The pillars of cloud and fire representing the Lord in Exodus 13:21–22 may symbolize God as the Dyad.

- ¹³ Indeed, modern physicists have discovered that the principle of duality is a fundamental property of matter, e.g., electron-positron, neutrino-antineutrino, etc. Duality is also inherent in biological heredity, i.e., dominant-recessive characteristics. Yin historical activity appears to be related to the left cerebral hemisphere while Yang is related to the right. See Reference 13, p. 8ff.

Capra gives an intriguing treatment of yang-yin in the *Tao of Physics*, Ref. 54. Arguelles in *The Transformative Vision*, Ref. 13, appears to have adopted a special definition of yang-yin in order to give Western culture an “evil” aspect.

- ¹⁴ Plato, *Timaeus*, Ref. 29. Three-ism was intimately connected with Greek and Roman theology. For examples, there was a triple succession of supreme deities—Uranus, Chronos and Zeus; there were three Hecatoncherries—Cottus, Gyges and Briareus; there were three points on the divine Trident, the hound Cerberus had three heads, etc.
- ¹⁵ The theory of the Sacred Triad was probably based upon ancient numerological speculation. The Trinitarian doctrine, appropriately modified, appears to have been introduced into Christian theology by Tertullian of Carthage. (c. CE 155–222; Ref. 14, p. 78.) This same Tertullian, who later became a leader of the heretical Montanist sect (c. CE 220), possibly based his ideas upon the theory of the Sacred Triad that was current in Gnostic creeds. It was a practice of later Christian cabalists and missionary writers to refer to the fundamentally different “Trinity” of the Hebrew *Zohar* (Father-Creator; Upper-Lower Mother; Creation) in support of their own doctrine. (Ref. 4, p. 118, n. 28 and ch. IX) The doctrine was hotly disputed by the leaders of the early Church and is still a matter of contention among Christian theologians. An infamous episode in the history of the Church was the Theodosian Code of CE 438 that inflicted the death penalty on those who denied the Trinity. (Ref. 14, p. 103; Ref. 11, p. 37. Compare KJV and RSV versions of I John 5:7–8. Also see Chapter 2, Note 16.)

The Hebrew mystical concept of God as “He Who was, Who is, Who always will be” may rest upon concept of the Three as the first “complete” number, having a beginning (1, was), a middle (2, is), and an end (3, will be). The phrase signifies the timelessness of God. <1:4#3>

- ¹⁶ In the ancient Hebrew Sanctuary of the Wilderness, the 4 fabrics of the sacred tent and the priestly garment may have symbolized the 4 elements of fire, air, earth and water. (Ref. 4, p. 14)

An important concept of modern physics is the 4-dimensional Einsteinian

space comprised of length, breadth, height and time. Some modern physicists believe that matter can be constructed of four basic particles—the u and d quarks, the electron, and the electron-neutrino. (*Scientific American*, October 75) There are four known forces in physical nature: the weak nuclear force, the strong nuclear force, the gravitational force and the electromagnetic force. There are four fundamental physical units of measure: length, mass, time, and charge. DNA nucleotide groups (see Note 22 below) are constructed from four chemical radicals. There are four basic operations in mathematics: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Four colours are necessary and sufficient to colour a map.

- 17 The Tetraktys is an example of another type of number-mysticism that will be called the “triangular expansion” of a number. The triangular value of a number is the sum of its components. Thus the triangular value of 4 is 1+2+3+4 or 10. In general, the triangular value of a number N is given by $(N+1) \times N/2$.

The number 5, the literal value of the Báb, has a triangular value of 15. The number 9, the value of Bahá, has a triangular value of 45.

Both 15 and 45 were sacred numbers to the ancients, 15 being the literal value of “Eve” (Ĥva) and 45 being the literal value of “Adam” (Ádm) in many oriental languages. (See Reference 15 and Appendix D.) Five, the number of the Báb, is also the number of Man, i.e., the four elements plus ether. See Ecclesiastes 17:5. The geometric symbol for Five is a pentacle (5-pointed star), a symbol sometimes used by the Báb in His Tablets.

- 18 Reference 16. It is believed by many modern biologists that the human body replaces its cells once every 7 years.
- 19 Reference 17. Essene writings were especially emphatic of the 7, e.g., the 7 angels of Mother Earth, the 7 angels of the Heavenly Father, etc.
- 20 The spelling of Bahá’ (Glory) and Bahá’u’lláh (Glory of God) in Arabic and the abjad equivalent is as follows:

Bahá’		Bahá’u’lláh	
Letter	Value	Letter	Value
Beh	2	Beh	2
há’	5	há’	5
alif	1	alif	1
ḥamza*	1	ḥamza	1
		Alif†	1
		lám	30
		lám	30

		há'	5
Total	9		75

Mystical references to “Bahá” can be found in Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim writings. e.g., see References 15 and 18; Isaiah 60:1–2, Hebrews 2:14.

[*] The ḥamza is a glottal stop.

[†] In phonetic usage, the second alif disappears and the spelling becomes Bhá'llh as in chapter 1 below.

- 21 Among the ancients 9 was also the number of finality, judgement, and the fulfilment of prophecy. (Reference 9, p. 34)
- 22 The question arises as to whether or not the decad is simply an arbitrary radix (base for counting) of the numbering system. An argument that it may have fundamental significance to all life as we know it is that the DNA molecule, the primary code-carrying unit of the genetic heritage, requires 10 nucleotide groups (building blocks to form one complete turn of its double helix. See Reference 19.
- 23 Twelve was also the number of Olympian deities, the Titans, etc. Belief in astrology was typical during the early Christian centuries. Among the Greek philosophers the order of the cosmos was reflected in the world of man, and the concept of stellar influences on historical events was considered awesome and inspirational. Among the Gnostics, on the other hand, such influences were antipathetic to man’s quest for freedom. The Gnostics claimed to offer salvation from the 7 (order of the planets) and the 12 (cycle of epochs or “generations”). See Reference 3, pp. 66, 254ff. That the Christians also claimed to free man from cosmic imprisonment is evidenced by Colossians 2:8 (RSV) and Galatians 4:3ff. The Son of God is sent to free man from the “elements” (physical order) and bondage to the “law”, the religious result of mechanistic cosmic influences. See Reference 20, p. 190 and commentary on “sin”, Rev. 1:6.
- 24 See Ref. 53, Appendix I. It is remarkable that many modern cosmologists again hold the view that the universe is round, except that it is now considered to be a hypersphere with four dimensions. The ancient cosmologists know that the earth is spherical, and at least one, Eratosthenes, had made some reasonably accurate estimates of its circumference (Ref. 6).

Plato in his *Timaeus* ascribed a cubical shape to the “element earth”. The medieval notion that the earth is flat and rectangular can be traced to early Church Fathers such as Saint Lactantius. The sixth century monk Cosmas in his *Topographia Christiana* likened the earth to the Hebrew

Tabernacle of the Wilderness (Exodus 26, 27) except on a greatly enlarged scale. The earth corresponded to the floor of the Tabernacle, the sky to its walls and ceiling. Belief in a spherical earth was not re-established among the western intelligentsia until about CE 1000, largely through the progressive leadership of Sylvester II, the “magician Pope”.

- ²⁵ The swastika was once used as a symbol by the early Christian Church. It should not be confused with the Nazi emblem that had a counter-clockwise orientation, symbolic of the intent of the Nazi leadership to draw upon “negative occult powers” in opposition to Christian or “positive occult powers”. In early Christian art, round halos were usually reserved for the dead while square halos were given to the living (Figure 29B, Reference 14).
- ²⁶ Besides the Great Pyramid, number and geometric symbolism appears to have been incorporated in the dimensions of temples and other sacred structures in ancient times. For discussion of the *quadratus circuli*, see References 1, 2, and 9. Regarding ancient temples and the Great Pyramid, see References 6, 9, 46, 65, 66, and 67.

Part II
The Revelation of Saint John
the divine

1

The Greatest Name

1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:
2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.
3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

God gave this Revelation to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is giving the Revelation to His servant John through an angel. The Revelation is of things that must shortly come to pass. John is recording the Revelation, the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of the things John saw.

The angel is a celestial messenger, a purified soul¹ who is sent from heaven. Shortly come to pass means that the events will soon commence. The duration of time may seem long to man but is short to God.

The person is blessed who reads the words with spiritual eyes and ears and remembers the words and lives according to their true meaning.

4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

John is to give the Revelation to the seven Divinely revealed Churches, that is, the Seven Faiths of the region known as Asia in the first century. These churches are those of the Prophetic Cycle begun by the Prophet Adam that will have living followers at the time of the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that the church or temple is a collective centre, a symbol of the real Divine Temple, the Manifestation of God.²

The Seven Sprits before the throne will be met again in Chapter 4. They represent the Most Great Name—Ḥusayn-'Alí, Bahá'u'lláh. <1:4 #1, 2>^{*} Both of these Names have seven letters in Arabic and Persian.[†] Bahá'u'lláh was the title conferred upon Ḥusayn-'Alí by the Báb. The name Bahá'u'lláh translates into English as "The Glory of God". The name Ḥusayn-'Alí means literally "The Good, the Exalted".

The expression "Him which is, which was, and which is to come" derives from ancient Hebrew mysticism. It is a name for the Lord God <1:4 #3>. The expression may also refer to God as His recurring Manifestations.

In *The Book of Certitude* Bahá'u'lláh explains that God educates mankind in phases. Each phase is approximately a thousand years long and is ushered in by a Revelator Who holds undisputed sway during the Age or Era.³

Before CE 1844 there were seven revealed monotheistic Faiths in the region known as Asia in the first century.[‡] They were:

Faith	Revelator
Sabean	Unknown
Jewish	Moses
Hindu	Krishna [§]

* Numbers in angle brackets<> refer to References in Appendix G.

† See Figure 6.

‡ See Part I, *The Time and Space of the Apocalypse*.

§ Lord Krishna is considered the Eighth Avatar of Vishnu by the Hindus and was the last Manifestation to appear in India prior to Lord Buddha.

1. The Greatest name

Zoroastrian	Zoroaster (Zarathustra)
Buddhist	Gautama Buddha
Christian	Jesus Christ
Muslim	Muḥammad

If one includes the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths revealed after CE 1844 the list has nine members. Revelation is addressed to the Seven Churches and reveals the Advents of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

Since the Apocalypse is addressed to the Seven Churches of the region of Asia, the list leaves out the religions, that may or may not have been Divinely revealed, of the Far East, Europe, Africa, and the Americas.* The list also excludes Sikhism and Jainism, which are off-shoots of the Hindu Faith. One can also leave out several monotheistic Faiths that may have been Divinely revealed but which are now extinct.

The Seven Churches may possibly be represented by the seven candlesticks of the ancient Jewish Menorah: Peace, Benevolence, Justice, Light, Truth, Brotherly Love, and Harmony.

5. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood
6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Jesus Christ is a faithful witness that these things will come to pass. Jesus was the first to be raised from spiritual death during His Ministry. He is the spiritual Prince of the kings and rulers of the earth. By sacrificing His blood (His spiritual life-force) Jesus raised the early Christians from spiritual death.

* We note the possibility of a Manifestation in the Far East, e.g., Lao Tzu (Taoism) and Confucius in China. In the Americas we note Topiltzin-Quetzacoatl in Mexico, and Vircocha in Peru. The Succession of Manifestations is without end. See *Some Answered Questions*, Chapter XLI, etc.

In the symbolism of the Bible, death means to be devoid of spiritual awareness and to be without belief in God; sleep means the slumber of heedlessness, to be temporarily devoid of spiritual awareness; life means to have entered the paradise of the love of God.⁴

In one sense, sin is the disobeying of God's Laws as revealed by His Manifestation. In another sense, sin is enslavement to animal passions and motivations. In yet another sense, sin is attachment to the contingent world of attributes and duality.⁵

7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

When the spirit of Christ is re-manifested He will come with troubles and as One hidden by a veil. Eventually, all those with spiritual eyes from every nation and religion shall know that the Christ has been re-manifested, even the Jews who pierced Jesus. There will be a world-wide sorrow because He was not recognized at first.

Clouds means troubles or a veil between man and heaven.⁶ Because the Prophet comes in a human body with human limitations, such things cast doubts in men's minds and act as veils.⁷ Clouds can also symbolize Divine Mercy,⁸ annulment of laws, abrogation of former Dispensations and the repeal of rituals and customs. *"I have come in the shadows of the clouds of glory, and am invested by God with invincible sovereignty."*⁹—Bahá'u'lláh

Jesus sometimes referred to those who have eyes and yet do not see.¹⁰ Bahá'u'lláh explains that the sincere seeker will be rewarded with a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind.¹¹

The fact that there will be a delay between His appearance on earth and His eventual acceptance by the peoples of the existing

(spiritual) generation¹² is made clear in Luke 17:22–25 and Isaiah 60:1–3.

8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

The expression Alpha and Omega has several meanings. <1:8 #1, 2, 3, 4> Alpha and Omega is the Eternal, the Lord God; it is the Word of God, the Perfect Man, His Manifestation. Jesus Christ bears the title as does Bahá'u'lláh. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet,¹³ and the expression has as one of its meanings the “First and the Last”. Isaiah 44:6 explains that both God and His Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, are the First and the Last. Other Old Testament passages¹⁴ identify the Latter Day Redeemer or Ransomer as the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel, and the King of Glory (Bahá).

Bahá'u'lláh explains that He is both the Beginning and the End, and both Stillness and Motion: *“Behold how, in this Day, the Beginning is reflected in the End, how out of Stillness Motion hath been engendered.”*¹⁵ As the Beginning and the End, the Manifestation is the Beginning of a new Age and the End of a former Age. Elsewhere, Bahá'u'lláh explains that every Divine Revelator manifests the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, the Seen and the Hidden.¹⁶ Although the name of the Revelator changes from Age to Age, the Holy Spirit manifested through Him remains the same.

His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh bears many titles. Some of them have been given Him by other Manifestations and prophets and are ascribed to Bahá'u'lláh by those Bahá'ís who have entered by another faith. Examples of these titles are:

Jewish	Lord of Hosts, King of Glory, the Holy One of Israel
Hindu	Tenth Avatar, Immaculate Manifestation of Krishna, Kalki, Vishnu Yasha

Buddhist	Fifth Buddha, Buddha Maitreya
Christian	Spirit of Truth, Return of Christ
Zoroastrian	<u>Sh</u> áh Bahram
Muslim	The Great Announcement, Return of Christ, Return of Imám Ḥusayn
Bábí	Essence of Being, Remnant of God, Omnipotent Master, Crimson all-encompassing Light

In addition to these titles, there are many that Bahá'u'lláh ascribed to Himself in order to explain His Mission to mankind. Among these are: the Ancient of Days, Voice From the Burning Bush, Well Spring of Revelation, Day Star of Divine Revelation, Sun of Truth, Bird of the Throne, and many others that will be presented when appropriate.

In the *Tablet of all Food*, Bahá'u'lláh reveals that the spiritual worlds are of different degrees. In one of these several worlds, the world of Jabarút (the All-Highest Dominion), the dwellers therein, God's Chosen Ones, are closely identified with God, manifesting His attributes, speaking His voice, and are identified with Him. *"The essence of belief in Divine unity consisteth in regarding Him Who is the Manifestation of God and Him Who is the invisible, the inaccessible, the unknowable Essence as one and the same."*¹⁷ In another spiritual work, Láhút (the plane of Divinity, the Heavenly Court), the Manifestations are as utter nothingness compared to God.¹⁸

The letters Alpha (Α) and Omega (Ω) have the literal value of 801 by gematria. The archetypal value is 9, the Perfected Triad.¹⁹ The number 9 is the value of Bahá by the Arabic gematria (abjad) and was used as a seal by Bahá'u'lláh.

Verse 8 identifies the Alpha and Omega, Bahá', as the Almighty; that is, The Pantocrator.*

9. I John who also am your brother, and companion in

* The Pantocrator, ο Παντοκράτορας, one of the appellations of God, means literally The Almighty. The appellation is highly favoured by the Greek Orthodox Church.

1. The Greatest name

tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,
11. Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

The names of the Seven Churches of Asia represent seven Divinely revealed Faiths. While the prejudiced reader of first century Rome might be tempted to restrict the term "Asia" to include only the Roman Province of Asia (Asia Minor), in the unprejudiced view, the entire region of Asia extending through Palestine, Arabia, Persia, and India must be included.* ²⁰

The root meanings of the names of the Seven Churches are indicative of their characteristics. While it is true that all the Faiths, when sincerely practised, partake of all the implied characteristics to some extent, one can make a reasonable correlation between their present-day names and their names in the Apocalypse:

Revelation	Root meaning	Symbolism	Faith
Ephesus	Family Hearth	Peace	Sabean
Smyrna	Myrrh ²¹	Benevolence	Jewish
Pergamos	Parchment	Law, Justice	Hindu
Thyatira	Cypress Tree ^{† 22}	Light	Zoroastrian
Sardis	Stone ²³	Truth	Buddhist
Philadelphia	Brotherly Love	Brotherly love	Christian
Laodicea	Just People	Harmony	Muslim

* See Part I, *The time and space of the Apocalypse*.

† Probable.

The Sabaeans are mentioned three times in the Qur'án (2:62, 5:69, 22:17) together with Jews, Christians and Muslims as "People of the Book". Considerable confusion and controversy have surrounded the ancient Sabaeen religion. Bahá'u'lláh spoke of two types of Sabaeans (aş-Şábi'ún). The first includes those people who were followers of John the Baptist but who refused to accept the Prophethood of Jesus Christ. Today this group, called Mandaean (al-Mandá'iyún),²⁴ is centred in southern 'Iráq. The second type of Sabaeans is the remnants of an ancient, independent, Divinely revealed Faith. It is the Divinely revealed Sabaeen Faith that was prevalent in Ur of Chaldea during the time of Abraham, and it is probable that Abraham was originally a follower of the true Sabaeen Faith. The name of the Revelator of the ancient Sabaeen Faith is unknown to us, but the remnants of the Faith are the idolators of Africa.²⁵

The Jewish Faith was probably the first in history to emphasize the benevolence of God. In contrast with the gods of their neighbours, Yahweh was the God of righteousness and loving kindness. God lifted the Jews from slavery through the Prophet Moses. In Ezekiel's vision, God assists the Jewish exiles in Babylon.

The Hindu Faith places emphasis upon the lawful processes prevailing in the world through the law of karma, roughly equivalent to a moral law of cause and effect. By this law, justice is held to be certain and automatic. But this noble tenet has been misused to achieve a negative result. The Brahmins of ancient India compiled an elaborate set of manuals of ceremonial and everyday behaviour. Among them were the "laws of Manu", composed near the beginning of the Christian Era. Although intended to set standards of justice and duty, these rules of conduct eventually degenerated, with the consolation of karma, into the modern caste system in which justice has been sublimated into a static and largely unjust social structure. Although monotheistic in theory, it may be said that the modern Hindu Faith as practised has many of the attributes of idolatry and polytheism.

A distinguishing feature of the Zoroastrian Faith is its concept of the struggle between the forces of Light (enlightenment, good) and Darkness (ignorance, evil). Their Deity of goodness is Ormazd (Ahúrá Mazda), Who is light and fragrant, dwells in light, and is the Creator of light. The monotheistic Zoroastrian Faith degenerated into a form of polytheism shortly after the Prophet's death. Another contamination was the introduction of worship of the Eternal Flame, a fire kept burning in Zoroastrian places of worship.

Lord Buddha was the Revealer of the Four Noble Truths. These are roughly:²⁶

- One** The world is in a state of dislocation or disharmony.
- Two** Selfish craving is the cause of the world's dislocation.
- Three** The remedy of the world's dislocation is the overcoming of selfish craving.
- Four** The method of overcoming selfish craving is through the Eight-fold Path: right knowledge, right aspiration, right speech, right behaviour, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right absorption.

While many scholars claim that Buddhism is a Faith that has no God, or more correctly, that Buddhism needs no God, other modern scholars maintain that, in fact, Lord Buddha taught the existence of God.²⁷

The Christian Faith is unquestionably the Faith of Brotherly Love. The bulk of the teachings of Jesus, His parables and beatitudes, emphasized two important facts: God loves mankind, and man must reflect God's love toward his fellow man.

Islám, the Faith of Muḥammad, is the Faith of Harmony. The very word "Islám" means peaceful surrender to the Will of God. But beyond the internal harmony of the spirit, Islám brought social harmony to the sincere practitioners among the warlike tribes of the Arabian peninsula and a vast array of peoples spread from Spain to India.

According to tradition, John wrote the Apocalypse while in exile on the island of Patmos during an early persecution of the Christians. His reference to the Lord's day (lower case) refers

to the sacred week day of the early Christians, the first day of the week on which Jesus was reputed to have arisen from the dead.²⁸

12. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;
13. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.
14. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;
15. And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

Candlestick symbolizes a Faith.²⁹ Garment to the foot symbolizes heavenly attributes. The One like unto the Son of Man³⁰ is Bahá'u'lláh. *"The voice of the Son of Man is calling aloud from the sacred vale: 'Here am I, here am I, O God my God!'"*³¹—Bahá'u'lláh

Golden girdle symbolizes a new Faith³² and spiritual power. His hair like wool identifies the Manifestation as the Head of Days, that is, the Ancient of Days. White also symbolizes purity. Because of His great tribulations, the hair of Bahá'u'lláh had literally become snow white.* *"The Pen of Holiness ... hath writ upon my snow-white brow ..."*³³—Bahá'u'lláh His eyes have been described as flames of fire. In the Apocalypse, flaming eyes symbolizes vengeance.

Brass or bronze, because it is a strong blended metal, symbolizes strength, understanding, and guidance for the blending and uniting of mankind. "As if they burned in a furnace" suggests His title, the Voice from the Burning Bush. Water means spiritual grace, knowledge, and understanding. The sound of many waters means great spiritual knowledge and describes Bahá'u'lláh as the Well Spring of Revelation.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, the Ancient of Days, the First

* As was the custom in that region, Bahá'u'lláh dyed His hair and beard a jet-black.

and the Last, and the Day Star of Divine Revelation, is seen standing with brass-like feet among the seven candlesticks, that is, the seven Faiths.

16. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.
17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:
18. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

The seven stars are the seven Revelators of Sprits of the Seven Churches and also represent the Greatest Name, Bahá'u'lláh <1:4 #2>. Since the seven stars or Spirits spell a single Word, they are actually the Manifestation of a single Spirit, the Spirit of Bahá.

The likening of the seven Spirits to seven stars is an allusion to the seven planets, which, according to the theories of the ancient astrologers, were the true governors of the world of man, the executives of the Divine Will.³⁴

The right hand is the hand of might and power. As the Spirit of Truth, Bahá'u'lláh speaks with the Sword of Truth. It is two-edged because it separates the true from the false and the good from the evil. *“Aid ye your Lord with the sword of wisdom and utterance.”*³⁵—Bahá'u'lláh

Sun symbolizes variously the Divinity, His Manifestations, or His Faith. *“From Him all the Suns (Manifestations) have been generated, and unto Him they will all return.”*³⁶—Bahá'u'lláh

His sun-like countenance describes Bahá'u'lláh as the Sun of Truth. Many witnesses have testified that it was extremely difficult to gaze upon the dazzling countenance of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Holy Spirit as evidenced through Jesus Christ and Muḥammad seemed to be dead before the Advents of the Báb

and Bahá'u'lláh. But God lives forever and has the power to resurrect man from the death of unbelief and to return man from the hell of remoteness from Him. Bahá'u'lláh proclaims, "Paradise is on your right hand, and hath been brought nigh unto you, while Hell hath been made to blaze."³⁷ "Followers of the Gospel, behold the gates of heaven are flung open."³⁸ "No man can obtain everlasting life, unless he embraceth the truth of this inestimable, this wondrous, and sublime Revelation."³⁹

In verses 17 and 18, God is speaking through His Manifestation, Bahá'u'lláh.

- 19. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;
- 20. The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.

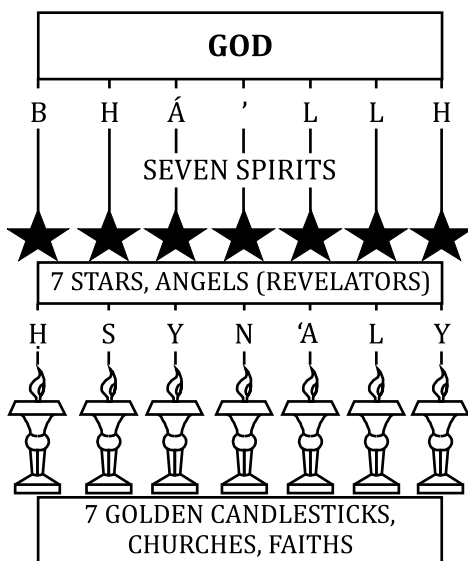


Figure 6
Hierarchy of revelations

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

These verses reveal that the seven stars or Governors of the Seven Churches are the angels; that is, the Divine Revelators Who manifest the Spirit of Bahá.

The relationship between God, the Seven Spirits, the seven stars, and the seven golden candlesticks is best shown by a diagram, Figure 6. Since the seven Spirits manifest the single spirit of Bahá, they can, in one sense, be represented by a single ray. The similarity of the Hierarchy of Revelations to the Greatest Name Emblem of Bahá'u'lláh now becomes clear. However, the seven stars are now replaced by only two, representing the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, Whose missions are to unite the Seven Churches through the single Spirit of Bahá. One possible meaning of the Greatest Name Emblem is shown in Figure 7. The numerous meanings in the Emblem have been the subject of many studies.⁴⁰

Notes

- 1 See *The Book of Certitude* [aka *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*], pp. 79–80.
- 2 "... Therefore it is evident that the church is a collective centre for mankind. For this reason there have been churches and temples in all the divine religions; but the real Collective Centres are the Manifestations of God, of Whom the church or temple is a symbol and expression. That is to say, the Manifestation of God is the real divine temple and Collective Centre of which the outer church is but a symbol."—Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 158.
- 3 The concept of progressive revelation was also known to the ancient Hebrew mystics. (Ref. 9, p. 62 and Ref. 4, p. 79ff, 108.)

In their phraseology, each phase was called a Day of Creation, a Lord's Day, an Era, or a world. That the early Christians also believed in progressive revelation is strongly indicated in the Book of Hebrews, e.g., Hebrews 4:14, 6:20, 7:12, 9:15–28 (cf. I Timothy 2:5; II Corinthians 3:7–11). Jesus refers to future Ages in Matthew 12:32, 24:3, 28:20. (RSV) Also see I Corinthians 10:11; Psalm 72:5; Matthew 26:29. (All in RSV.)

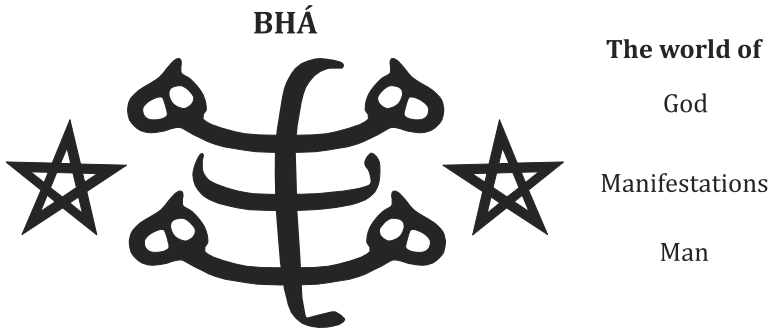


Figure 7
The Greatest Name

Jesus prophesies His own Successor (re-manifestation) in numerous passages in the New Testament, e.g., Matthew 16:27 (see Note 12 below), 19:28, 24:3, 30, 44; Mark 13:26; Luke 9:26 (see Note 12 below), 17:24, 26, 30, 18:8; John 14:16, 17, 26, 15:26, 16:7, 8, 13. It is clear from Matthew 17:10–13 and Revelations [2:17 and] 3:12 that the new Manifestation will have a new name.

Jesus relates His own Revelation to that of Moses in John 5:46 and to that of Abraham in John 8:58. Moses prophesies a Successor in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18.

A very interesting prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy 33:2 reads as follows: “The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; and from his right hand went a fiery law unto them.”

One interpretation of the prophecy is as follows: Moses and Jesus came from Sinai; Muḥammad and the Báb rose up from Seir and shined forth from Paran; the Advent of the Báb was attended by 10,000 martyrs to His Cause. (cf. Jude 14) Bahá'u'lláh is He from Whose right hand went forth a fiery law in the letters in which He addressed the crowned heads of the earth. Also see Galatians 4:24–25.

- ⁴ See *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 118–19. See also Matthew 8:21–22, 10:28; Ezekiel 18:21–23; 1 Timothy 5:6; John 11:25, 17:3.
- ⁵ See *Some Answered Questions*, chs XXIX, XXX; Genesis 2:16–17.
- ⁶ e.g., Psalm 97:2; Zephaniah 1:14–15; Isaiah 44:22, 50:3; Ezekiel 32:7–8, 30:1–3.
- ⁷ See *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 71–2.

⁸ idem, pp. 216–17.

⁹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 101.

¹⁰ e.g., John 9:39; Matthew 13:14–19, 24:15; Acts 28:26–27; Isaiah 6:9–10. We still use the verb “see” in our own day to mean “understand”. An unambiguous usage of “see” in this sense of the word can be found in Romans 1:20. See also Revelations 2:7, 11, 17, etc., 3:18, 4:8 etc., 5:6. Compare Matthew 17:10–13; II Kings 2:11; Malachi 4:5.

¹¹ *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 192–6.

¹² The term “generation” γενεα as used in Luke 17:22–25 and elsewhere has as some of its meanings: a period of time, race, family, offspring, historic age, class, kind, and nation. It is clear from the context that Jesus uses the word in its allegorical sense to mean the spiritual Age initiated by His Advent. The allegorical usage of the word was not confined to Christendom. See, e.g., Reference 3, pp. 54, 54 and fn, 85 fn, 87, 90. In allegorical usage, a generation is similar to a Day of Creation of a Lord’s Day as described in Note 3 above. The word may be modelled after the Hebrew word *olam*, meaning an “infinity” or a “world”. Also see αἰώνας, chapter 2, Note 17; Isaiah 41:4; Luke 21:7–33; Matthew 24:3–35; Mark 13:4–31.

Matthew 16:28 and Luke 9:27 imply that the re-manifestation of the Son of Man should have occurred within a few decades of the Crucifixion. Obviously this did not happen. Furthermore, these verses seem to preclude the long span of history that must precede the re-manifestation as prescribed by Jesus in other prophecies, notably Matthew 24:3–44; Mark 13:4–37; Luke 21:7–36. There are at least two possible explanations for this seeming contradiction. One might assume that in these verses Jesus was explaining that some of those present would be rewarded with eternal life and, therefore, would “not taste of death” before they saw the son of Man coming in His kingdom. Another explanation is that the reporter quoted in Matthew 16:28 and Luke 9:27 may not have understood the allegorical meaning of the word “generation” as used by Jesus. Early Christians derived solace from the widely held milleniarist belief that the Christ would soon return in the flesh to establish the Kingdom of God during their own lifetimes. It would be understandably human that anticipation would bias the believer towards a more optimistic interpretation of the word “generation”. (See Reference 51, Chapter 1.)

It seems possible that several other seeming contradictions in the New Testament might also be explained by the failure of listeners to understand the allegorical meanings of the words of Jesus in spite of His

many warnings such as in Matthew 13:10–17. Consider, for example, His claim that He would destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days (Matthew 26:61, 27:40; John 2:19). Literal interpretations of this statement are absurd, since the physical temple was neither destroyed nor rebuilt in three days.

Consider also the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 27:62 that He would rise again after three days. Does this contradict His reassurance to the criminal, His companion of the cross in Luke 23:43: “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise?” Also, if Jesus died on Friday (Mark 15:42) and was bodily resurrected on the following Sunday morning (Matthew 28:1), does this span of time accommodate the three days of Matthew 27:62?

Literal interpretations of these and many other statements of Jesus cannot fail to generate technical difficulties. However, if we assume that by the word “day” Jesus meant a “Day of God”, the difficulties disappear. The “three days” then correspond to three Dispensations: that of Jesus Himself, of Muḥammad, and of the Báb. The Resurrection prophesied by Jesus to occur “after the third day” then becomes realized through the Advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

It is interesting, but perhaps not significant, that if we take CE 1, the traditional origin of the Christian calendar, and CE 622, the traditional date of the origin of the Muslim calendar, the first “Day” had a duration of 621 years. “Three days” then becomes 3×621 or 1863, the date of Bahá’u’lláh’s Declaration in the Garden of Ridván.

In *Some Answered Questions*, chapter XXIII, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains that the Resurrection was viewed in the eyes of the original disciples of Jesus to be the revival of the Reality of Jesus—that is, His teachings, bounties, perfections and spiritual power—after three days of apparent disappearance and concealment.

The method by which the present twenty-seven books of the New Testament were chosen as canonical is not fully understood. One of the oldest collections of the New Testament is the Codex Sinaiticus that was discovered on Mount Sinai in 1844.

- ¹³ The peculiar use of “Alpha and Omega” in the Apocalypse is highly suggestive that its gematrical value is intended to convey an important meaning.
- ¹⁴ See Isaiah 41:4, 14, 44:6, 47:4, 48:12, 59:19–21; Psalm 24:7–10; Job 19:25; Jeremiah 23:5–8. See also *God Passes By*, pp. 93–99.

¹⁵ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 168.

¹⁶ *idem*, p. 54.

¹⁷ *idem*, p. 167.

¹⁸ Ref. 21, p. 58.

¹⁹ In at least one early Greek version of the Apocalypse, “A” is spelled out (αλφα) (“alpha”). The literal value of αλφα + ω is 1332. The archetypal value remains 9. The number 1332 is twice 666.

²⁰ There have been numerous attempts to explain why Jesus Christ chose these particular Churches as the addresses for such a weighty Book as the Apocalypse. Christian commentators have suggested, for example: (1) that the 7 Churches were those founded by Paul, or (2) that these particular 7 Churches were most important to the spread of early Christianity, or (3) that the 7 Churches correspond to successive evolutionary phases of the Christian Church. However, other Christian commentators contend that none of these explanations have adequate evidential support. But one explanation may deserve serious consideration—that the geographical arrangement of the 7 Churches may have symbolic significance. If we connect the Churches by straight lines as in Figure 8, we discover a figure, not only resembling an Arabic numeral 7, but also resembling a sickle. The sickle may also symbolize Bahá'u'lláh as the Divine Reaper of Chapter 14, verse 14. Incidentally, the successive exiles of Bahá'u'lláh form a sickle-shaped pattern enclosing the sickle of Figure 8 with the two blades touching at Smyrna.

The sickle has been a sign of the harvest and reaping since ancient times. Chronos, the Greek god of time and the harvest, is usually portrayed carrying a sickle. Chronos has had a remarkable longevity, reappearing every New Year's Eve as Old Father Time, the Grim Reaper.

²¹ Smyrna <Σμυρνα<μυρ (myrrh/myr). The ordering of the Churches in verse 11 corresponds to one possible chronological order of their Advents and to the stages of the progressive spiritual education of man from family unity to national unity.

²² The word “thyine” is used in the original Greek version of Revelations 18:12 as an epithet for a tree and its wood. The etymology of the word is as follows:

“Thyine <thia, thya (Sandarac tree)< thyon (a tree burned for perfume). The Sandarac is a relative of the cypress tree. Among the ancient Zoroastrians, the candle flame shaped cypress was the emblem of Ormazd and Zoroaster.

In antiquity the tree was used variously as a symbol of life, death,

immortality, god, knowledge of good and evil, etc. (Reference 12, p. 37ff). Its symbolism probably derived from its great age, awesome span, beauty, majestic height, and its life-giving fruits. As a bearer of olives, it was also a source of olive oil used in lamps, and hence was a source of light. Bahá'u'lláh uses the tree as a symbol of the Manifestation. The Manifestation has an analogy in the Sadratu'l-Muntahá [Divine Lote Tree], the name of a tree planted at the end of a road to serve as a guide. See also Genesis 2:9, 21:33.



Figure 8
The sickle formed by the seven churches

- ²³ Compare Psalm 118:22; Genesis 28:10–22, 35:13–14; Isaiah 28:16; Daniel 2:29–45; Job 38:4–7; Matthew 16:18. (“Peter” means rock or stone.)
- ²⁴ The word “Mandaean” means “Gnostic”. See Reference 3, pp. 39, 48ff.
- ²⁵ See Genesis 10:7, 25:3; Ref. 12, p. 190ff.

- ²⁶ Reference 23, p. 109ff.
- ²⁷ See, e.g., References 24 and 25.
- ²⁸ The name “Sunday” for the first day of the week was introduced by Constantine. The survival of this name among the Nordic peoples is a curious remnant of the ancient solar cult. See Reference 14, pp. 46, 94, 199.
- ²⁹ The symbol of the lampstand is also used in Zechariah 4:2.
- ³⁰ The enigmatic title Son of Man was based upon the concept of a divine prototype or primordial Man. According to this belief the true home of man is in heaven. At each Advent, God sends a Messenger, a Son of Man, to redeem mortal man from his prison of worldliness and to renew humanity. The Son of Man also calls Himself the Shepherd, the Truth, the Light, and so forth. The concept of Man was important in Hebrew and Gnostic theology and was even incorporated in the *Fourth Eclogue* of Virgil. The figures of the Messiah and Man were coalesced in the Synoptic Gospels. See References 4, p. 100; 20, pp. 86, 163, 164; 52, Part II, chapter 3; and 14, pp. 25, 42. The modifying phrase “one like unto” in verse 13 suggests that John realized that the concept of the Son of Man would be largely unintelligible in the Age of the Manifestation of the Latter Day Redeemer, Bahá'u'lláh.
- ³¹ *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 104.
- ³² This symbol is probably borrowed from the Zoroastrian Faith. See Reference 26, p. 21.
- ³³ *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 194; *God Passes By*, p. 169. See also Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14, Ref. 52, part 2, ch. 3.
- ³⁴ In the ancient star cult, stars were considered to be living creatures, world rulers, the lords of time. See References 4, p. 18; 20, p. 146ff, 153. Also see Job 38:7; Isaiah 14:12; Jude 1:12–13; Daniel 12:194; Numbers 14:17; Hebrews 4:14. According to the *Zohar*, during the “last struggles” preceding the ultimate Kingdom of Peace, one star will swallow seven others. See Reference 4, p. 116. In referring to the time of the redemption of the Jews, Isaiah 30:26 says, “Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days...” In this prophecy, the light of the Báb (the Moon) will shine as brightly as that of Bahá'u'lláh (the Sun). The light of the Sun of Bahá'u'lláh will be as bright as the seven Suns (Manifestations) of the seven previous Dispensations (Days).
- ³⁵ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 296.

³⁶ idem, p. 104. See also Malachi 4:2.

³⁷ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 45.

³⁸ *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 104.

³⁹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 183.

⁴⁰ See Reference 15.

2

Letters to ancient faiths

The letters that follow are addressed to the Seven Churches of Asia as they are characterized at the end of the Age of Prophecy. In contrast to their original purity alluded to in Chapter 1, verse 11, each of the Churches has become corrupted to some extent. The Author is the Spirit of God speaking through His Manifestation. Their style suggests an equivalence between the Manifestation and His Church. The Saviour seems to be identical to the saved.¹ The ambiguity also extends to which Manifestation is doing the speaking. The intermingling of the Voices points out their essential unity. Bahá'u'lláh explains, *"Inasmuch as these Birds of the Celestial Throne are all sent down from the heaven of the Will of God, and as they all arise to proclaim His irresistible Faith, they therefore are regarded as one soul and the same person. ... They all abide in the same tabernacle, soar in the same heaven, are seated upon the same throne, utter the same speech, and proclaim the same Faith"*² The close connection between the Manifestation and His Church is also made clear by Bahá'u'lláh: *"Nay, all else besides these Manifestations, live by the operation of their Will, and move and have their being through the outpourings of their grace."*³ And further, *"That some are near (to God) and others are far (from God) is to be ascribed to the Manifestations themselves."*⁴

But there is a special role that is played by Bahá'u'lláh. In His Tablet, *The Youth of Paradise*, Bahá'u'lláh identifies Himself as the Word upon which depended the souls of all the Prophets of God and His Chosen Ones.⁵ It is therefore necessary to consider Bahá'u'lláh as the Speaker Who addresses the letters to the Founders of the Churches.

1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks:
2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:
3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured and hast not fainted.

This letter is addressed to the Revelator of the Sabaeon Faith. Apostles are trusted messengers. To faint means to grow weary.

4. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.
5. Remember therefor from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.
6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.
7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat out of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

God, speaking through Bahá'u'lláh, is threatening to remove their Faith from the earth because they have strayed from their original teachings.

Nicolaitanes, followers of Nicolas, were Covenant breakers in the early Christian Church and here symbolize Covenant breakers of any Divinely revealed Faith. Nicolas may have been originally a convert from Antioch who is mentioned in Acts 6:5. The doctrine of Nicholas included the theory that acceptance of Jesus Christ placed the believer above the laws and morality of non-Christians, and one's standard of behaviour became largely a matter of personal inclination.

The promise that God is making is that he who overcomes the false teachings existing within the Church will receive spiritual life, light, and sustenance through God's Manifestation, the Tree of Life, Bahá'u'lláh. (Compare Genesis 2.)

8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;
9. I know thy works and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.
10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.
11. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

This message is addressed to Moses and the Jewish Faith. God distinguishes between those Jews who are materially poor but spiritually rich, and those who are materially rich but spiritually poor. A true Jew is one who loves God and obeys His laws. The synagogue of Satan is those who exalt themselves before God and refuse to obey His laws.

The Jews are informed that some of them will be imprisoned by the devil for a period of 10 days. The prophecy refers to their 10 year tribulation under Hitler and the Nazi regime from CE 1935 to 1945.⁶

In Biblical prophecy, the following time scale conversion must be used:⁷

Biblical term	Calendar time
1 day	1 year
	or
	1 time (360 years)
	or

Biblical term	Calendar time
	1 era (arbitrary period)
1 week	7 years
1 month	30 years
1 time	360 years*
1 year	360 years
1 hour	A short time; part of a year

The length of the year is indicated by the context. The Spirit, through Bahá'u'lláh, promises that the Jews who persevere in true Judaism through their tribulation will receive spiritual salvation and eternal spiritual life. The Jews will avoid the “second death” by accepting Bahá'u'lláh. The “first (spiritual) death” was the result of their rejection of Jesus Christ.

Satan, the devil, and similar epithets symbolize the evil principle and do not refer to an actual being. In this case, the devil refers to the evil principle manifested in Hitler and the Nazi regime.

12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;
13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied by faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

These words are addressed to Krishna and the Hindu Faith. “Where Satan dwells” and “Satan's seat” refer to a degraded spiritual condition. Antipas Αντιπας⁸ means literally “against all” and refers to the great Reformer of the ancient Hindu world, Lord Buddha. The martyrdom of Antipas in the place where Satan dwells symbolizes the end of resistance to spiritual decay.

* Called a “deva” or “divine year” in Hindu chronology. There are 72 “times” in a Great, i.e. a Platonic, year. See Part I, *Astrological Symbolism*.

The true Hindus are cited for maintaining the name of God (Brahma) even during their period of spiritual decay.

14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.
15. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon and the wife of Ahab, king of Israel, introduced the idolatrous doctrine of Balaam into Israel in the ninth century BCE. The story is recounted in Chronicles and II Kings. Idol worship is equivalent in the doctrine of materialism.⁹

To eat things sacrificed to idols means to accept idolatrous teachings. Similarly, the consuming of the bread and the wine of the Eucharist symbolizes the acceptance of Jesus Christ's teachings and His blood sacrifice.¹⁰

In the symbolism of Revelations, to commit fornication means to accept false doctrine.

16. Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.
17. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Hidden manna refers to Divine Revelation; that is, spiritual sustenance from heaven, the Word of God and reality, hidden until revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.¹¹ "... *That which is pre-eminent*

above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, is the gift of Divine Revelation. ... It is, in its essence, and will ever remain, the Bread which cometh down from Heaven."¹²—Bahá'u'lláh <2:17><G#4> The hidden manna is promised to those who overcome the false teachings within the Hindu Faith.

In antiquity, it was a custom to present invited guests with small mosaics or stones engraved with names or other suitable inscriptions. These stones were called tesserae.¹³ They were roughly equivalent to modern engraved invitations or passports. The colour white symbolizes purity and perfection, the stone symbolized truth; hence white stone symbolizes perfect wisdom and understanding.

Tesserae were also used to perpetuate a friendship and to render a union more sacred. The privilege of friendship could be extended to others carrying the tessera. The tessera was usually constructed of a small piece of bone, ivory, or stone. It was broken into equal parts, and each party wrote his own name or other suitable inscription on his piece. Mutual pledges and an exchange were made, and, to prevent imposture, the pledge was kept secret and no one knew the name inscribed on his piece except the possessor. Tesserae were probably carried by the early Christians during their travels to introduce them to fellow Christians.

The Báb presented His followers and Bahá'u'lláh with a scroll often called the "White Stone" on which He inscribed a pentacle (five-pointed star) with 360 derivatives of the word *Bahá*.¹⁴ This scroll represented a revelation of the name of the new Manifestation to follow Him. Only those who accept the Bahá'í Revelation will understand the meaning of the new name.¹⁵

New name, καινού ὄνομα ("new name") has a literal value of 432 and an archetypal value of 9, the number of Bahá.

18. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes

like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

“Son of God”¹⁶ and “god” are epithets for “one unto whom the Word of God came”. Jesus makes this clear in John 10:30–36 where He quotes from Psalm 82:6–8 in answer to certain Jews who accused Jesus of blasphemy. The subject is further elucidated in Romans 1:3–4 and Hebrews 1:4–6. The Bible contains other clear references to Manifestations, prophets, and believers with the epithet “Son of God” or “son of God”. For examples see:

I Chronicles 28:6, 22:10, 17:11–14 (Solomon)

Psalm 2:6–8 (David)

Hebrews 6:20, 7:1–3, 7:15 (Melchisedec)

Luke 3:38 (Adam)

Galatians 3:23–28, 4:3ff (Christians)

John 1:12 (Christians)

I John 3:2 (Christians)

Revelations 21:7 (Citizens of the New Jerusalem)

Job 38:7 (Various)

Malachi 2:10 (Various)

Romans 8:14 (Various)

Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1 (Israel)

The term “son of God” is applied to primal men in Genesis 6:2–4.

Adam, a Son of God,¹⁷ was a Prophet and the first Manifestation of the Adamic Cycle. Bahá’u’lláh is the first Manifestation of the Bahá’í Cycle and is the Son of God referred to in verse 18.¹⁸

In the above verses, the Zoroastrians are admonished for putting everything else before the Law and the love of God.

20. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee,

because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

21. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.
22. Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.
23. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Bed means the bed of heedlessness, misery and shame. Adultery means to share false doctrine. The Zoroastrians are warned to avoid the practice of idolatry. The idolatrous followers of the teachings of Jezebel will receive spiritual death and will be rewarded in accordance with their deeds.

24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.
25. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.
26. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him I will give power over the nations:
27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.
28. And I will give him the morning star.
29. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.

The Báb, the forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh, was manifested in that part of Írán where the Zoroastrian Faith is centred. The Báb as the Herald of a new Day of God is likened to the morning star. His Advent resulted in great upheavals in Írán (Persia) and neighbouring countries. The verses present a prophecy of the final

dissolution of all the nations of the world and their spiritual domination by the faithful who accept the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

The rod of iron is a symbol of spiritual domination; it is not a sword of conquest. "... *though the revelations of My grace and bounty have permeated every atom of the universe, yet the rod with which I chastise the wicked is grievous ...*"¹⁹—Bahá'u'lláh concerning the rod of iron, 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, "... *certain souls guided (people) with a rod of the plant, that is, a reed where with he shepherded the sheep, like unto the rod of Moses; others trained (the people) with a rod of iron and drove them, as in the time of Muḥammad ...*"²⁰—<21:10-17 #1>

Notes

- 1 The Son of Man by redeeming man, consummates Himself. This style was also used by Gnostic writers. See Reference 3, p. 78f.
- 2 *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 115.
- 3 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 179.
- 4 *idem*, p. 185.
- 5 Reference 21, p. 213.
- 6 The conscious reliance of Hitler and the Nazi leadership upon satanic forces is strongly indicated by the evidence presented by Trevor Ravenscroft in Reference 27. The "imprisonment" began with the "Nuremberg laws on citizenship and race", 15 September 1935, and ended with the destruction of the Third Reich in May 1945, a period of ten lunar years.
- 7 The time scale is based in part upon Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 in which it is explained that a day of the Lord is equal to a year. It is also probably based in analogy upon the ancient Egyptian civil calendar containing 12 months each of 30 days duration. The use of the 360-day calendar in biblical allegory can be inferred by comparing Genesis 7:11, 24, 8:4. Concerning the "Hour", see <11:13>.
- 8 There were at least three known attempts to murder Lord Buddha by a jealous cousin named Devadatta and his henchman Ajatasatru, a decadent monk and follower of Devadatta. Tradition tells us that all attempts to murder Buddha were failures. However, tradition also records that Lord Buddha was accidentally killed by a meal of poisoned mushrooms in the home of Cunda, a smith.

Poison was one method that Devadatta and Ajatasatru had attempted to

use against Buddha. The wording of 2:13 suggests that Lord Buddha's death may not, in fact, have been accidental. Even if His death was truly accidental, Lord Buddha may be considered a martyr in a symbolic sense, since His teachings were first perverted, then rejected in the land of His birth. The episodes and machinations of Devadatta and Ajatasatru are remarkably similar to those perpetrated against Bahá'u'lláh by Muḥammad-i-Iṣfahání and Mírzá Yahyá. (See *God Passes By*.)

- ⁹ See Exodus 32:23.
- ¹⁰ See *Some Answered Questions*, chapter XXI and John 6:33. For early Christians living in urban areas there arose the controversy over whether they might eat meat that had first been sacrificed to idols and later offered for sale in the public stalls. (Ref. 14, p. 59.) Literally "Eucharist" means a thanksgiving.
- ¹¹ Philo gave the allegorical interpretation of manna as signifying the Reason of God. (Ref. 4, p. 41, n. 16.)
- ¹² *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 195. See also John 1:1-2, 3:34, 6:33ff, 6:50-51, 12:49, Wisdom of Solomon 9:17.
- ¹³ Ref. 12, p. 148. See Euripedes, *Medea*, v. 613, and Plautus, *Paenulus*, act v, sc. 2, ver. 85.
- ¹⁴ *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 505; *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 221.

Note that the number 360 has an archetypal value of 9 and equals the number of years in a "time". The number 360 is also the product of 9 and 40, and is, therefore, a coupling of the number of Bahá (9) with another sacred number 40. The number 40, the decadal successor of 4, figures prominently in the Bible, e.g., Exodus 24:18; Genesis 7:12, 8:6, 50:3; Numbers 13:25, 14:33; Deuteronomy 9:18-25; I Kings 19:8; Ezekiel 4:6; Jonah 3:4; I Samuel 17:16; Matthew 4:2; Acts 1:3; Psalm 95:10. Its symbolic significance is not clearly understood (Ref. 12, p. 112), but Micah 7:15 (KJV) prophesies that the Latter Day Redeemer will be shown "marvellous things" for 40 years. This was the period of Bahá'u'lláh's Ministry from His Revelation in AH 1269 until His Ascension in AH 1309 (Ref. 28, p. 127). The number 360 is the product of $3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 6$. See also, chapter 14, Note 16.

- ¹⁵ See also I Thessalonians 4:16 (cf. Ephesians 2:5-7); Luke 13:35; Matthew 17:10-13, 25:31-33, 23:39, 16:27; Isaiah 62:2.
- ¹⁶ "Son of God" and "Saviour" were titles current in the pre-Christian Gentile world meaning "Redeemer" (Ref. 20, p. 176).

Deification of emperors was a part of the Roman Imperial cult, beginning

with Augustus (63 BCE–CE 14), who received the title *Divi Filius* (Son of God) by decree of the Senate. The term Messiah was a Jewish regal title. Conjoining the titles Messiah and Son of God implied that the Messiah was not inferior in dignity to Caesar. However, it was possible among the Jews to use the title Son of God without implying deification. The deification of Jesus probably resulted from the early controversy between the Messianists (Christians) and the Gnostic-Christians. The Gnostics maintained that Jesus was actually a god Who only seemed to have “come in the flesh”. A belief in two Gods would have been the logical outcome of such a doctrine. Monotheism was saved by the esoteric three-in-one doctrine of the Trinity. (See Part One, Note 15; Chapter 11, Notes 10, 15; Ref. 52, Part II, chapter 1; Ref. 11, p. 37; Ref. 12, p. 88; Galatians 3:20 (RSV).)

A son is a “mirror” of his father. The likening of Jesus to a Mirror can be found in Colossians 1:15 and Hebrews 1:3.

- ¹⁷ According to the Bible, neither Adam nor Melchisedec had human parents. The meaning of this statement is that their priesthods were not inherited as were the priesthods of the surrounding peoples and the later Aaronic priesthood under Moses. Since their priesthods were not inherited from their parents, their priesthods were bestowed upon them directly by God and would not dissolve upon their deaths. The early Christians made this same claim for Jesus Christ (Ref. 12, p. 64).

The expression “Only-Begotten” often applied to Jesus as the Only-Begotten Son of god, seems to contradict the frequent use of Son of God as an epithet among the ancients. With the recent researches into Gnostic literature, and particularly as a result of the discovery of the Gnostic library at Nag-Hammadi, it is possible that the original meaning of the term as used in the early Christian centuries may now be discernible. In the ancient Gnostic writings, the term “Begotten” meant an Emanation from the Divine Essence. In the various Gnostic systems of thought the heavenly hierarchy of these Emanations (collectively called the “Pleroma”) was varied, but the primary or direct Emanation was referred to as the “Only-Begotten”. The remaining Emanations, up to thirty in some systems, were secondary Emanations of a lower rank. Thus, for example, in the system of Valentinus, the Divine Essence was sometimes called the “Fore-Father”, while the “Father” was the “Only-Begotten”. Secondary Emanations included the “Word”, the “Holy Spirit”, the “Christos”, etc. Jesus was considered to be the joint offspring of the Pleroma and had a strictly human mission.

Another Gnostic system described in the Apocryphon of John more closely resembled the orthodox Christian view. In this system, “Man” was

elevated to the rank of the Image of the First-God (as in Genesis 1:26) while the Son of Man was considered to be the Only-Begotten. As explained in chapter 1, note 30, the Son of Man (Redeemer) was sent periodically into the world of man to reveal the “Light”, etc.

The theory of Emanations is also found in Jewish mystical writings. (See Reference 3, pp. 179–181, 199–200, 202–203; Reference 4, pp. 79ff, 100ff, 108.) The term Only-Begotten was applied to Israel in the Apocalypse of Ezra, 6:55.

In modern terms, the “Only-Begotten” was roughly equivalent to the highest spiritual rank beneath the Divine Essence, but the term did not imply that the Only-Begotten would not be re-manifested in successive Ages. To the contrary, Gnostic, Jewish and Christian systems all included the theory that the Redeemer would be re-manifested.

While the term “Only-Begotten” is applied to Jesus in the King James Version of the Holy Bible, the term “Begotten” is dropped in the RSV and other modern translations. (Compare KJV and RSV versions of John 1:18.)

Rank implies autonomy. Autonomy or self-life is ascribed to Jesus in John 5:26–27.

Hebrews 7:3, 13:8 explains that the priesthood of a Manifestation continues “forever”, but Matthew 28:20 implies that the term “forever” is αἰῶνας (“century”), that is, limited to an Age, “generation”, or “world”, (Compare KJV and RSV versions of Matthew 28:20. See also I Peter 1:5, 20, 4:7; Jude 18; I Corinthians 10:11.)

- ¹⁸ In a Tablet addressed to the Jewish people, Bahá'u'lláh reveals that it is He Who “ruleth upon the throne of David”. (*The Promised Day is Come*, pp. 78–79; *God Passes By*, p. 230.) Compare with the prophecy of II Samuel 7:12–16. See also Isaiah 9:6–7, 56:8; Matthew 10:34; John 10:16; Ephesians 4:4–6; Ezekiel 37:24; Malachi 2:10; Zephaniah 3:9.
- ¹⁹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 325. See also Isaiah 11:4. The sword, a “rod of iron”, was used by the followers of the Báb to defend themselves against Muslim attacks during the blood stained days of the Báb's Ministry. Although Bahá'u'lláh gave encouragement, by His visit, to the heroic defenders of Fort Shaykh Ṭabarsí, AD 1848–49, during His own Ministry AD 1952–92, Bahá'u'lláh forbade the sword in favour of the pen.
- ²⁰ *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, vol. 1, p. 93.

3. Letters to recent faiths

1. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.
2. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.
3. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

This letter is addressed to the Buddhists who are accused of keeping alive the name of Buddha but of being dead to the message of the spirit. God, speaking through Bahá'u'lláh, threatens to send His Manifestation as a "thief", meaning One Who enters and departs "unseen".¹ Furthermore, the time of His Advent may not be announced beforehand.

4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.
5. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
6. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Raiment, garment, clothing, etc. mean character or attributes of the soul. *“Say: From My laws the sweet smelling savour of my garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of victory will be planted upon the highest peaks.” “Clothe thyself with the essence of righteousness, and let thine heart be afraid of none except God.”*²—Bahá'u'lláh Verse 4 alludes to those Buddhists who defile their red and yellow robes by violating their true purposes.

The Book of Life is the record of those deserving eternal life. *“O thou who art the fruit of My Tree and the leaf thereof! ... Wert thou to scan the pages of the Book of Life thou wouldst, most certainly, discover that which would dissipate thy sorrows and dissolve thine anguish.”*³—Bahá'u'lláh

7. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things say he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;
8. I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Philadelphia is the Church of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is transmitting this letter to His Church. Therefore, verse 8 refers to “my word” and “my name”.

Both Jesus Christ and Bahá'u'lláh are holy, true, and have the Key of David. The Key of David is the power to pen and close a door of history, that is, a new Age. Jesus Christ opened the Christian Age; the Báb was the Door to the Bahá'í Cycle that will consist of numerous Ages covering a period of approximately 500 thousand years.⁴

Although Christians recite the words of Jesus their inner meanings have been largely forgotten. For that reason the Christians are weak and divided.

9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan,

which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

The original Christians were true Jews because they had accepted the Prophet of the new Day of the Lord.⁵ Jews who become Bahá'ís must first accept Jesus Christ as a Manifestation.

The “Hour” is the “time of the end”, the “Hour” at which the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh declare Their Mission.* It is a time of temptation because the reluctant and negative forces of the existing social order conspire to prevent the Revelation from performing its work of creative reconstruction.

When the Báb declared His Mission in 1844, the bigoted among the Muslims of Persia arose to prevent the renewed Word from becoming manifest throughout the contingent world. The Christians were spared the temptation to participate in this repression. Even the Christian regiment that was commanded to execute the Báb was unable to do so through Divine intervention.⁶ Today the whole world is being tested to determine whether it is worthy of receiving the new Revelation.

11. Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.
12. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.
13. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

* See Rev 11:13; <11:13>;14:7; ch. 16.

A crown is a symbol of reward and authority. “To go no more out” means that the believer will never again separate himself from the Covenant.

“New” is repeated twice, so that we cannot look for the same name but a new name. The new name of God is Bahá, and the new name of the Manifestation is Bahá'u'lláh. *“O Concourse of the Son (Christians)! Are ye hidden from Myself because of My Name?”*⁷—Bahá'u'lláh The “city of my God”, the new Jerusalem, is the renewed Word of God and divine civilization.* *“Once in about a thousand years shall this City be renewed and readorned. ... That City is none other than the Word of God revealed in every age and dispensation.”*⁸—Bahá'u'lláh

Jerusalem Ἱερουσαλημ has a literal value of 864 and an archetypal value of 9, the number of Bahá. 864 is twice the literal value of new name, καινού όνομα, 432, which also has an archetypal value of 9. (See Revelations 2:17.) The word “Jerusalem” means literally “Sacred Peace”.

14. And unto the angel of the church of Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;
15. I know thy works, that thou are neither cold nor hot; I would thou were cold or hot.
16. So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

Amen is Hebrew for faithful and true. The promise of Muḥammad was that He was a true witness of the Day of God. *“In the Qur’án it is said that God addressed Muḥammad, saying, ‘We made Thee a witness, a herald, and a warner’; [Qur’án 48:8] that is, We have established Thee as one Who bears witness, Who imparts the glad-tidings of that which is to come, and Who warns of the wrath of God.”*⁹—‘Abdu’l-Bahá

The beginning of the creation of God is the beginning of a new

* Equivalent to the “Dharma of Lord Buddha’s teachings.

Day of God. In these verses God is addressing the Muslim Faith through His Manifestation Muḥammad.*

To be cold is to be indifferent; to be hot is to be zealous; to be lukewarm is to be bigoted. The devotees of all Faiths have often confused bigotry for zealotry.

17. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
18. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.
19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Gold is purified by fire; man is purified by spiritual suffering and repentance. God would even rebuke and chasten those He loves. He therefore warns them to be zealous and to repent.

20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.
21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.
22. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

In these verses, Bahá'u'lláh alludes to His Herald, the Báb. The Báb was the next Manifestation following Muḥammad. His title means the Door or Gate.⁴ To those who recognized His voice speaking through the Báb and followed that voice, Bahá'u'lláh literally came to sup with them. Both the Báb and

* Muḥammad is one of the two Witnesses mentioned in Revelations 11:3.

Bahá'u'lláh proclaim that the Báb's Revelation actually came from Bahá'u'lláh.¹⁰

The words of Ezekiel confirm the close relationship between the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. "Afterward he brought me to the GATE that looketh toward the east, and behold, THE GLORY OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL came from the way of the east; and his voice was like the noise of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. ... And the GLORY OF THE LORD came into the house by way of the GATE whose prospect is toward the east."¹¹

Note in verse 21 that Bahá'u'lláh sits *with* His Father on His throne. This fact will become important in Chapter 4. <G #4>

Notes

- ¹ The Revelator, Manifestation, Prophet, etc. usually, but not always, appears on earth and departs without mankind being aware of the Great Event until years, even centuries later. The realization that Jesus was a Revelator was not generally known for several centuries. On the other hand, Muḥammad was widely recognized as a Revelator during His lifetime. Compare II Peter 3:10 and Wisdom 17:19ff, 18:1.
- ² *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 332,323, <G #4>.
- ³ *idem*, p. 132.
- ⁴ The idea of the "Door" that opens a new Age reminds us of Janus, the old Roman god of doorways, to whom was ascribed the origin of all things, particularly civilization and religion.

Legend has it that the worship of Janus and other religious institutions was first introduced into Roman culture by the great adept of the Etruscan mysteries, Numa Pompilius. The month of January bears his name. See Psalm 24:9-10.
- ⁵ The Jews were the only people exempt from emperor worship following the assassination of Caligula, CE 41. It was, therefore, an advantage to the early Christians to be recognized as the only "true" Jews. Reference 14, pp. 53-54.
- ⁶ The story of the miraculous episode is described in *Nabil's Narrative*, Reference *The Dawn-Breakers*.
- ⁷ From *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, quoted in *Star of the West*, Vol. 4, No. 1, March 1913.
- ⁸ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 269-270; Is 2:2-4, 9:6, 62:1; Sec 14:9.

- ⁹ *Some Answered Questions*, p. 56.
- ¹⁰ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, ch. CXXXV, pp. 291–294, 244, Ref. 21, p. 296.
- ¹¹ Ezekiel 43:1–4. See also Hebrews 2:14; Psalm 24:7, 50:2, 102:16; Isaiah 35:2, 40:5; Matthew 16:27; Mark 8:38.

4. The invisible zodiac

In this chapter, John is permitted to see the far side of the celestial sphere, the Upper World, the Celestial Pavilion <21:2 #1>, and to have a preview of great secrets that will be disclosed at the end of the Age of Prophecy.

1. After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.
2. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.
3. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.
4. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Jesus Christ, through His angel, is still showing John the things that must come to pass (Revelations 1:1). He is speaking as a Herald with the voice of a trumpet. Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory and Lord of the Covenant <G #7, 8> is seen sitting on the throne as a Manifestation of God. (Compare Isaiah 6:1–5 and Ezekiel 1:26–28, <G #4, 5>.)

The imagery of the radiance about the throne describes a “glory”, that is, a “manifestation”.* The precious stone jasper

* See chapter 15, note 9.

can have many colours, and in particular, a clear red like the hue of the heart. It symbolizes the fact that man may have many colours of skin but his heart is one. The sardine stone (also called a sard or sardius) can have either a brown or red colour depending upon how it is held. It symbolizes the essential unity behind the spiritual and physical worlds, the apparent disharmony being only an illusion. The rainbow is symbolic of the Covenant of God with man: that He will always send us a Messenger provided we heed His Message. The rainbow is also "*... the Testament of the Merciful One. The lights of the Kingdom and the heavenly illumination emanated from this rainbow. This rainbow is the sign of the removal of the wrath of God from all the people, and the sign of prosperity, tranquillity, universal peace, the oneness of humanity, and the unity of the world of man.*"¹—'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The emerald is pure green. Since green harmonizes with every other colour it symbolizes harmony and unity.² Gold is symbolic of excellence and perfection.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, was manifested in the station of the Father, that is, as a Manifestation of God the Father. Thus as Bahá'u'lláh sits on the throne with God He is the representative of God,* acting as a communication link between God and man.

The twenty-four elders are guardians and holy souls of the Bahá'í Dispensation.³ The fact that they sit on their own thrones means that they rule eternally. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has revealed the names of only twenty of these holy Figures.⁴ They are:

The Báb

The Eighteen Letters of the Living (Disciples of the Báb)

Ḥájí Mírzá Muḥammad-Taqí

These pages are too few to recount their deeds and characters.

As for the remaining four elders, there are many great Figures who could be considered as candidates. Among them are certainly His Holiness 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.⁵ Many others can be found in the Bahá'í Writings.

* See Revelations 3:21.

The twenty-four elders are shown seated in a circle around the throne of Bahá'u'lláh and in correspondence with the signs of the zodiac. In former Dispensations there were only twelve elders. For example, Jacob had twelve sons; there were twelve chiefs of tribes under Moses. Jesus had twelve Apostles, and there were twelve Imams* of Islám (*Some Answered Questions*, pp. 66 & 78). Now, in the Bahá'í Dispensation, there are twice-twelve† of these holy Figures, two for each zodiacal sign. The doubling of the usual number is necessary because of the greatness of Bahá'u'lláh's Dispensation and the double Manifestation, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

5. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.
6. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about ;the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.
7. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.
8. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

Lightning is the anger and wrath of God. Thunder is the sound of the violation of the Covenant. Voices are the utterings of the doubters and hypocrites who fall into trials and temptations.⁶

The seven lamps of fire before the throne, to the outward eye, represent the seven planets, that popular myth considered to be seven lamps carried by angels across the dome of heaven.

* According to the Shí'ite tradition in the Muslim world, the Imams were the true and rightful leaders of Islám following the Ascension of Muḥammad. More will be said about the Imams in a later chapter.

† 24 has an archetypal value of 6, the number of mediation. See below.

However, John learns that the seven planets are not the true governors of the world of man, but that the world is actually controlled by the seven Spirits of God. The seven Spirits correspond to the Divine Revelators Who manifest the Spirit of Bahá.

To the outward eye, the far side of the crystalline celestial sphere appears as a sea of glass. But to the inward eye, the sea of glass like unto a crystal is firm, clear and pure—symbolic of the Ocean of Truth. *“O people! I swear by the One true God! This is the Ocean out of which all seas have proceeded, and with which every one of them will ultimately be united.”*⁷—Bahá’u’lláh Bahá’u’lláh reflects perfectly the attributes of God as from the polished surface, and one cannot distinguish between the Light of God and His Manifestation reflected on the throne.

To the outward eye, the four zodiacal creatures or beasts* with eyes (stars) before and behind, represent the four signs of the zodiac corresponding to the four chief tribes of Israel (Figure 9). But to the inward eye, the four signs correspond to the four pillars or corners that will secure the age of Aquarius, the advent of cosmic time that will announce the Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh.⁸ The four pillars are listed in the order of the Precession, beginning at the Autumnal equinox.[†]

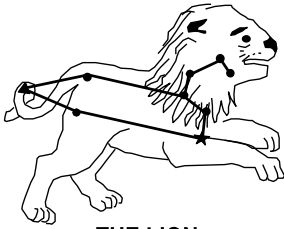
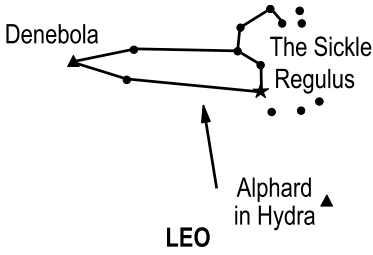
Creature	Sign	Precession order	Pillar (Dawning time in the year)
lion	Leo	9	Autumnal equinox
calf	Taurus	12	Summer solstice
man	Aquarius	3	Spring equinox
flying eagle	Scorpio	6	Winter solstice

The four pillars have other meanings. In the world of Jabarút

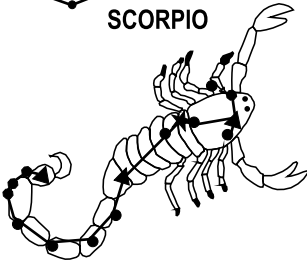
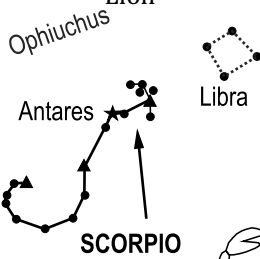
* In the RSV, four beasts is translated as four living creatures, while calf is translated as ox.

† The Jewish civil calendar begins at the Autumnal equinox. The Autumnal equinox is now entering the constellation Leo.

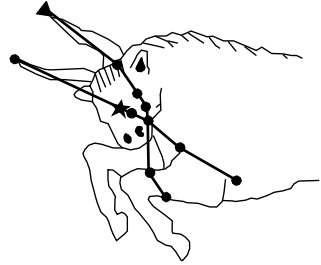
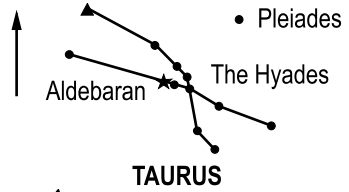
4. The invisible zodiac



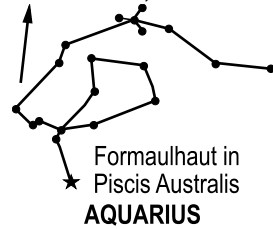
THE LION
Lion



THE SCORPION
Flying Eagle



THE BULL
Calf, Ox



THE WATER BEARER
Man

Figure 9
The four pillars of the age of Aquarius

[the All-Highest Dominion]* they are earthly rulers, paragons of virtue, who will accept Bahá'u'lláh and thereby secure the Cause. Their eyes within represent their great spiritual insight. Their attributes are lion—kingly majesty and strength; calf or ox—strength and servanthood; face of man—unity of mankind; flying eagle—majesty, victory, sharp vision.⁹ Like the ancient Hebrew Messengers of God, each paragon has 3-times-2 wings to emphasize his exalted station.⁹ Since Six was also considered the number of mediation (Chapter 7, Note 13), in this role they mediate between the twenty-four elders and the 6-times-24 “working arms”, the 144 primal rulers alluded to have probably not yet appeared in history.

In the world of the Láhút, it is God Who sits on the throne and the four pillars are the Four Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith, that is: lion = the Lion of Judah, Bahá'u'lláh; ox = the Servant of Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá†; man = the Man Child,‡ the Báb; and flying eagle = the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.§ The creative Word of God always has multiple meanings. In their role as Mediators, they mediate between God and the 6-times-4 elders and thenceforth to all mankind.

9. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,
10. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

In many of His Tablets Bahá'u'lláh proclaims, *“I am God”*.

* See chapter 1, verse 8, commentary.

† “Abdu'l-Bahá” literally means “Servant of Bahá”.

‡ The Man Child will be introduced in chapter 12.

§ A flying eagle adorns the pillar above the Sepulchre of Shoghi Effendi in London.

This identity with God is in the realm of His attributes and not of His essence.¹⁰ In *The Book of Certitude*, Bahá'u'lláh recites the words of God to His Manifestation. “*There is no distinction whatsoever between Thee and Them; except that they are Thy servants and are created of Thee.*” And, “*But for Thee, I would not have created the heavens.*”¹¹ In another place Bahá'u'lláh says, “*... He Who is the Monarch of all names is come, He at Whose bidding every single name hath, from the beginning that hath no beginning, been created ...*”¹²

If one draws a diagram of the arrangement of the invisible zodiac as described in this chapter, it is seen that it forms a mandala, the *quadratura circuli*, Figure 10. As explained in Part I of this book, this particular mandala is a symbol of the unification of heaven and earth and the realization of inner wholeness. Thus John sees that man's feeble conception of the phenomenal cosmos is a mere symbol of the hidden mandala, the Divine Order that is hidden, yet implicit, in the arrangement and laws governing the universe.

Notes

- ¹ Quoted in *Star of the West*, Vol. VIII, No. 17, p. 226, Jan. 1918. *Star of the West* was an English language Bahá'í magazine published in the United States during the years 1911–1935. See also Genesis 9:13; Ezekiel 1:28; Jeremiah 31:4, 31–34, 32:38–40; Luke 1:72; Isaiah 52:9, 54:10, 50:21; Psalm 33:11, 105:8–9; Ezekiel 16:62, 37:26; Hosea 14:7; Amos 9:11; Micah 7:19; Hebrews 8:8.
- ² Green is also sometimes used to symbolize immortality or humility.
- ³ *Some Answered Questions*, p. 66, <11 #1>. Jacob, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad each had 2-times-6 holy Figures while the Báb had 3-times-6. In the new Age, Bahá'u'lláh has 4-times-6 holy Figures. Many other religions and cults had 2-times-6 holy or sacred Figures, e.g., the 12 Olympian deities, the 12 Titans, the 12 knights of King Arthur's round table (the zodiacal wheel?), the 12 divine guardians (juni Shinsho) of Buddha the Healer, etc.
- ⁴ Ref. 21, p. 201 and n. <4:4>.

energy and new life-quickening is observed everywhere in the vegetable kingdom; the animal and human kingdoms are resuscitated and move forward with a new impulse. The whole world is born anew, resurrected... Likewise the spiritual bounty and springtime of God quicken the world of humanity with a new animus and vivification. All the virtues which have been deposited and potential in human hearts are being revealed from that Reality as flowers and blossoms from divine gardens. It is a day of joy, a time of happiness, a period of spiritual growth ..."

Similarly, in Mark 13:28–9 (RSV) we have the words of Jesus concerning a sign of the Day of the Return of the Son of Man: "From the fig tree learn its lesson; as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he (the Son of Man) is near, at the very gates."

It is interesting that there have been three known Universal Manifestations Whose Advents occurred near the dawning times of the three most recent zodiacal ages—Melchisedec: Aries, Jesus: Pisces, and Bahá'u'lláh: Aquarius. A Universal Manifestation has a Message for all mankind while other Manifestations have Messages for specific times and peoples. It is also interesting that the last four zodiacal ages, at least in the Middle East, may have had priesthoods and religious rites characterized by the sign of the zodiacal age. For example, the age of Gemini the Twins is notable for its religions of dualism (Set and Ra in Egypt, Yang-Yin in China). Twins are the city builders of ancient myth (Ref. 7). In the Bible, the Cain and Abel allegory and the Twin Pillars of God (Exodus 13:21–22) may correspond to this phase of religious evolution. The age of Taurus the Bull is represented by various bull cults (Apis in Egypt, bull-dancing in Crete). Aries is notable for the lamb sacrifice and various cults (Amon-Ra, the ram-headed god of Egypt, Pan, the goat-horned god of pasture fields in Greece). In the Bible we have Abraham's substitution of the ram for His son in the sacrifice; Moses descends from Mount Sinai with ram's horns but finds His people still worshipping the golden calf (Taurus?). Pisces is, of course, the age of Jesus Christ, and it is still common to represent His Dispensation with the Sign of Ichthys, the Fish. The influence of the Fish can be discerned in Christian art, architecture and literature. But astrologers claim that it is incorrect to list only one sign for the age, and that the two signs corresponding to both equinoxes should be listed. Thus Pisces-Virgo is more representative of the Christian Era, with Virgo the Virgin playing an obvious role in the Christian experience. Fátima in the Muslim world plays a counterpart to Mary.

Using this logic, the new age is either Aquarius-Leo or Leo-Aquarius.

Aquarius is the Water Bearer who brings spiritual awareness for the unification of mankind (Ref. 5). Leo has obvious characteristics of power and kingship, but the constellation of Leo (Figure 9) has interesting attributes of its own. The sickle that is the outstanding sub-cluster in Leo suggests a correlation with the sickle formed by the seven Churches (Figure 8) and the Divine Reaper in Revelations 14:14. The sickle in Leo can be easily discovered because of the brilliant star Regulus in its handle. Regulus crosses the meridian 12 degrees north of the equator at 10:00 pm on 23 March. Regulus means literally Sovereign or Lord.

The constellation Leo was the apparent point of origin of the Great Star Fall on the eve of 11 November 1833 that seemed to announce the sixteenth birthday of Bahá'u'lláh. The more literalist Christians, in accordance with the prophecy of Jesus, considered the Great Star Fall to be the last signal necessary to precede the “end of the world” and the Second Coming of Christ. The prophecy in Matthew 24:2-30 (RSV) reads “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken; then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven ...” The other parts of this prophecy seemed to have been fulfilled by the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and the Dark Day of 10 May 1780. The “sign of the Son of man in heaven”, by many, was equated with the great comet of 1843.

Leo has the number Nine, the number of Bahá', in the Precession order, and the number Five, the number of the Báb, in the zodiacal order.

- ⁹ Flying Eagle is used as the name of the sign instead of its more recent name Scorpio. This was probably done to imply a virtuous beast, the scorpion being a rascally little creature without obvious virtues. This constellation should not be confused with Aquila, Eagle, another constellation of the same name that is not a member of the zodiac (Ref. 59, p. 254). The four signs listed in verse 7 are also interesting for four brilliant stars, Alderbaran in Taurus, Antares in Scorpio or Flying Eagle, Regulus in Leo, and Fomalhaut in Aquarius. These four stars are very nearly at points separated by 90 degrees around the zodiacal band.

The four beasts are also used as a symbol in Ezekiel 1:5-9 and again in Daniel 7:17. Some authorities suggest that the four beasts in Ezekiel may define the attributes of Man or man (Reference 4, p. 98), but it is fairly obvious that the four beasts are intended to define four empires (Ref. 4, p. 50ff.). The ancients often ascribed life to abstract entities, even to the cosmos. (Ref. 20, p. 136; Ref. 29, 30C.) It has been a frequent device in the cultures of man to symbolize various attributes with a combination of

animals, men, sceptres, diadems, etc. Representatives of the Hindu pantheon are modern day examples; the great sphinx of Egypt is an ancient example.

According to ancient Hebrew mystical thought, all of the Messengers of God had 6 wings except Satan, who, before his fall, had 2-times-6 wings. They bore the title "Sons of God". (Ref. 12, p. 88.)

As one proceeds through the Apocalypse, the romance of the ancient cosmological view should delight the reader. One can easily be transported into an age when the night skies were pollution free, when man felt more at home in a living cosmos, and the ages rolled on forever in awesome cycles. In many cases the writer will choose to avoid pointing out the many allusions to stellar constellations such as rivers, crowns, etc., preferring to let the reader with a penchant for astronomy have the enjoyment of discovering these for himself.

¹⁰ Ref. 21, p. 46. Compare e.g., John 10:30.

¹¹ *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 100, 103.

¹² *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 258.

5

The book of seven seals

1. And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.
2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?
3. And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.
5. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

The “book” represents the seven Holy Books of the seven Faiths. It is sealed with seven seals because every Holy Book was sealed. The words on the inside represent the hidden meanings while word on the backside represent the obvious meanings. The hidden meanings of the Holy Books were revealed by Bahá’u’lláh. The Book of the Báb [the *Bayán*, meaning “Exposition”], actually revealed through the Spirit of Bahá’u’lláh, was also instrumental in unsealing the seven Books. The representation of all the seven Books as a single Book symbolized the fact that all the Holy Books are in essence one and the same.

The Lion of the tribe of Judah¹ is Bahá’u’lláh. The Lion of Judah alludes to the prophecy of Jacob in Genesis 49:9–10 (KJV). In that prophecy, the Lion symbolizes a ruler or sovereign;

Shiloh means a place of rest and symbolizes the Ark of the Covenant.*²

As the Root of David, Bahá'u'lláh, Who was descended from Abraham through His third wife Katurah, is equated to Abraham, meaning that all Prophets are in essence one and the same.†

6. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth unto all the earth.

RSV translates verse 6 as follows:

6. And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth;

The constellation Aries, the Ram or Lamb, (Fig. 11) was originally the first to appear at the Vernal equinox. But because of the Precession of the Equinoxes, the Lamb is always “slain” for a new constellation at each new zodiacal age. And so it is at a new spiritual Age, which is always accompanied by a Sacrificial Figure, a “Lamb of God”, a “leader of the flock”, the Sacrifice of the Covenant (Exodus 24:4–8).³

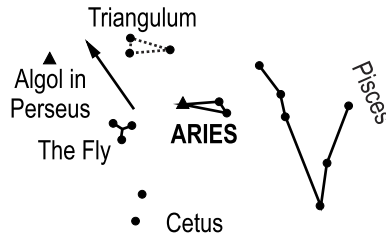
In the last chapter we discovered that the greatness of Bahá'u'lláh's Dispensation requires an invisible zodiac of twenty-four elders. Thus there are two of every type of elder (Holy Figure), and, in particular, there are two Lambs in this new Age. The two Lambs are the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.⁴

The Lamb may, in some Sacrifices, such as that of Jesus

* “Shiloh come” equals 358 by the Hebrew gematria, identical to “Messiah”.

† See *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 88–90.

5. The book of seven seals



THE RAM

Figure 11

Aries the Ram or Lamb

(Note the similarity of Aries and Triangulum)

Christ and the Báb, be the Manifestation Himself, and the Lamb may actually climb the “lofty summit of great martyrdom”. In others, such as that of Moses and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Lamb’s spiritual Sacrifice, while not including physical martyrdom, will transcend our abilities to recount or to comprehend. But the Lamb is always meek, innocent, spotless in purity., Who becomes the victim of slander and persecution, Whose Sacrifice is required to cleanse civilization of destructive forces, to renew the Ages, and to permit a higher reality to become manifest. <5:6>

Although Bahá’u’lláh is also a Sacrificial Figure, in these verses He is represented as the Lion, symbolic of His role as the Sovereign or Lord of the Covenant. <G #7, 8> In verse 6, horn symbolizes a name. The Lamb has seven horns representing the seven names by which the Lamb had been known in the seven former Dispensations. The seven eyes are the

seven Prophetic Spirits through which the Lamb had been manifested.⁵

7. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.
8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.
9. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;
10. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.
11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;
12. Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.
13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.
14. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

In verse 6 the Lamb stands (seemingly) as though it had been slain. In verse 9 we learn that the Lamb has actually been slain. The possible contradiction is resolved, of course, by the fact that there are two Lambs in Bahá'u'lláh's Dispensation. The first Lamb, the Báb, was literally slain in the public square of Tabríz. The second Lamb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was not slain in a literal sense,

and remains alive and well, to reappear as the Lamb of the new Jerusalem in a later chapter.

Since the Lamb that was slain is the One worthy to “take the book”, the Báb will help to unseal the Book of seven seals. <11:13 #2>

The Báb helped to unseal the Holy Books through the spiritual power of Bahá'u'lláh. Thus in verse 7 He takes the Book from Bahá'u'lláh to open the seals. Bahá'u'lláh explains, “... *whatsoever My Previous Manifestation and Harbinger of My Beauty (the Báb) hath revealed hath been My Revelation and the proclamation of My Cause.*”⁶

The new song is the message of the new Manifestation. “... *the divines and doctors ... have ... refused to incline their ears unto the divine Melody.*”⁷—Bahá'u'lláh

Notes

- ¹ RSV translates verse 5 as “... the Lion of the tribes of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”
- ² The prophecy of Genesis 49:9–10 (KJV) is correlated with others and is discussed in detail by Marsella, Reference 12, pp. 149–252.
- ³ See, e.g., *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 75–6, 85, 88–90, 135, 265; *The Reality of Man*, pp. 47–53. The emphasis placed on the Lamb symbol in the Apocalypse, written in the first century AD, may have resulted from an unusual astrological event. About 300 years earlier, the constellations and zodiacal signs were once again synchronous for the first time in about 25,000 years. This auspicious event had not gone unnoticed, the Precession apparently being rediscovered by the astronomer Hipparchus in 127 BCE, who also produced an estimate of the precession rate—one degree per century, with an error of about 40%. As explained in *Astrological Symbolism*, Part One of this book, there was supposed to be a mystical correlation between the Twelve Tribes of Israel and the zodiacal signs. Since Aries is the first sign of the zodiac, the Lamb is a symbol of the “leader of the flock”. Gad was the leader of the ancient tribal system whose symbol was Aries, but his tribe was one of the Ten Lost Tribes. (See Chapter 7, Note 11; I Chronicles 12:8, 14.)

The astrological formula “as above, so below”, required that heavenly events would have their counterparts on earth. Thus there must have been an unknown Figure among the “remnant of Israel” Who was the invisible leader of the tribe of Gad, and, hence, of Israel. Since the sign of Aries was once more in synchronism with the constellation, it seems likely that this rare event must have boded well for the ascension of Israel

and her release from foreign domination, a hope that, alas, was not to be realized.

In the first century BCE, the fact that the constellation of Aries would once again lag behind the sign or Aries must have been widely anticipated, and speculation as to the significance of this event must have been rampant. By the “law of correspondences” there should, of course, be a similar “sacrifice” on the earthly plane. The believer in astrology would be expecting the appearance of the mystical “Lamb of God”, which would account for the reported exclamation of John the Baptist in John 1:29, 36. This theory would also account for the reported journey of the wise men (astrologers), Matthew 2:1-2, who may have dated the end of the age of Aries at 6 BCE to coincide with a “big conjunction” of Saturn and Jupiter. (See Reference 58, pp. 399-401.)

A remarkable episode is retold by de Santillana and von Dechend in *Hamlet's Mill*, Chapter 21, lifted from Plutarch's dialogue *On why oracles came to fail*. The narrative, presumably historical, describes how, during the reign of Tiberius (AD 14-37) a rumour was started that the “great Pan is dead”. Pan, the goat-horned god of the pasture fields, was clearly an Aries-type figure. His presumed death was considered important enough for Caesar to cause an investigation into the matter. It is ironic that Pan gradually suffered the ignominy of being transformed from a benevolent god into the stereotype of the “devil” of medieval Christendom.

The symbols Lion and Lamb suggest a dualistic, Yang-Yin relationship. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (*God Passes By*, p. 99) likens the Revelation of the Báb to the sun, its station corresponding to the first sign of the zodiac—the sign Aries (the Ram)—that the sun enters at the Vernal equinox. The station of Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation, on the other hand, is represented by the sign Leo the Lion, the sun’s midsummer and highest station.

The blood sacrifice (ox, bull, sheep, ram or goat) was practised by the ancient Hebrews as a sin offering (e.g., Numbers 6:17, 28:9; Leviticus 4:32-35, 16:11) and as a symbol of the Covenant (Exodus 24:2-8). In a variation of the sacrifice, a goat was symbolically caused to bear the sins of the community and then suffered to escape into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:10). This is the origin of the term “scapegoat”.

In the Genesis story (22:13-14) of Abraham and His son, God allows Abraham to substitute a ram for His son in the sacrifice. The ram thereby became a surrogate, and the story may symbolize the end of or the non-existence of human sacrifice in the ancient Hebrew world (Reference 14, p. 9), and entrance into the age of Aries.

A connection between the blood sacrifice and Christianity is given in I Peter 1:19 and Hebrews 9:12–14, 10:4, 11, 12. The author of Hebrews denies that the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats or bulls by priests is capable of removing sin while the blood of Christ is capable of doing so.

Early Christian theologians set forth the theory that Jesus Christ was a scapegoat for the original sin of Adam, giving an esoteric meaning to the title “Lamb of God”.

The future Sacrifice of Jesus may have been the theme of Isaiah 53:4–5, but some, in view of Isaiah 40:2, regard the passage as referring to Israel. (Reference 14, p. 14f. Also see John 1:29, 36; I Peter 1:19; I Corinthians 15:22; Romans 12:1; I Peter 2:5.) For a further history of the blood sacrifice, see Reference 4, p. 14ff.

The symbolism of the ram has great antiquity. The cult of the ram flourished in the Middle East beginning about 2000 BCE. For example, the chief god of Upper Egypt was Amon, a highly spiritual deity whose name means “occult” or “hidden”. (cf. Acts 17:23.) He was originally represented as having the head of a ram and was worshipped in Roman times as Jupiter Ammon.

The “good shepherd” symbol was mirrored in ancient culture in the religion of Orpheus. Orpheus was probably a real man, a singer, a prophet, and a teacher, who was martyred, and whose tomb became a shrine. The early Christian Church saw in Orpheus the prototype of Christ. See *Orpheus and the Son of Man*, by Joseph L. Henderson in Reference 1.

- ⁴ The Sacrificial qualities of these two Figures can be found in several Bahá’í Writings, e.g., *God Passes By* and *The Dawn-Breakers*. Regarding the Báb, we may consult, e.g., the writings of the French historian A. L. M. Nicolas, *Siyid ‘Alí-Muhammad dit le Báb*, pp. 203–4, 376: “Christians believe that if Jesus had wished to come down from the cross He could have done so easily; He died of His own free will because it was written that He should and in order that the prophecies might be fulfilled. The same is true of the Báb so (His followers) say ... He likewise died voluntarily because His death was to be the salvation of humanity. Who will ever tell us the words that the Báb uttered in the midst of the unprecedented turmoil which broke out...; who will ever know the memories which stirred in His noble soul?”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, called the Mystery of God by Bahá’u’lláh, was born on the same evening as the Declaration of the Báb, 23 May 1844. On page 290 of

God Passes By we find this quote by Shoghi Effendi: “When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited this country (the United States of America) for the first time in 1912”, a commentator on His American travels has written, “He found a large and sympathetic audience waiting to greet Him personally and to receive from His own lips His loving and spiritual message... Beyond the words spoken there was something indescribable in His personality that impressed profoundly all who came into His presence. The dome-like head, the patriarchal beard, the eyes that seemed to have looked beyond the reach of time and space, the soft yet clearly penetrating voice, the translucent humility, the never failing love—but above all, the sense of power mingled with gentleness that invested His whole being with a rare majesty of spiritual exaltation that both set Him apart, and yet that brought Him near to the lowliest soul—it was all this, and much more that can never be defined, that have left with His many...friends, memories that are ineffaceable and unspeakably precious.”

- ⁵ See Zechariah 3:9–10, 4:10 (KJV). In 4:10, “Zerubbabel” means “Begotten in Babylon”, “Scattered in Babylon”, “Banished in Babylon”, or “Stranger in Babylon”. (Reference 28, p. 116.) The word is a descriptor of Bahá’u’lláh Who fits each of the appellations. See commentary, Rev 16:10–11 & 14:8. In Haggai 2:23 the Lord of Hosts promises to make Zerubbabel His signet.
- ⁶ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 244–245.
- ⁷ *The Book of Certitude*, p. 164. Also see Isaiah 42:9–10, 43:19.

6

The Book is opened

After having witnessed the hidden forces of the Upper World that will become manifest in the Last Day, John is now permitted to see the hidden forces that will rule the Lower World until the end of the Prophetic Age. The seven seals will be opened by the Báb. The openings of the first five of these seals present an overview of the tribulation of mankind leading up to the Manifestations of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. The opening of the sixth seal describes the world-wide cataclysmic events attending their Manifestations.

In opposition to the four paragons of the Upper World, four mischief makers will dominate the Lower World. The four mischief makers ride four horses representing the hidden forces of the Under-World.¹ The four paragons of the invisible zodiac invite John to “come and see” what is destined to happen as the zodiacal wheel rolls onward.

The seventh seal, to be opened in Chapter 8, will reveal a detailed future history of the spiritual life of mankind, beginning with the coming of Bahá'u'lláh and the new Jerusalem. The future will be revealed in seven stages by seven angels. The relationship between the opening of the seals and the various angels is shown in Figures 12 and 18.

1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.
2. And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a

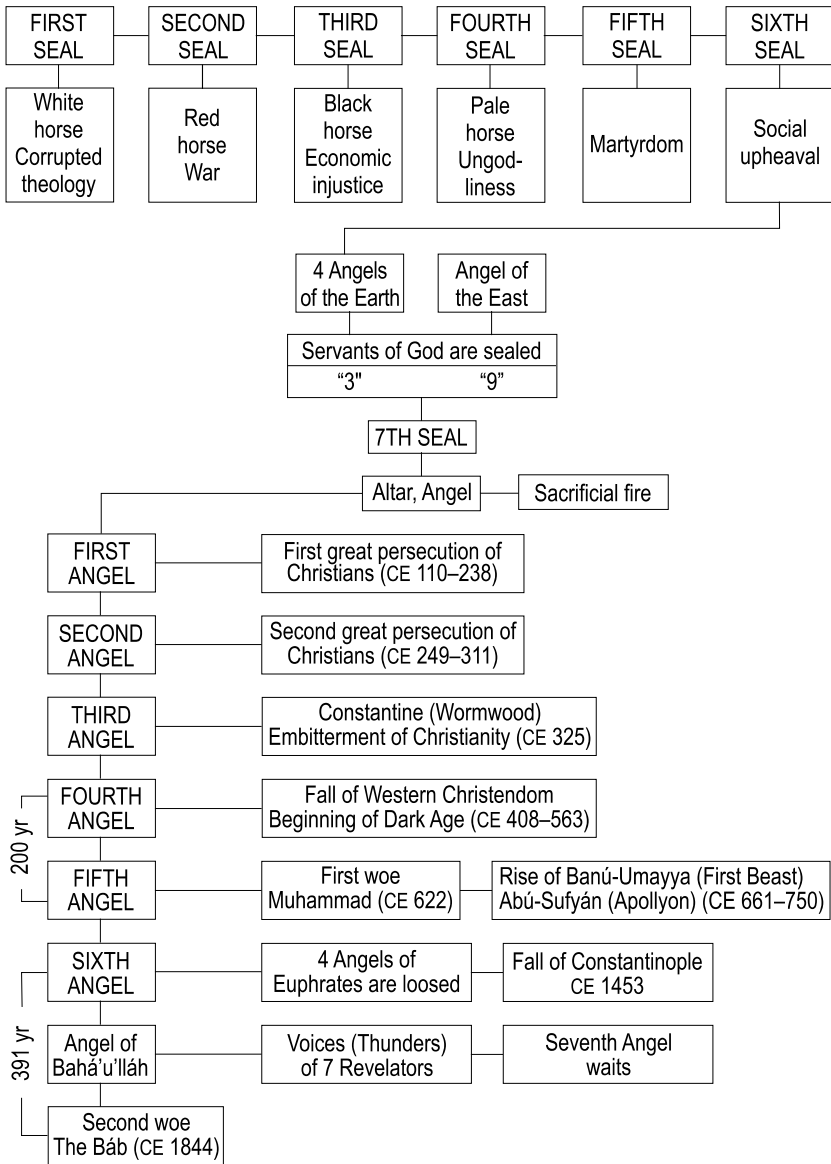


Figure 12
Prophecies to the Christians
Chapters 6 to 10

- bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.
3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.
 4. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The thunder from the opening of the first seal is the noise of the violation of the Covenant. The white horse is Corrupted Theology, disguised with the colour of purity but bent upon conquering the minds of men. Its rider is the Worldly Church, who holds in his hands the bow of propaganda. The crown given him is spiritual authority.

The red horse is War and has the colour of blood. The rider is National Greed and he holds in his hand the sword of conquest.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.
6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.
7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.
8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The black horse is Economic Injustice and has the colour of impure motive. His rider is Personal Greed. The balance he

carries is the power to distribute wealth. The measure* of wheat and three measures of barley for a penny are unjustly traded for about one-eighth their fair value. The victim of the transaction is warned not to consume oil and wine, the commodities of luxury.

The pale horse is Ungodliness and has the colour of indifference. His rider is Spiritual Death and his followers are those who are remote from God. Their weapons include the sword of evil practices, the starvation of spiritual destitution, the death of unbelief, and ungodly leadership (beasts of the earth).

9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they help:
10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?
11. And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

These verses prophesy the future martyrs of Islám, the Bábí, and Bahá'í Faiths, numbering in the tens of thousands. It has been estimated that several thousand martyrs sacrificed their lives to the Causes of Jesus Christ and Muḥammad. About twenty to thirty thousands more were martyred for the Causes of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became as black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;
13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs,

* RSV translates the measure as a quart and the penny as a denarius.

when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.
15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the right men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.
16. And said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:
17. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

These verses contain several symbols used by the prophets:²

Earthquake—Disturbance of the worldly order.³ (Heaven quake—Disturbance of the heavenly order.)

Sun, moon, stars—The hierarchy of prophets, church leaders, saints, priests, elders, etc.⁴

Sun becomes black, etc.—Fall of the hierarchy.

Heavens rolled up like a scroll—Removal of the heavenly order.⁵

Mountains, valleys—Peoples, nations, religions, institutions.⁶

Dens, islands, rocks—Strongholds, places of safety.⁷

When the divines of a former Dispensation accept the new Manifestation, they will become illumined; otherwise they will become “darkened”, and their teachings will turn from water into blood. In *The Book of Certitude*, Bahá'u'lláh reveals, “*In another sense, by the terms ‘sun’, ‘moon’, and ‘stars’ are meant such laws and teachings as have been established in every Dispensation, such as the laws of prayer and fasting. ... Hence, it is clear and manifest that by the words ‘the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from*

heaven' is intended the waywardness of the divines, and the annulment of laws firmly established by divine Revelation ..."⁸

Verses 12–17 reveal that after the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are manifested, the world hierarchy of church potentates, leaders, and clergy will lose their power. Nations, religions, and institutions will disappear. *"Speed out of your sepulchres. How long will ye sleep? ... The earth has quaked with a great quaking, and cast forth her burdens. ... the mountains have become like flocks of wool ... the people are sore vexed at the awful majesty of the Cause of God. Witness how their houses are empty ruins, and they themselves a drowned host. ... The All-Merciful hath come down in the clouds of knowledge, clothed with manifest sovereignty. ... The heaven of every religion hath been rent, and the earth of human understanding been cleft asunder, and the angels of God are seen descending. ... The mountains have passed away, and the heavens have been folded together, and the whole earth is help within His grasp"*—Bahá'u'lláh

Notes

- ¹ Hades-Pluto, the Graeco-Roman god of the Underworld, also drive four horses. The horses also appear in Zechariah 6:2–3 where they appear benevolent and may correspond to the four winds of prophecy (Revelations 7:1).
- ² *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 44–45. The opening of the six seals in Chapter Six may have other meanings, for instance, the six plagues may represent in microcosm the disasters that accompanied the six centuries of the Christian Dispensation, the six years of the Báb's Ministry, etc.

The events earthquake, darkening of the sun and moon, and falling of the stars are in the same order as the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24:29–30. See chapter 4, note 8.
- ³ e.g., Psalm 114:7; I Chronicles 16:29–34; Joel 3:16; Amos 8:8; Isaiah 13:13, 14:16; Haggai 2:6–7; Hebrews 12:26–27.
- ⁴ e.g., Amos 8:9; Isaiah 13:10, 60:19–20, 14:12; Ezekiel 32:7–8; Job 38:7; Numbers 24:17; Joel 2:31, 3:15; Acts 2:20; Jude 1:13; Matthew 24:29; Obadiah 1:4. See also Genesis 37:9–10. An important Tablet of the Báb, the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* [*The Book of Names*], reveals that the story of Joseph is a prophecy of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, His imprisonments, treachery by relatives, etc.
- ⁵ e.g., Isaiah 34:4.
- ⁶ e.g., Psalm 114:4; Isaiah 14:25–26, 2:2–3, 40:4, 65:23–5; Jeremiah 48:8; Micah

1:3-4; Luke 23:30, 3:4-5; Daniel 2. Ancient Sumerian literature states that the "divine laws" were revealed on the 7 holy mountains of the Zagros Range. (Ref. 12, p. 32.) In the more recent traditions of the Middle East, certain mountains remain associated with a Faith, e.g., Sinai and Zion with Judaism, Calvary and Olivet with Christianity, Párán and Hira with Islám, Máh-Kú and Carmel with Bábí, Sar-Galú and Carmel with Bahá'í. See John 2:21.

⁷ e.g., Psalm 18:2.

⁸ *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 33-34, 36, 37, 38, 41.

7

God's servants are sealed

1. And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.
2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,
3. Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

These verses portend the holding back for a period of time the Breath of God from the world of man. Wind symbolizes the holy Breath of God that is wafted over the worlds of matter and spirit.¹ *“Out of thee* hath gone the Breath of the All-Glorious, a breath that hath breathed over all created things, and filled with joy the breasts of the devout that dwell in the mansions of Paradise.”*²—Bahá'u'lláh

Earth or soil is the world of man. *“... the clouds of truth will continue to the end that hath no end to rain on the soil of human capacity, reality and personality their favours and bounties.”*³—Bahá'u'lláh

The Tetrad of four angels are those who will control the corners of the square earth during the Dispensation of Jesus Christ.⁴ They correspond to the four trumpets in Chapter 8.

* Baghdád House, the scene of many of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelations.

The angel of the East is Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, not yet manifested in the first century, Who, as we shall see in Chapter 9, will command His followers not to hurt the righteous.

Here the sea symbolizes the spiritual existence of man and the sources of inspiration.⁵ *"The seas of Divine wisdom and divine utterance have risen under the breath of the breeze of the All-Merciful."*⁶—Bahá'u'lláh

A tree represents a source of spiritual guidance. A tree can also represent a nation.⁷ *"Advance, O people, with snow-white faces and radiant hearts, unto the blest and crimson Spot, wherein the Sadratu'l-Muntahá (Tree of Guidance [Divine Lote-Tree]) is calling: 'Verily there is none other God beside Me, the Omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting.'" "Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch."*⁸—Bahá'u'lláh

4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

"Israel" means literally "he that strives with God". In the context of this and the next four verses, Israel is a symbol, a microcosm of humanity.⁹ Israel's history of spiritual struggle is representative of all mankind. In astrological works, the 12 parts of the human organism were correlated with the 12 signs of the zodiac. In a similar way, the 12 tribes of Israel were considered to be mystically correlated with the zodiac and the stellar influences over the world of man. Thus the 12 loaves of the shewbread* and the 12 precious stones of the breastplate of the High Priest were representative of both the 12 signs of the zodiac and the 12 Tribes.

According to the Hebrew theory of the "Chosen People", the redemption of humanity depended upon the attainment by Israel of perfect obedience to the Will of God. The Theocracy of Israel, once achieved, would set the example for a World

* The twelve loaves of unleavened bread placed at the altar in the ancient Jewish Temple as a token offering every Sabbath by the priests.

Theocracy, thereby leading to the Universal Brotherhood of Man under the One True God, the Father of all men. Some advocates of the theory were more realistic, believing that the same end would be achieved if a "remnant of Israel" were to reach the required state of righteousness.⁹ The prophecy of verses 4-9 asserts the ultimate redemption of a symbolic "remnant of Israel" and hence the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

The number of the sealed, "144 χιλιαδες" ("144 thousands"), can be translated as either 144 thousand or 144 groups of 1,000. 144 is twice 72. In past Dispensations, 72 represented the number of specially endowed and confirmed souls who formed the "working arms", that is, the primal points or "mustard seeds" that were cast over the soil of mankind to generate the Heavenly Garden. For example, Noah had 72 followers, there were 72 elders under Moses endowed with prophetic ecstasy, some versions of Luke 10:1 give 72 as the number of disciples of Jesus, and, by the Pledge of 'Aqabah, 72 heroes of Medina fought for Muḥammad.¹⁰

The mustard seed in the parable of Jesus¹¹ is the primal point of creation whose attributes as a seed are sacrificed to the attributes of the tree. It is only through the sacrifice of the self and submission to the Covenant that the Divine civilization can be brought into existence. The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh requires twice 72 of these primal mustard seeds, just as it required twice 12 elders in the invisible zodiac. (Rev 4:4) Each of these 144 sanctified souls is to be the "gate" through which a "thousand", that is, a "large number",¹² of souls will enter the Kingdom.

The number 144,000 had an archetypal value of 9, that is $1+4+4+0+0+0 = 9$. Verse 4 also explains that those who have the seal of Bahá' (9) on their foreheads will be blessed and saved. *"These are they who are blessed by the Concurrence on high, who are glorified by the denizens of the everlasting Cities, and beyond them by those on whose foreheads Thy most exalted pen hath written, 'These! The people of Bahá. Through*

them have been shed the splendours of the light of guidance.”*¹³ “... Seek thou the shore of the Most Great Ocean, and enter, then, the Crimson Ark which God hath ordained in the **Qayyum-i-Asmá**[†] for the people[‡] of Bahá.”¹⁴—Bahá’u’lláh

5. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.
6. Of the tribe of Asher were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.
7. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.
8. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

It will be revealed in verse 21:12 that the gates of the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, are correlated with the Twelve Tribes of Israel. These gates correspond to the 12 signs of the zodiac in the manner defined in Genesis 49 [discussed on page 27]. But, whereas in former Dispensations there were only 6 “thousand” entering each gate, there will be twice 6 “thousand” entering each gate of the new Jerusalem during the Day of God. Amongst the ancient numerologists, 6 was the symbolic number of mediation, beauty and harmony.¹⁵

The ordering of the names of the Tribes is suggestive of the uniting of man during the Day of God. Judah and Reuben correspond to the future age of Leo-Aquarius,¹⁶ Gad and Asher

* The Bahá’í Universal House of Justice.

† [*The Book of Names*, the] explanation of the *Súrih of Joseph*, the first work written by the Báb.

‡ The followers of Bahá’u’lláh.

to the past age of Aries-Libra. The remaining names circulate through the ages, past, present, and future.¹⁷ Thus the Tribes of verses 5-8 are the spiritual generations of the age to come (after Pisces-Virgo), the past age (before Pisces-Virgo), and all ages, future, past, and present. All those who have been sealed since the foundation of the world are written in the Lamb's book of Life and will be permitted to enter the Holy city.

Verses 5-8 list "remnants" from all Twelve Tribes. Ten of these Tribes, all except Judah and Benjamin, had been "lost" since they had been carried away in captivity by Sargon II in 722 BCE. The fate of the Lost Tribes, numbering about 27 thousand persons, has been one of the great questions of history.

12,000 has an archetypal value of 3. The number 3, the Sacred Triad, stands for the Seal of God, regardless of the Name by which He may be called. The number 3 has stood for holiness and Divinity since very ancient times.¹⁸

9. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;
10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.
11. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,
12. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

These verses witness the multitudes of all nations and races who will advance towards the Kingdom following in the footsteps of the first fruits,* that is, the first 144 "thousand". The

* The first fruits will be introduced again in Rev 14:4.

fact there is a “great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues ... before the throne” indicates that the numbers 144,000 and 12,000 are not to be taken literally but have hidden meanings. Nor do the verses mean that only the tribes of the children of Israel will be saved. Palms symbolizes glad tidings and victory.

13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?
14. And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.
16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.
17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

In this instance sun and heat symbolize the ubiquitous tribulation experienced by the martyrs.¹⁹ Here, water symbolizes spiritual grace and knowledge.²⁰ *“O My servants! Whoso hath tasted of this Fountain hath attained unto everlasting Life, and whoso hath refused to drink therefrom is even as the dead.”*²¹ In another place Bahá'u'lláh proclaims, *“Say, O ye who are as dead! The Hand of Divine bounty proffereth unto you the Water of Life. Hasten and drink your fill. Whoso hath been reborn in this Day, shall never die; whoso remaineth dead, shall never live.”*²²

The symbolism of hunger is made clear in another passage from His Writings: *“Glorified be He, Who is the Creator of all*

*names and attributes! Cast into the fire the tree that hath rot and dried up, and abide under the shadow of the green and goodly Tree, and partake of the fruit thereof.*²³

The great tribulation began with the persecution of the Christians and ends with the persecution of the Bahá'ís. The greater number of the martyrs have been followers of the Báb.

Notes

- 1 See chapter 6, note 1; Ezekiel 47:9, Psalm 104:3-4.
 - 2 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 113.
 - 3 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 68. See commentary, Revelations 6:12, "... the earth of human understanding ..."
 - 4 The four angels may also correspond to the four elements—earth, air, fire (or sun), and water.
 - 5 e.g., Luke 21:25.
 - 6 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 331.
 - 7 Genesis 2:17; Psalm 1:3; Proverbs 3:18; Daniel 4:10, 20-22; Matthew 3:10, 7:19, 12:33.
 - 8 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 198, 218.
 - 9 Reference 4, pp. 14, 109f, 118 n13. The pervasive power of astrologers in ancient times is attested by Isaiah 47:13-15. Jesus correlates the 12 Apostles with the 12 Tribes in Matthew 19:28. At one time, Christian theologians attempted to replace the pagan names of the 12 zodiacal signs and some of the older constellations with the names of the Apostles and other New Testament Figures. (Ref. 59, p. 277)
- Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes were among those movements dedicated to the objective of attaining perfect obedience to the Will of God. (Ref. 52, Part One, Chapter 1)
- Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, in *The Bahá'í Proofs*, 3rd edition, 1929, p. 249, suggests that the "144,000 of all the tribes of Israel" may have a literal meaning, numbering those Jews who will ultimately accept Bahá'u'lláh. In this writer's opinion, his view is highly pessimistic and ignores the ancient number symbolism that obviously permeates the Revelation. Another ancient literary device is ignored by his theory—the macrocosm: microcosm analogy.
- 10 *The Book of Certitude*, p. 8; Numbers 25:26; Ref. 37, pp. 44, 57, 66. Jewish

legend says that 72 angels from heaven chopped off the Serpent's hands and feet. (Ref. 12, p. 59) According to a Hadith of Muḥammad, there would be 72 sects of Islám. 72 is the traditional number of Jewish scholars who translated the Septuagint. The followers of Zoroaster were commanded to wear girdles made of 72 threads. There are 72 stupas, each containing a sculptured Buddha, atop the great temple of Siva at Borobudur, Java. Confucius had 3000 disciples when he died, 72 of whom had mastered the 6 arts. 72 Muslim companions fell with Imám Ḥusayn on the Plain of Karbila in AH 61, and, in fulfilment of a prophecy, 72 Bábí companions fell with Mullá Ḥusayn at Fort Shaykh Ṭabarsí about 12 lunar centuries [later] (*The Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 326, 382). 72 was the number of Bahá'ís exiled to 'Akká. (*The Chosen Highway*, p. 63)

In ancient Hebrew mysticism, there were 72 hidden Names of Yahwah (YHWH). These Names were derived from the Book of Exodus, Chapter 14, verses 19, 20 and 21. Each of these verses in Hebrew has 72 letters. Writing these three verses one above the other, verse 19 right to left, verse 20 left to right, and verse 21 right to left, generates 72 three-letter Names of God. In total, they are called the Schemhamphoras or Divided Name. These 72 Names can be divided into 4 groups of 18 Names, each under the aegis of one of the letters of the Tetragrammaton, YHWH.

Another cabalistic derivation of 72 is by the method of "klima", an esoteric form of number expansion. (Ref. 4, p. 60) Using the Hebrew gematria (Appendix D), the value 72 is derived in the following manner:

Y	= 10
Y H	= 15
Y H W	= 21
Y H W H	= 26
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	
Total	= 72

72 appears to be related to the Great or Platonic year, since the Platonic year consists of 72 "times" and there are 72 solar years in a Platonic day.

The remarkable golden triangle, also called the sublime or pentalpha triangle, has apex angles of 72 degrees, 72 degrees, and 36 degrees.

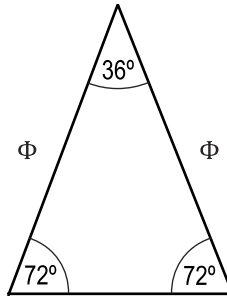


Figure 13
The golden triangle

Using unity for the base side, the other sides become the Golden Number, Φ (1.6180 ...). The golden triangle is a most remarkable “gnomon”. A gnomon is a figure that exhibits repeatable patterns by addition or subtraction of like figures, thus permitting an open-ended “harmonic” growth pattern. Figure 14 shows examples of harmonic figures generated through the repeated use of the golden triangle. (Further examples can be found in References 44 and 61. See also Chapter 15, Note 9.) The golden triangle is intimately related to biological growth. For example, each turn of the DNA helix is composed of twice 5 golden triangles. (Part 1, note 22)

- ¹¹ The grain of mustard seed is mentioned in all three synoptic Gospels, but the reference to the mustard seed in Mark 4:30-34 is particularly interesting since it seems to imply an esoteric significance to the term: “And he (Jesus) said, ‘Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.’ And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them; and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.”

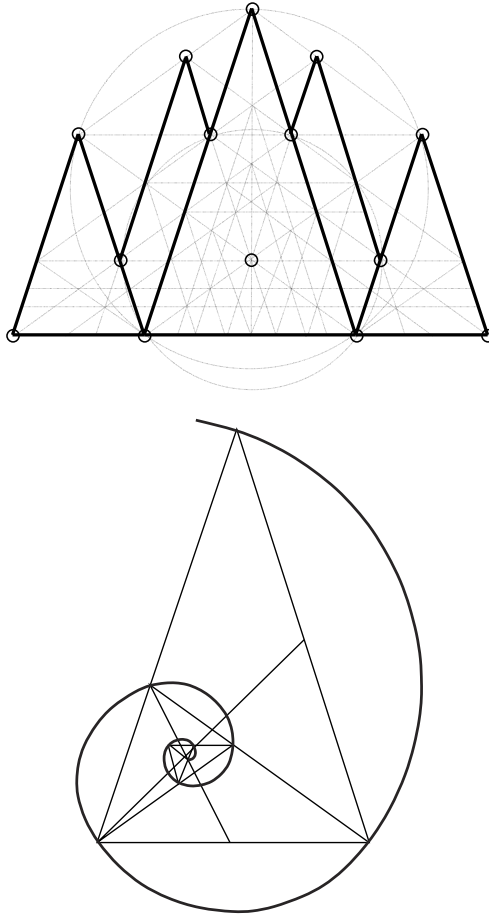


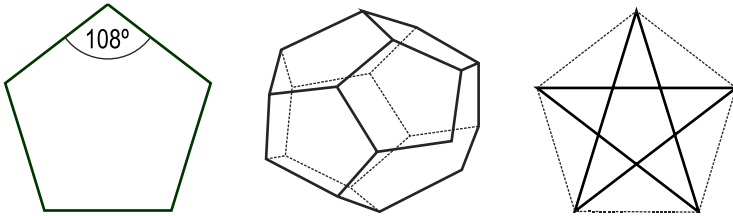
Figure 14
Harmonic patterns using
the golden triangle

“A grain of mustard seed” κόκκον σινάπεως (“mustard grain”) has a literal value of 1746. 1746 is the sum of the solar 666 (Yang) and the lunar 1080 (Yin), and was considered the “number of fusion”. Creation was supposed to issue from the fusion of these two forces.

Each of the numbers 666 and 1080 that comprise the number of fusion also played major roles in ancient cosmogony. The solar 666 will be discussed in Chapter 13. Among the ancients, it applied to material activity in analogy to the spiritual. The number 1080 (3-times-360), on the

other hand, symbolized spiritual activity. There were many remarkable examples of the use of 1080 in antiquity. For example, there are 108 beads in a Buddhist rosary, while the Rigveda has 10,800 stanzas of 40 syllables. 108 appears in the dimensions of the temples at Angkor, in Babylon, in the works of Heraclitus, and in the Norse Valhalla. (Ref. 58, p.18)

108° is what the Egyptians called the “Neter” (see chapter 21, note 8), that is, the harmonizing Principle or Platonic Idea that generates the regular 5-sided figure called the pentagon.



Pentagon

Figure 15
Dodecahedron

Pentagram

The pentagon was held in high esteem by the ancient numerologists. 12 pentagons generate a regular 12-sided solid called the dodecahedron. Plato in the *Timaeus*, following Pythagoras (Ref. 61, p. 114), chooses the dodecahedron as the sphere of the Universe, the guiding scheme or Neter underlying the harmony of the Cosmos. Astrologers considered the 12 pentagons of the dodecahedron as corresponding to the 12 signs of the zodiac.

The pentagon encloses the 5-pointed star-pentagon or Pentagram, also called the pentacle or pentalpha, composed of 3 interwoven golden triangles. The “holy and mysterious Pentagram” has been called the “star of the Magians”, the sign of the “Word made flesh”, the “blessed Lamb of Ormazd and of Saint John”, etc. It was employed all over the East as a talisman to resist evil spirits, and has been associated with various Middle Eastern and European cults and religions. The Druids wore it on their sandals as a symbol of the Deity, from whence the Germans called it the *Drettenfuss*, Druid’s Foot, and is still used to this day among the common people of Germany to ward off witches and elves. The early Christians considered the Pentagram as representing the 5 wounds of the Saviour. The ancient Pythagoreans considered it to be a talisman of health and a symbol of Man, the microcosm. The number of Man being the 5 corresponded to its 5 points, etc., while the macrocosm or World had the number 10. The “flaming star” of the Freemasons still retains the sacred attributes of the Pentagram. “G”, the Latin transcription of the Hebrew

Yod contained within the symbol, has the value of 10 by the Hebrew gematria, signifying a unification between Man (5) and the World (10), that is, the consummation of Man. The Pentagram has been used as the outline of special Tablets by both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, and appears twice in the Greatest Name Emblem, Figure 7, where it represents the double Manifestation.

Geometrically, the Pentagram contains the angles 36°, 72°, and 108°, all of which were numbers held in high regard by the ancient numerologists. Huntley, (Ref. 44), has identified no less than 20 manifestations of the Golden Number implicit within the Pentagram.

Both 666 and 1080 have archetypal values of 9. 1746, the number of fusion, being the sum of the two, can be considered a symbol of the Manifestation since He is the unique connection between the material and spiritual realms. (See Revelations 10:2.)

Ezekiel refers to Bahá'u'lláh by the name "Glory of God" and also by the phrase "The Glory of God of Israel" (Ezekiel 43:1-4). The Glory of God of Israel (Η Δόξα του Θεού Ισραήλ) has the literal value 1746 and an archetypal value of 9.

- ¹² See, e.g., Matthew 13. If the numerical progression of sealed souls follows the mediation number 6, each of the 144 primal seeds will generate $6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6 = 1296$ new "seeds" after 4 "generations". We might expect about 296 of these seeds to fall on "rocky soil".
- ¹³ *Prayers and Meditations*, pp. 83-4
- ¹⁴ *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 139.
- ¹⁵ In Hebrew mysticism, the Sixth Sefirah (Emanation) is Tiphereth, i.e., Justice, Balance, etc. The 6 is symbolized by the 6-pointed Star of David.

Much ancient cosmology, numerology and music appear to be mediated by the 6. For example, 6 "mediates" between the 6 "double gates" of the invisible zodiac to produce the $6 \times 12 = 72$ primal mustard seeds of spiritual generation. 6 mediates again to generate $6 \times 72 = 432$, the value of "new name" καινού ὀνομα, etc. 6 mediates between the basic Hindu-Greek musical scale and the Greek Phrygian mode (Chapter 15, Note 9). 6 mediates between the "time" and the Platonic month, that is, $6 \times 360 = 2160$. 6 is the archetypal value of Cosmos = Order = Κόσμος ("world") = $600 \rightarrow 6$.

In geometry, 6 mediates between the radius of a circle and its circumference, since 6 radii exactly generate the inscribed hexagon. Many crystalline structures, such as snowflakes, are 6-sided and grow in

harmonic relations to the 6. Stable, balanced 6-based crystalline structures contrast to biological organisms which are often “pentalphic”, that is, 5-based structures. Indeed, the Golden Number Φ is exactly $(\sqrt{5} + 1)/2$. (See Ref. 44, 61)

- 16 Leo, corresponding to the Fall equinox, is listed before Aquarius, emphasizing the dominance of Bahá’u’lláh’s Dispensation in future ages. The remaining list of the Tribal names has no discernible order unless this fact is recognized. Using the Correspondences listed in Part One, *Astrological Symbolism*, the sequence of Figure 16 is discoverable in their listing.
- 17 With the recognition that Gemini the Twins, like the Roman Janus, looks to both the past and the future, the signs occur in their correct precessional or counter-precessional order. Virgo, as in Genesis 49, is “veiled” and does not appear explicitly in the listing.
- 18 Reference 12, p. 100ff.
- 19 e.g., Ecclesiastes 3:16, 4:1–16; Isaiah 49:10.
- 20 e.g., Isaiah 12:3; Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13; Ezekiel 36:25; John 4:11; Zechariah 14:8. In ancient Sumer the god Enki was lord of both water and knowledge.

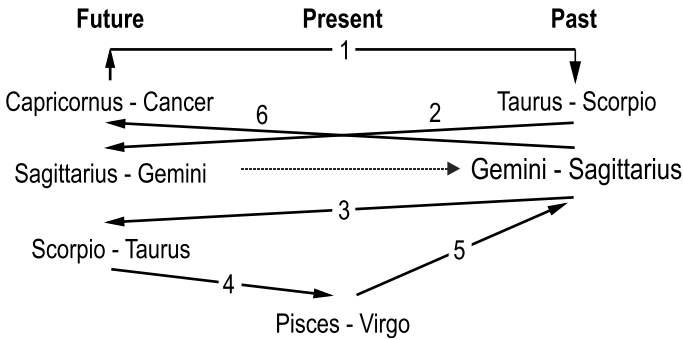


Figure 16

- 21 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 160.
- 22 *idem*, p. 213.
- 23 *idem*, p. 189; Amos 8:11–12.

8

The fate of the early church

1. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space on half an hour.
2. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.
3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.
4. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

The silence of half an hour indicates that it will be a very short time until the tests to follow.

At the great Temple in Jerusalem, the altar of burnt-offering was located in the court of the children of Israel. However, only the Jewish priests were allowed to enter the court and to perform the oblations and sacrifices. Now in the heavenly realm, it is Jesus Christ, the altar angel, Who controls the acceptance or rejection of the burnt-offering.

Golden censer symbolizes perfect piety. Incense or perfume symbolizes the fragrance of communion with God. *"Thus counselleth you the All-Knowing, the Faithful. We shall always be with you; if We inhale the perfume of your fellowship, Our heart will assuredly rejoice, for naught else can satisfy Us. To this beareth witness every man of true understanding."*¹—Bahá'u'lláh

5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire

of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

Fire in this instance symbolizes sacrifice and purification. Fire can also symbolize the rebuke of God, destruction or torment.² The voices are of those who fall into trials and temptations; the thunder is the sound of the violation of the Covenant; the lightning flashes are the anger and wrath of God.³ These are accompanied by the earthquake of doubts.⁴

7. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.
8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea become blood;
9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.⁵

This prophecy concerns the impending series of persecutions of the Christians by Rome from CE 110 until 311. It was during an earlier persecution that John was banished to Patmos where he wrote the Apocalypse.

The persecutions of the early Christians can be divided into three series.⁶ A minor persecution began under the Emperor Nero in CE 64 as a result of Nero blaming the Christians for the Great Fire of Rome. The first great persecution began in CE 110 as a result of the Roman State stigmatizing Christianity as a crime. This anti-Christian campaign lasted sporadically until CE 238. In the last phase of this persecution, attempts were made to destroy the clergy as propagators of the Faith.

The second great persecution began under the Emperor Decius in CE 249 and was continued with increased vigour under

the Emperor Diocletian. This last and most severe of the anti-Christian campaigns resulted in executions, torture, church burnings, and book burnings on a large scale.⁷

In the prophecy, hail and fire mingled with blood symbolize tests from heaven and wrath accompanied by death. Grass symbolizes the common people who inhabit the earth; green grass symbolizes righteous people.⁸ Verse 7 says that one-third of the spiritual leaders (trees) and all the righteous people will be destroyed. This was the great persecution of CE 249–311.

10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;
11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Constantine the Great (a great star) ended the persecutions and made Christianity the official Faith of Rome. But in attempting to unify his empire, Constantine, at the Council of Nicea in CE 325, enforced the theories of certain theologians upon the Christians in the form of creed and dogma. The spontaneity of the early Church was destroyed, and the Church, formerly the oppressed, now became the oppressor. Constantine's policy was continued by later Emperors and resulted in bitter quarrels, heresies, and finally the great schism between the Eastern and Western branches of the Church in CE 1054. Constantine became a "fallen star" and "Wormwood".⁹

Constantine's influence was greatest over the churches that eventually became the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church constituted a third of Christendom, another third eventually formed the Western or Roman Church, and the last third was constituted by the schismatic Asian and African churches.

Rivers and fountains symbolize the mainstreams of spiritual guidance. *"From time immemorial even unto this day, all the kindreds and peoples of the earth have clung to ... fanciful and unseemly thoughts, and thus have deprived themselves of the clear waters streaming from the springs of purity and holiness." "They drink of the tainted water, and know it not."*¹⁰—Bahá'u'lláh

12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.
13. And I beheld and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

This prophecy concerns the invasion of Western Rome beginning with the Visigoths under Alaric the Bold in CE 408. This was a prelude to further invasions of the West by Vandals, Huns, etc. It was the beginning of the Dark Age in Europe.

The smiting of the West resulted in a third part of the Christian hierarchy (sun, moon, and stars) being separated from the mainstream of Christianity. The Church became darkened for a third part of a Lord's Day and for a third part of the ensuing night.

The Lord's Day commenced with the Advent of Jesus Christ (circa CE 1) and ended with the Advent of Muḥammad (circa

CE 622), a period of about six centuries. Thus the Day was darkened for about one-third of the Lord's Day or the two centuries from CE 408 to 622. A "Night" is the period between two Divine Revelations when the Sun of Truth is not manifest among men.* It began soon after the Ascension of Muḥammad† and ended with the Declaration of the Báb in CE 1844, a period of about twelve centuries. Verse 12 also says that the Day did not shine for one-third of the "Night", that is, the period from the middle of the seventh century until the middle of the eleventh century CE, the end of the Dark Age of Europe.

The three woes to come are the dawns of the Lord's Days of Muḥammad, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh. That a "woe" signals a Day of the Lord is made clear by Ezekiel.¹¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá says, "*Therefore it is certain that the day of woe is the Day of the Lord; for in that day woe is for the neglectful, woe is for the sinners, woe is for the ignorant.*"¹²

In astrological symbolism, the three woes correspond to what astrologers call the "fiery triplicity", that is, Sagittarius, Aries and Leo. Sagittarius the Archer, to be introduced in Chapter 9, represents the fiery wrath of God that will attend the Manifestation of Muḥammad. The wrath of Aries the Lamb, corresponding to that of the Báb's Manifestation, was previewed in [Revelations] 6:16. The wrath of Leo the Lion corresponds to that of the Manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh. This will be the subject of the last 9 chapters.

In each new age, "wrath" attends the judgement of the mischief-makers of the dying civilization. Following His role as a "bringer of the wrath of God", the Manifestation assumes His role as one of the Pillars of the Age. This is why the signs of Jesus are both a Lamb and a Fish, and the signs of the Báb are both a Lamb and a Man.

* *Selected Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 129 fn.

† Beginning with the advent of the "beast" circa 666. The beast is the Umayyad dynasty, to be introduced in Chapter 9.

Notes

- 1 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 316.
- 2 e.g., Isaiah 1:25, 10:17, 30:27–33, 33:11, 66:15–16; Amos 2:5; Psalm 29:7–8, 83:14–15; Malachi 3:2–3; Jeremiah 13:9; Hebrews 12:29.
- 3 See Revelations 4:5.
- 4 *Some Answered Questions*, p. 70.
- 5 The ark or ship was a prominent symbol for the early Christian Church. See Reference 14, pp. 79, 80, 82, 88; *The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 84–85.
- 6 See, e.g., Ref. 30. Compare the events of Chapters 8 through 13 with *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp. 85–91. Three was the number associated with creative acts. Thus the thirds denote dismemberment and destruction.
- 7 Reference 14, p. 89.
- 8 e.g., Isaiah 40:6–7; I Peter 1:24; Psalm 72:6.
- 9 Reference 14, chapter 6. Constantine did not introduce contention among the Christians. For many centuries, hot philosophical debate seems to have been a characteristic of the people of that region. However, the quarrels between the various schools of thought were embittered beyond reconciliation by the insistence of the totalitarian Constantine and his successors that there be only one tolerated opinion and that all others must be suppressed.
- 10 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 21, 41.
- 11 Ezekiel 30:2–3.
- 12 *Some Answered Questions*, p. 63. <11 #1> The 7 trumpets announce events meaningful to the history of Christendom. The last 3 trumpets also announce the 3 woes but are not necessarily synchronous with them. The 5th trumpet v. 9:1 announces the woe experienced by the Christians attending the Advent of Muḥammad. The 1st woe ends at [Revelations] v. 9:12. The 6th trumpet v. 9:13–15 announces the “Hour”, i.e., the 2nd woe, but gives its date as 391 years after the fall of Constantinople. The 2nd woe actually begins at v. 11:11 and ends at 11:14. The 7th trumpet v. 11:15 announces the 3rd woe and the new Jerusalem.

9

The fall of Christendom

1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.
2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.
3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

This prophecy concerns the Muslim invasions of Asian and African Christendom that began about CE 633. At first, Muslim warriors were noted for their justice and tolerance of other Faiths, notably Sabaeism, Christianity and Judaism.¹ Muslim warriors were, however, ferocious fighters against idol worshippers and other enemies of monotheism. It is important to understand that the aggressive invasions of Islám were not instigated by Muḥammad but by the Successors (Caliphs) following the death of the Prophet.

The question of the Successorship was the historical origin of the Shí'ah and Sunni divisions of Islám.² The first four Caliphs, often called the Rightly-Guided, generally followed the policy laid down by Muḥammad. However, according to Shí'ah

belief, Muḥammad had actually chosen His son-in-law, 'Alí, as His Caliph. Although 'Alí later arose to His appointed station, He was assassinated before He could consolidate His power. The caliphate fell to the Umayyad pretender, Mu'áwiya, whose father, Abú-Sufyán, was the arch-enemy of Muḥammad and His Revelation. The course of political intrigue set in motion by Abú-Sufyán eventually achieved success, and, by beclouding the principles of Islám, Abú-Sufyán became a "fallen star".

The bottomless pit is the pit of error.³ The smoke arising from the pit symbolizes obscurity.* The sun of spiritual truth was obscured, and the atmosphere of nearness to God was stifled by the smoke. *"As for them who have disbelieved in Him, they shall be in the shadow of a black smoke."*⁴—Bahá'u'lláh

The scorpion was a quick-firer that permitted rapid discharge of arrows.⁵ John describes the plague of mounted warriors as "locusts". The magnificent horses of the Arabian warriors are commemorated in fable.

Grass, green things and trees are the commoners, the righteous people and their spiritual leaders.⁶ The command not to hurt the righteous was given by Muḥammad.⁷

5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.
6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.
7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.
8. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.
9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running

* Smoke can also mean grave dissensions, abrogation of recognized standards, and the destruction of their narrow minded exponents. See *The Book of Certitude*, p. 76.

to battle.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

A “month” is 30 years.⁸ Hence, 5 months is 150 years. The Muslim Empire was carved out in a space of about 150 years, from the initial invasions of CE 633 until the peak of the Empire under Caliph Hárún ar-Rashīd in CE 786.

Verses 7 to 10 describe the appearance of the mounted Arabian warriors (locusts), their quick-firers (scorpions), and the sound of their chariots (wings). John’s metaphor for the Arabian warriors draws upon the constellation Sagittarius the Archer, Figure 17, which is adjacent to Scorpio the Scorpion and the Southern Crown. Sagittarius was one of the four pillars or corners during the age of Pisces, and also belongs to the “fiery triplicity”. verse 8:13.

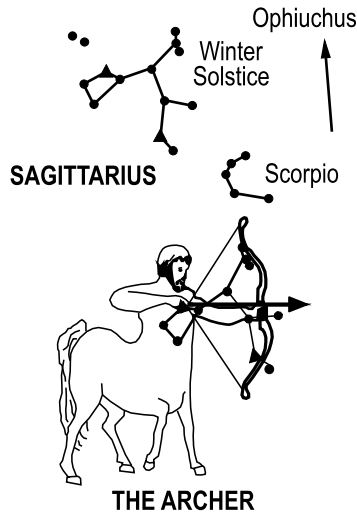


Figure 17
Sagittarius-Scorpio

11. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his

name Apollyon.

12. One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

Abaddon and *Apollyon* mean “The Destroyer” and refer to the Umayyad dynasty personified by Abú-Sufyán.

The woe that is past is the Advent of Muḥammad. The two remaining woes are to be the Advents of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. <11 #1; 9:12 #1; G #6>

13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God.

13. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

The four horns⁹ symbolize the Four Winds of prophecy that blow over the world of man. The symbolism of the four angels bound in the Euphrates River is that Islám, bound together by the Euphrates, will be the origin of the punishments and tests to follow. The new Tetrad of four angels (see 7:1) will control the corners of the square earth during the Dispensation of Muḥammad.¹⁰ These angels are to “slay” a third part of men for a period of 391 years.

The prophecy refers to the fall of Constantinople (Byzantium) and Eastern Christendom¹¹ to the Turks under Sultan Mehmet II on 30 May 1453. The period of time from 30 May 1453 to 23 May 1844, the date of the second woe and the beginning of the Bahá'í Era, was 391 Roman years. This is the period of time that the third part of Christendom would be cut off or deprived (slain), beginning with the collapse of the Christian East and lasting for the duration of the Dispensation of Muḥammad. Mehmet's victory was said to have cut off one-third of Christendom. By the year 1453, Christendom had become divided into

these three major parts: the Eastern Orthodox, the Roman Catholic, and the anti-papist Christians who would soon form the Protestant branch.¹²

The computation of time is as follows:

According to verse 15 the span of time is

biblical term	calendar time
1 "hour"	an "hour"
1 "day"	1 year
1 "month"	30 years
1 "year"	360 years
<hr/>	
Total	391 years and an "hour"

Old Roman calendar years are meant because the prophecy is addressed to the early Christians. The Roman year was 365 days long with an extra day added every fourth or leap year. There were 97 leap years between CE 1453 and 1844. But by the Papal Bull of CE 1582, 10 days were removed from the calendar in 1582 and one more day was removed in 1600. Thus the number of days by the Roman calendar between 30 May 1453 and 23 May 1844 was $(391) \times (365) + 97 - 10 - 1 - 7 = 142,794$ days, a span of time almost exactly 391 old Roman years of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days. The "hour" refers to "the time of the end" and the second woe. (Revelations 3:10, 11:13, 14:7, <11:13>) It will commence with the fulfilment of the 391 years.

- 16. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.
- 17. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the houses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

Two hundred thousand thousand (200,000,000)* has an archetypal value of 2. Mehmet's army consisted of his own Muslim regulars and an independent army of Christians called Janissaries. John "heard" the number of the army. In his vision he "sees" the army that stormed Constantinople, describing early flared cannons as "horses" with heads that roar like lions. The description of the sulphurous (brimstone) smoke that issues from their mouths is remarkably accurate. In the imagery of the first century he describes the colourful armour and equipment of the fifteenth century.¹³

18. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.
19. For their power is in their mouths, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

Mehmet employed the Hungarian engineer, Urban, to construct the cannons for the assault. The largest of these was 26 feet long and fired a ball weighing 1,200 pounds. John explains that the tails (breeches) of the houses (cannons) contain heads (projectiles) with which they do damage.

20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk;
21. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

John describes the state of affairs in Christendom and the Church following 1453. The result was further disintegration of

* The size of the army was about 80,000.

the Church, religious wars, and the formation of the Protestant and Catholic branches, and eventually hundreds of sects.

Notes

- 1 See References 31 and 32.
- 2 The Sunni position is that the Successorship should be a matter of election of the person most qualified to fill the position. One can see parallels to this controversy among the Christian churches; that is, was Peter the true Successor of Jesus, and how valid is the claim of the Roman Catholic Church that the papacy is descended from Peter?
- 3 *Some Answered Questions*, p. 59.
- 4 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 43.
- 5 Reference 12, p. 228.
- 6 See Revelations 8:7.
- 7 Reference 31, pp. 176, 268; Reference 32, p. 57; *The Qur'án* 73:15, 46:11, 42:11.
- 8 See the Table in chapter 2.
- 9 The Jewish altar of burnt-offerings had a horn extending from each of its four corners. In antiquity, an oath was contracted by seizing a horn of the altar with the right hand. See Psalm 18:2; Leviticus 4:34; Ezekiel 43:20.
- 10 See Revelations 7:1.
- 11 The Eastern Roman Empire centred at Constantinople was technically an extension of the old Roman Empire centred at Rome. After the collapse of the Western Roman Empire following the invasions of Alaric, etc., the eastern part of the Empire maintained the name of Rome. However, the eastern culture became so different from that of the conquered West that most historians classify the eastern part as a new empire and call it Byzantium. Byzantium was originally the name of a small town at the entrance to the Bosphorus where Constantine set up the eastern capital of the Roman Empire.

The Holy Roman Empire, a third entity, was an amorphous political grouping created by Pope Leo III in CE 800 as an attempt to resuscitate the Western Roman Empire. Its first "Emperor" was Charlemagne. The attempt to revive Western Rome was a failure. In the words of Voltaire, the Holy Roman Empire was neither Holy, Roman, nor an Empire. It was officially terminated in CE 1806.
- 12 The first definitive breach in the Western Church occurred in 1431 at the

Council of Basel by which Hussitism was to be tolerated in Bohemia. (Ref. 14, p. 241.) The ninety-five theses were nailed to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg by Martin Luther in 1517.

- ¹³ See Reference 33. The term “horse” is applied to various mechanical contrivances in the modern lexicons.

10 Interlude

1. And I saw another mighty angel come down from the heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:
2. And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,
3. And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.
4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

The mighty angel is the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh, clothed with a cloud of glory,¹ the rainbow of the Covenant upon His head,² His countenance shining as the sun in its median splendor,³ and His feet of brass as if they were pillars of fire.⁴ The little book is the Word of God. His right foot is upon the sea of the spirit, and His left foot is upon the world of matter. His voice is as the Lion of Judah.⁵ The seven thunders are the voices of the seven Revelators of the seven Faiths.

5. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,
6. And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea,

and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

The mighty angel reveals that the hidden mysteries of God; that is, His precepts and commands, will be revealed at the end of the Age of Prophecy when the Age of Fulfilment will begin. The End of the Age will coincide with the blast of the seventh angel.

8. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.
9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.
11. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

John is commanded to accept (eat) the Word of God. He discovers that the words are easy (sweet) when they are merely spoken (in the mouth) but are difficult (bitter) when they are actually lived.

The prophecies of the first six angels beginning with Chapter 8 verse 7 were directed primarily to the Christians. John is now commanded to prophesy again, this time to many peoples and nations: Islám.⁶

Notes

- ¹ See Revelations 1:7.
- ² idem, 4:3.
- ³ idem, 1:16.
- ⁴ idem, 1:15. Compare with the pillars of fire and cloud in Exodus 13:21–22. In an Epistle addressed to the Czar of Russia (*Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 51) Bahá'u'lláh explains that His Voice spoke from the burning bush. See also *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 16, 24, 96, 199, 269, 271.
- ⁵ See Revelations 5:5.
- ⁶ See part 1, *The time and space of the Apocalypse*.

11

The course of Islám

The next three chapters are directed specifically to Islám. Chapter 11 and part of Chapter 12 have been interpreted by His Holiness 'Abdu'l-Bahá¹ and have been paraphrased by the writer of this book. The events alluded to are unfamiliar to most western readers, and it is recommended that the references be consulted. The events in the prophecies are correlated in Figure 18 [p. 148].

1. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.
2. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

The Perfect Man is likened to a flute (hollow reed) from which come beautiful melodies played by the Divine Flute Player, God. The rod is the rod of the Divine Shepherd, used to guide the weak. Using the Perfect Man as his cubit,* John is asked to discover the conditions, perfections, behaviour, and attributes of those who dwell inside the Holy of Holies. But he is told that the court of the temple, that is, the physical temple, will be overrun by the Gentiles for 42 “months” or 1260 lunar years.^{† 2} Lunar years are meant because the Muslims use the lunar calendar.

* See verse 21:17.

† A “month” is 30 years. See Table, Chapter 2. <G #6>

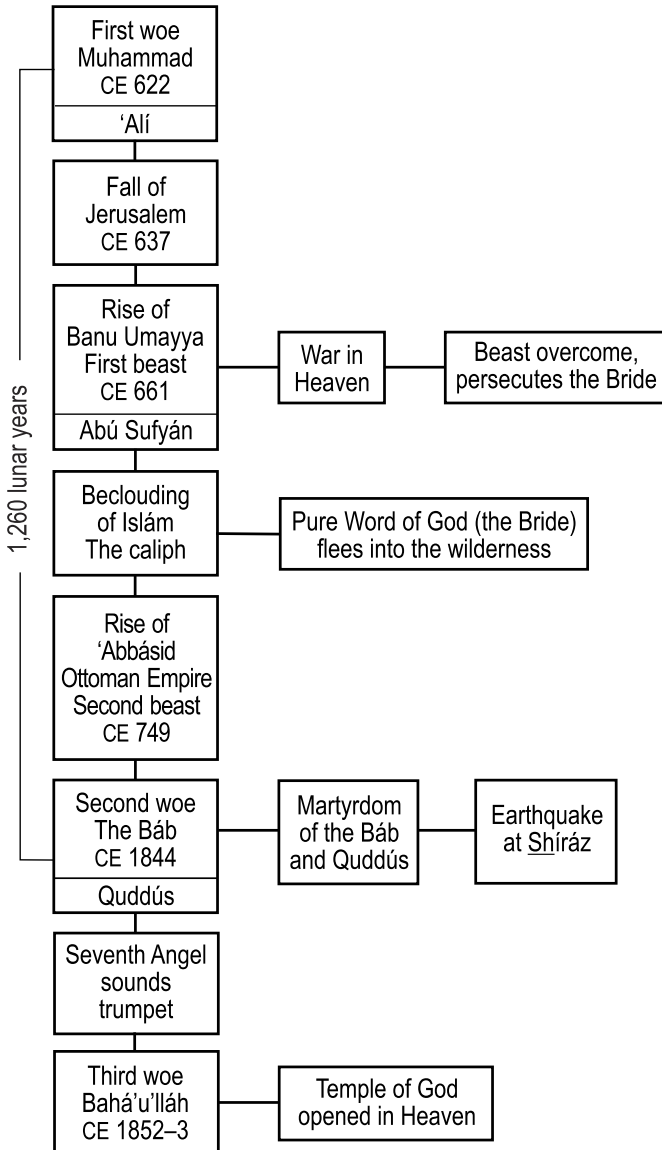


Figure 18
Prophecies to Islám
Chapters 11 to 13

This is the span of time covered by the dispensation of Muḥammad, ending in AH 1260.* (AH 1260 coincides with CE 1844 of the Christian calendar.) Thus John is being told that the Holy City, Jerusalem, will be given over to the Gentiles for the duration of the Dispensation of Muḥammad.

When Jerusalem was conquered by the Muslims early in the seventh century CE, the Christian Bishop Sophronius placed a condition upon the bloodless surrender of Jerusalem—that the Jews would be strictly excluded from the Holy Land.³ During the next twelve hundred years, Palestine gradually became a land of desolation. In the year AH 1260 the Edict of Toleration was promulgated by the Turks⁴ allowing the Jews to re-enter the Holy Land, ending the “time of the Gentiles” and the “abomination that makes desolate”.⁵ (These events were prophesied by Jesus.)⁶ Throughout this period the Holy of Holies, that is, the spiritual Law of God, was respected and left inviolate.

3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.
4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.
5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

The angel says that God will give power to His two Witnesses, Muḥammad and ‘Alí, <11:3 #1, 11:3 #2> whose prophecies clothed in sackcloth will prevail for 1,260 years.[†] They are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks (sources of spiritual illumination) standing in the service of God. If anyone will hurt them, the power of the

* “AH” means “After the Hijrah”, the beginning point of the Muslim calendar.

† A “day” is a year. See Table, chapter 2.

Law will come from their mouths and their enemies will be exterminated.

Clothed in sackcloth or in old raiment means that, in the beginning, their cause will not appear new. Muḥammad's spiritual law (love, humility, detachment, moderation, justice, reverence, etc.) corresponds to that of the Gospel, while most of the laws relating to the material world of man (fasting, forms of worship and prayer, business transactions, indemnities, marriage, divorce, slavery, etc.) correspond to the Pentateuch.

Olive trees⁷ refers to the fact that lamps were fuelled by olive oil in the first century and are, therefore, like candlesticks, sources of spiritual illumination.

The enemies of Muḥammad and 'Alí were vanquished and put to flight by the power of their words.

6. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.
7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.
8. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

The verses say that They will have the power to cut off the bounties of heaven (rain) and will have the same Prophethood as Moses; that is, to turn the waters into blood⁸ and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.⁹ And after they have performed that which they were commanded, the beast (the Banú Umayyad dynasty)¹⁰ that ascends out of the pit of error will arise against the religion of Muḥammad and the reality of 'Alí and gain the victory, so that the virtues and perfections diffused by the power of these two Witnesses will be entirely dispelled. The religion of God will lie as a body without spirit in the region

of the Middle East* that is under the control of the Banú Umayyad.¹¹

Turning waters into blood means that that which was the cause of their life, through their ignorance and pride, became the cause of their death. To smite the earth with plagues means that they have the power to chastise, correct, and educate the tyrannical and bloodthirsty. Rain in this case means bounty from heaven. To kill them means to destroy the spiritual reality of their teachings.

9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.
10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.
11. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

A “day” is also a “time” or 360 years.[†] Therefore three days and a half are 1,260 years. The prophecy says that the nations, tribes, and peoples of Islám will make a spectacle of the Religion of God, only clinging to it in an outward appearance and not allowing the “body” of observances to be destroyed. This they will do for 1,260 years, the duration of the Dispensation of Muḥammad. The other nations of the earth will rejoice to see the corruption of morals that will infect the people of Islám, and they will assist each other (give gifts) because the two Prophets had been a torment to them.

But after 1,260 years the Divine teachings, heavenly virtues, perfections, and spiritual bounties of Muḥammad and ‘Alí will again be renewed by the appearance of the Báb and Janáb-i-

* RSV translates the word “spiritually” in verse 8 as “allegorically”.

† 1 “day” = 1 “year” = 360 years = 1 “time”. See Table, chapter 2.

Quddús.¹² <11:3 #1, 11:11–14> Great fear will seize the populace.

The Religion of God was renewed by the Báb with the help of Quddús and the Báb's other disciples during His six-year ministry beginning 23 May CE 1844. The Báb's Declaration that He was the One foretold in numerous prophecies of Islám and other Faiths, and that He was the Forerunner of the Promised One of All Ages (Bahá'u'lláh) caused great fear among the Muslims, leading to armed attacks, confiscation of property, torture and martyrdom of the followers of the Báb.

As 'Alí was to Muḥammad, Quddús was to the Báb. He was the Báb's promoter and most devoted disciple, second only to the Báb in spiritual rank among His disciples. The disciples of the Báb were called the Eighteen Letters of the Living.

12. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.
13. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.
14. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

The voice is from the invisible heaven. They heard the voice of God saying, "*You have delivered My message to the people, raised the call of Truth, and fulfilled your every obligation. Now, even as Christ, you must lay down your lives in the path of the Beloved and suffer a martyr's death.*"¹³—'Abdu'l-Bahá <11 #1>

The Báb and Quddús ascended to heaven on a "cloud of glory". The Báb was publicly executed by a firing squad of 750 soldiers on 9 July 1850, the 15th of Sha'bán AH 1266. The body of Quddús was destroyed by fire. Many of their enemies "beheld them", that is, they testified to their greatness and perfection.

The earthquake prophesied in verse 13 occurred in Shíráz, the birthplace of the Báb, in the year AH 1268.¹⁴ Those who were not killed were frightened, lamenting, praying, and glorifying God.

The second woe, the Advent of the Báb, is past. The third woe, the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh, will follow shortly.* <11:3 #1, G #6, 11:14 #1, 9:12 #1>

15. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.
16. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped god,
17. Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

The word "Christ" comes from the Greek *Christos*, meaning Messiah, King, or Anointed One.¹⁵ All of God's Manifestations are Anointed Ones. It is in this sense of the word that Bahá'u'lláh asks of God: "*Make this known unto them (the servants of God), that nothing whatsoever may shut them out from Thy Beauty, in these days whereon the Christ exclaimeth: 'All dominion is Thine O Thou Begetter of the Spirit (Jesus) ...'*"¹⁶

Verse 15 reasserts that the Kingdom of God on earth will follow the blast of the seventh angel.¹⁷

18. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy

* The third woe appeared in the year Nine of the Bábí Dispensation, AH 1269. The "hour" is the "time of the end". See <11:13> <9:12>

them which destroy the earth.

19. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

The prophecy says that with the seventh blast, the nations will be angry because God's teachings oppose the passions of the other peoples, and all who do not follow His precepts will be deprived of His everlasting bounty, and veiled from the light of the Sun of Reality. At that time, those who are deprived of the spirit of the love of God and do not have a share of the sanctified eternal life will arise and receive that which they deserve. The righteous¹⁸ will be distinguished by endless bounty, making them shine on the horizon of eternal honour. At that time the neglectful will be deprived, making manifest the blindness of the blind and the ignorance of the people of error.

The temple of God in heaven will be opened and the Divine teachings will be diffused in all directions. The Book of His Testament and the Epistle of the Covenant¹⁹ <11:13 #1, 11:13 #2> will be established. There will be a great storm of the spirit. There will flash the lightnings of the anger and the wrath of God, the thunder of the violation of the Covenant, and even those who professed belief will fall into trials and temptations. <G #8>

(The Covenant was broken by the archbreaker of the Covenant, Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí, a half-brother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. *God Passes By*, p. 246.)

Notes

- 1 *Some Answered Questions*, chapters XI and XIII. <11 #1; 12 #1>
- 2 The year 1260 also figures prominently in the history of the Christian Church. The twelfth century Calabrian abbot, Joachim of Flora, deduced that the 1,260 days meant that the end of the papacy would occur in AD 1260. This interpretation had serious repercussion on the Church and influenced the arguments of early Protestants. (Reference 14, pp. 217, 233, 241.)
- 3 See Reference 12, p. 127.
- 4 The exact date of the Edict of Toleration was 21 March CE 1844. In the Jewish calendar this date is the first of Nísán. It was exactly 2,300 years from the first of Nísán, 457 BCE, the day on which Ezra left Babylon in compliance with the decree given in the seventh year of Artaxerxes. This date figures prominently in the Book of Daniel. (See Appendix B of this book.) The number of days from the fall of Constantinople until the Edict of Toleration was 142,731.

The date of the second woe was the Declaration of the Báb, 13 May CE 1844, the 5th day of Jamádiyu'l-Avval, AH 1260. This date also corresponds with the birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, designated by Bahá'u'lláh as the Centre of the Covenant and the Mystery of God.

- 5 See Daniel 8:14 and Luke 21:20. Israel's call to return will be given by the Lord of Hosts, Bahá'u'lláh. (Isaiah 5:24-26)
- 6 Matthew 24:15, 29, 30; Mark 13:10, 14, 24-27; Luke 21:20, 24-28.
- 7 The dyad of olive trees is a symbol also used in Zechariah 4:3, 11-14 to represent the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.
- 8 Exodus 4:9. See also Psalm 72:6.
- 9 Exodus 4:21.
- 10 Many Biblical scholars equate the "beast" with the so-called "Antichrist". (See II Thessalonians 2:1-4.) The doctrine of the Antichrist rests upon questionable premises, especially in view of I John 2:18, 22, 4:3. Although the Banú Umayyad dynasty can be considered as an Antichrist in the sense of I John 2:22, it was composed of a group of rulers instead of a single individual. If there ever was such an individual it was Hájí Siyyid Muḥammad-i-Iṣfahání who is often called the "Antichrist of the Bahá'í Revelation" because of his actions against Bahá'u'lláh and His Revelation. (Reference 21, p. 233.) The "antichrists" of II John, verse [1:7] were the Gnostics who believed that Jesus was actually a god and only seemed to have come in the flesh. (Reference 14, p. 65.)
- 11 In the allegory of the *Zohar*, Egypt is the home of spiritual darkness. (Reference 4, p. 108.) In Gnostic writings, Egypt symbolizes the material world. (Reference 3, p. 118.)
- 12 See *The Dawn-Breakers*.
- 13 *Some Answered Questions*, p. 63.
- 14 The earthquake of AH 1268 was accompanied by cholera, famine, and havoc. *God Passes By*, p. 53; *Some Answered Questions*, p. 64. In addition to the earthquake described in Revelation 11:13, an earthquake shook Constantinople (Istanbul), the seat of the caliphate, on the day following the martyrdom of the Báb.

"Juillet.—Le 10, 3h. 10 m. du matin, à Udine, forte secousse ondulatoire de quelque durée. Entre 3 et 4 heures du matin, à Trieste and Goritz, tremblement ondulatoire. Dans le courant du jour, deux nouvelles secousses légères à Goritz.

“Le même jour, un peu avant 5 heures du matin, à Constantinople, une secousse du N. au S., sans dommages.

“Il y a-t-il là plus d'un fait? C'est peu probable. La différence des longitudes et l'inexactitude des heures indiquées peuvent laisser supposer l'identité.

“Je lis encore dans la lettre de M. Meister: ‘nuit du au 15 (sic) entre 11 heures du soir et 8 heures du matin, 6 secousses, dont la plus forte à 2 h. 45m.’ S'agit-il du 11 au 12, et de Goritz, Trieste ou Constantinople?”—Reference 34.

- ¹⁵ Originally “messiah” or “anointed one” was simply a king. For example, Cyrus is called an anointed one in Isaiah 45:1. The term gradually became identified with the Messiah of the Age of Redemption. The Greek rendering, *Christos*, became simply a proper name in early Christendom. The title “Kyrios” was the most popular designation of Jesus, characterizing Him as a mystery deity. (Reference 20, pp. 81, 86, 90, 93, 176, and 216 n. 38.)
- ¹⁶ *Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 68.
- ¹⁷ See Revelations 10:7.
- ¹⁸ In the early Church the term “prophet” meant a preacher. (Reference 14, p. 56.)
- ¹⁹ *God Passes By*, p. 239, 249. Shoghi Effendi names ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the “Ark of His (God’s) Testament”.

12

The travail of the word

In the verses that follow <12#1>, John discovers the fate of the Law of God during the Dispensation of Muḥammad. The Law is likened to a Bride. Her unborn child is the Báb, Who is destined to renew the Law.

1. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:
2. And she being with child cried, travailing in birth and pained to be delivered.

The Bride is clothed with the emblem of Persia (the sun) and has the emblem of Turkey (the moon) beneath her feet. Her crown of twelve stars represents the twelve Holy Imams of Islám.

(The Shi'ah position is that the Twelve Imams* were the rightful leaders of Islám, beginning with 'Alí. All of the Imams are known to have been martyred except the last, Who mysteriously disappeared while still a child in the year AH 260.)

3. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.
4. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did

* See Genesis 17:20. Muḥammad and the Twelve Imams were descended from Abraham through Ishmael. (Reference 12, p. 117.)

cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

The red dragon represents the devil, with the colour of war, manifested as the Baní-Umayyad dynasty. The seven heads* are the dominions that were ruled by the Banú Umayyad. The ten horns† are the names of the Baní-Umayyad rulers [see below]. The tail of the dragon is the last ruler of the Banú Umayyad, Marwán II, who destroyed one-third of the saintly lineage (stars) of Muḥammad. The Baní-Umayyad were ever watchful to prevent the recurrence of the Law of God.

The seven countries and dominions over which the Baní-Umayyad had power were (1) the Romans (Byzantine) dominion around Damascus (Syria, Palestine), (2) the dominion of Persia (Sasanid dominion: Írán, Mesopotamia, Syria), (3) the dominion of Egypt, (4) the dominion of Africa (Tunis, Morocco, Algeria), (5) the dominion of Arabia, (6) the dominion of Andalusia (Spain), and (7) the dominion of Turkestan-Transoxiana (Sogdiana).

There were fifteen commanders and chiefs of the Baní-Umayyad, beginning with Abú-Sufyán and ending with Marwán II. They were: Abú-Sufyán, Mu'áwíyah I, Yazíd I, Mu'áwíyah II, Marwán I, 'Abdu'l-Malik, al-Walíd I, Sulaymán, 'Umar II, Yazíd II, Hishám, al-Walíd II, Yazíd III, Ibráhím, and Marwán II. But several of these names were repeated. These were Mu'áwíyah, Yazíd, Marwán, and al-Walíd. Thus there were only ten different names of rulers.

Draco the Dragon is the name of a constellation near the north celestial pole. Another constellation, Hydra the Water Snake or Leviathan, is near Leo the Lion. (Figure 19)

5. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.
6. And the

* A "head" is that upon which a crown is placed.

† Compare Daniel 7:24.

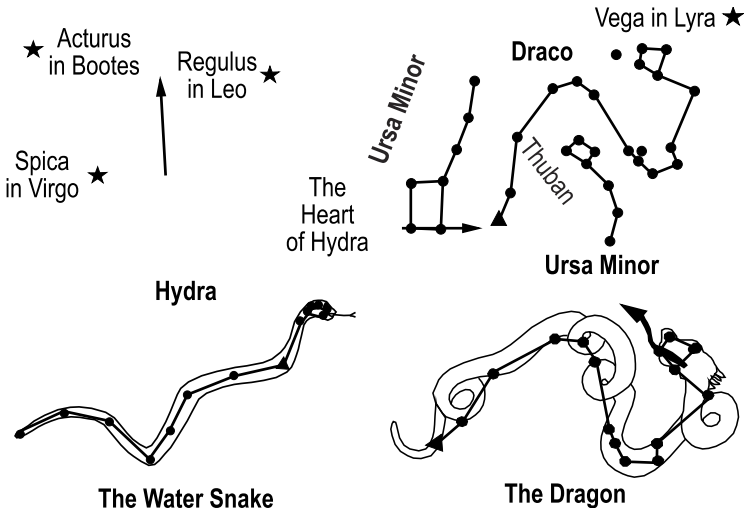


Figure 19
Wonders in the heaven

woman fled unto the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

Verse 5 prophesies that the Bride’s man-child, the Báb, is destined to have spiritual dominion over all nations. <G #6> It also reveals that the Báb will be martyred (caught up unto God). (The youthful Báb was also the Qá’im, that is, the “Return” of the Twelfth Imám. In fulfilment of various prophecies, the Qá’im appeared exactly 1,000 lunar years after the disappearance of the Twelfth Imám while still a child. Thus the Twelfth Imám was “caught up unto God” in AH 260, later to “return” in AH 1260. The Báb was also destined to be “caught up unto God” from the public square of Tabríz.¹

In verse 6, the Bride, the Law of God, flees into the vast desert² of Hijáz and the Arabian Peninsula (the wilderness), where the Law of God will be kept safe for 1,260 years. (The period of the Bride’s gestation has an archetypal value of 9.)

7. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon

fought and his angels.

8. And prevailed not, neither was the place found any more in heaven.
9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
10. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

These verses tell of the spiritual struggle between the diabolical forces of the dragon³ (the Devil) and the Divine forces of the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh (*Michael*). "Michael"⁴ means "One like god", a synonym for Bahá'u'lláh. "Devil" (*Diabolos*) means the "Deceiver" or "accuser", with the implication of a false accuser or slanderer.

Angels are the spiritual leaders and forces involved in the struggle. The prophecy says that the forces of truth will eventually triumph over the forces of deception, and the Kingdom of God will prevail. To be cast out of heaven means to lose heavenly virtues.

Hercules the Kneeler is a constellation with his right foot on the head of Draco the Dragon. Another constellation, Ophiucus-Serpens, is a man in conflict with a serpent (Figure 20).

When the Great Pyramid was built about 2500 BCE, Thuban in Draco was the north star. Now, two astrological ages later, the Precession of the Poles had caused Draco to lose its eminence in the northern sky to be replaced by Ursa Minor, the Little Bear.

11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
12. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

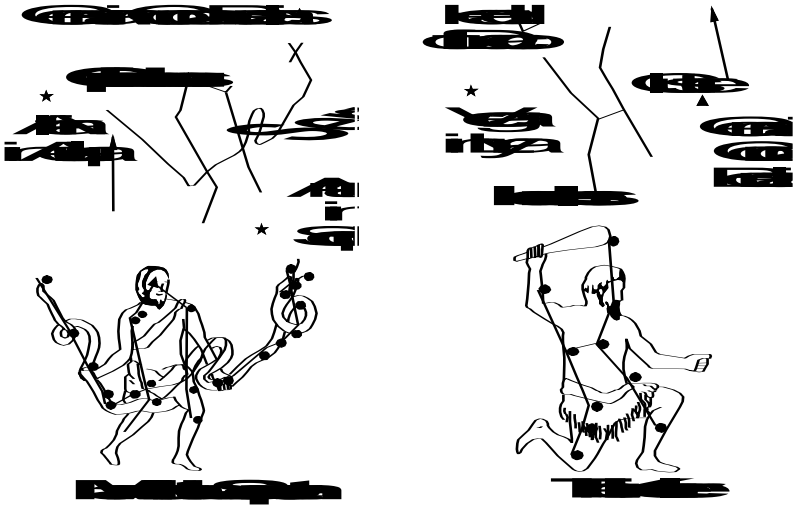


Figure 20
War in heaven

The Deceiver is to be overcome through the Sacrifice of the Báb, and by the testimony and martyrdom of His followers. Because the Deceiver has but a short time to prevail, his wrath will be great. The inhabitants of the earth are warned.

13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.
14. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

After the digression of the past several verses, it is again explained that the honoured Bride of verse 5 will be persecuted and driven into the wilderness, where she will be kept safe for 1,260 years (three times and half a time),* ⁵ the period of her pregnancy. (See verse 4.)

* A "time" is 360 years. See Table, chapter 2.

The two wings⁶ are 'Alí and Fāṭima, the progenitors of the Imams, Fāṭima was the daughter of Muḥammad; 'Alí was His son-in-law. The Great Eagle is, of course, Muḥammad.

The constellation Virgo the Virgin or Maiden of the Harvest is usually depicted with wings and holding in her left hand a head of wheat. (Figure 21)

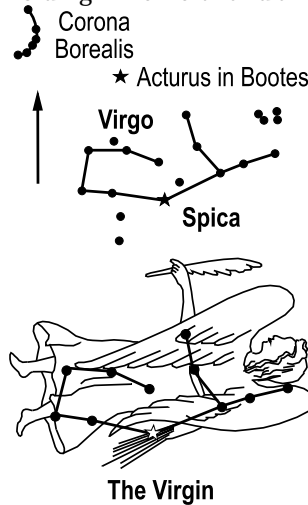


Figure 21
The woman in heaven

15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.
16. And the earth helped the woman and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.
17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The Banú Umayyad as the Deceiver pours out a flood of words

(tainted water) in an attempt to destroy the Bride. But the vast desert and its hardy peoples prevent the Law of God from being destroyed. The Banú Umayyad then attempt to destroy the righteous descendants of Muḥammad who keep the commandments of God and testify to the Reality of Jesus Christ.

A true Muslim believes in God and His Prophets. In Súrah 5 of the Qur'án God says, "And when I revealed unto the Apostles (of Jesus), 'Believe on Me and my Sent One (Jesus),' they said, 'We believe; and bear thou witness that we are Muslims.'"

In astrological terms, Virgo was on "dry land" during the age of Aries. The Precession threatened to cause her to descend to the "waters below". However, she safely became the pillar at the Fall equinox during the Age of Pisces.

Notes

- 1 *The Dawn-Breakers*, pp. xxx, lii.)
- 2 In the symbolism of the *Zohar* "wilderness" (Hebrew *Midbar*) is given a special meaning through its etymological connection with *Dabar*, the "word" that comes to life in the wilderness. (Reference 4, p. 109).
- 3 The equation dragon = serpent = Devil = Satan identifies all of these concepts as being in essence the same. The dragon of Isaiah 51:9 is probably the Leviathan of Isaiah 27:1. The serpent is introduced in Genesis 3:1. "Satan" is from the Hebrew word for Adversary, and evolved from an abstract principle into a personification. (Compare I Chronicles 21:1 and II Samuel 24:1. See also Job 1:6ff and Zechariah 3:1ff.)

The dragon may have been introduced in Revelations 12:3 to amplify the meaning of an old Canaanite myth of the tyrant Leviathan, a sea-dragon with seven heads. (Reference 35.) In the Second Labour of Hercules, Hercules was forced to battle with the seven-headed Hydra of Lerna while the crab pinched his heels. The constellation Hydra, Figure 19, requires about seven hours to cross the meridian.

The serpent has been used symbolically to convey several meanings: sin, (Genesis 3), wisdom and cunning (Matthew 10:16), healing (Numbers 21:9), eternal life (John 3:14-15). Also, it has been used to symbolize kingship, majesty, and domination (Reference 12, Chapter 6). Its symbolism as the Deceiver probably derives from the fact that it manoeuvres cunningly among the grass (humanity) and trees (spiritual leaders).

- 4 See Exodus 23:20-21; Daniel 12:1-4. "My angel" equals "Michael" by temurah. According to Jewish mysticism, Michael was the archangel of

Hod (Glory, Reverberation), one of the primary Emanations from God.

⁵ Compare Daniel 12:7.

⁶ See Exodus 19:4-6.

13

The rise of the caliphate

1. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

The sand of the sea is the peoples and nations that comprised the land of the beast, the Banú Umayyad dynasty. The seven heads are the seven dominions; the ten horns are the ten names of rulers enumerated in Chapter 12. The beast has on his heads the name of blasphemy: The Caliph, 'Ο Καλλειφ.

“The Caliph” means literally “The Successor” and refers to the Successorship to Muḥammad. The title of Caliph was blasphemously usurped by the Bani-Umayyad. The office combined both the temporal and “spiritual” authority in early Islám.

2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

The terms leopard, bear, and lion refer to the prophecy in Daniel, Chapter 7. In that prophecy the leopard represents the Empire of Alexander the great; the bear represents the Empire of Media-Persia; the lion represents the Empire of Babylonia.¹

The Banú Umayyad dynasty ruled an Empire reminiscent of the Empire of Alexander (the leopard) in its extent and prosperity, the strength (feet) of the beast was situated in Media-Persia

(the bear), but it had its throne (mouth) within the confines of ancient Babylonia (the lion).

3. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was headed: and all the world wondered after the beast.
4. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?

The Banú Umayyad were overthrown by the 'Abbasids in CE 749. The destruction of the Banú Umayyad seemed total. However, one of the Banú Umayyad, 'Abdu'r-Raḥmán, known as "The Falcon of the Quraysh", managed to escape to Andalusia (Spain) where he set up another Umayyad dynasty that lasted for 300 years. Thus Andalusia was the wounded head that healed.

5. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.
6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.
7. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
8. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The Banú Umayyad were noted for their hypocrisy, economic and social injustice, and their luxurious lives dedicated to the pleasures of the flesh. Although the Banú Umayyad were overthrown by the 'Abbasids in CE 749, the empire founded by the Banú Umayyad persisted under the 'Abbasids and later under the

Turks for the entire Dispensation of Muḥammad, 1,260 years (42 months).

The Banú Umayyad suppressed the descendants of Muḥammad and the Imams (saints) and dominated a vast assemblage of peoples covering most of the civilized world known to the resident of the Middle East.

The “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” symbolizes the principle of Sacrifice that has existed since the beginning of time, necessary for the renewal of the Ages and the manifestation of a higher reality. There is also an astrological analogy. Because of the Precession of the Equinoxes, the constellation of Aries the ram or Lamb always lags behind the sign of Aries. Thus, symbolically, the Lamb has always been “sacrificed” or “slain” to permit a new constellation to appear at the Vernal equinox.

In the Bahá'í Dispensation, the names of the Book of Life are written by the Centre of the Covenant, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, the “Most Great Branch” from the “pre-existent root”. <G #4, G #8, 13:8>

9. If any man have an ear, let him hear.
10. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

In these verses John learns the Law of Divine retribution that will cause the destruction of the beast. Because of their iniquity, the Banú Umayyad decayed in spirituality and power and eventually met the same fate that they had meted out to others. Except for ‘Abdu'r-Raḥmán, the Banú Umayyad were hunted down and destroyed. Even the corpses of the dead Banú Umayyad Caliphs, except for the pious ‘Umar II, were exhumed and desecrated.

11. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.
12. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them

which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.
14. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by the sword, and did live.

The second beast was the 'Abbásid dynasty. The 'Abbásid dynasty came to power by conquest on the ruins (earth) of the Banú Umayyad Empire. Its rulers gradually became Turkish beginning about CE 840. The second beast* had two names (horns) of leadership—"The Caliph" and "The Sultan".²

At its apex, the second beast exercised all the power of the Banú Umayyad and revived the dying Empire that had been "mortally wounded" yet had lived on in Spain. Again the nations of Europe, Africa and the Middle East admired the Muslim State. The second beast also displayed remarkable technical and scientific skills. Very early they learned the use of gunpowder and Greek fire.³ Strange devices were used in war, such as burning javelins and globes that were propelled over long distances.⁴

15. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak,

* The term "beast is more correctly translated as "living creature". The term in Greek does not necessarily imply a malevolent entity. Thus, for example, the four beasts of Chapter 4 are paragons of virtue. The caliphate, like the papacy and other religious hierarchies, has had its full share of both good and bad masters.

and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:
 17. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The second beast, the 'Abbásid dynasty, was able to revive the image of the first beast, the Banú Umayyad Empire, so that it seemed to be alive again. The second beast enforced the new regime with great severity, ruthlessly murdering even those who had helped the 'Abbasids to gain power.

The marks⁵ or stigmata were: "right hand"^{*}—the land and business tax (*kharáj*), and "forehead"—the head tax (*jizyah*) paid by non-Muslims, marking them as inferior and symbolizing in concrete form their subjection to the Muslim State. Many non-Muslims fled to avoid these taxes. Trading was forbidden unless one had paid the tax (had the mark) or was "Muslim" (name of the beast), or was a member of the ruling class (number of his name).

18. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

In the sense that 666 symbolizes blasphemy, deception or hypocrisy, the number can be applied to many personages in history. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá has explained <13:18 #1, #2; 21:15 #1> that 666 applies to the first Umayyad Caliph who came to power in the year 666 of the Christian era.

Mu'áwiya, the first Umayyad Caliph, came to power during the year CE 661-662. But most authorities, in agreement with the Gospel of Matthew, place the birth of Jesus sometime prior

* The right hand is the "working" hand.

to the death of Herod the Great, who died during the year 4–5 BCE. It is reasonable to believe, therefore, that the span of time from the Birth of Jesus until the first Umayyad Caliph was very close to 666 solar years.

Most serious attempts to discover the name of the beast of the Apocalypse have started from the premise that 666 is the gematrical value of the name. Since Mu'áwiyah committed an act of blasphemy by assuming the title of Caliph, it should not be surprising if his assumed title The Caliph has the value 666.⁶

Notes

- ¹ Reference 12, Chapter 18. The history of Islám can be found in numerous references, e.g., References 36 and 37.
- ² “Sultán” means “Sovereign”. The sultanate was introduced by the Turks. The last ‘Abbásid Caliph was assassinated in AD 1258. He had nominal successors in Egypt who were overcome by the Turks in the sixteenth century. The title of “Caliph” was retained by the Sultans until 3 March 1924. The Apocalypse says that the second beast was spiritually terminated with the Advent of the Báb. Three years after the martyrdom of the Báb, the Turkish Empire became known as the “Sick Man of the East”. The last of the Turkish dynasties, the Ottoman, was terminated twenty-seven days before the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

In the Qur’án 27:82 is found this remarkable prophecy of Muḥammad:

We will bring forth to them a beast from the earth. It will speak to them, for mankind would not be convinced of our signs.

- ³ The secret of Greek fire is now lost.
- ⁴ See the writings of Ebn Fadhi and Ben Abdalla. The material brilliance of the ‘Abbásid period is commemorated in the fable *Arabian Nights*.
- ⁵ See Ezekiel 9:4; Deuteronomy 11:18.
- ⁶ This is probably the most famous riddle in history. Countless attempts have been made to assign the number 666 to favoured villains over the past nineteen centuries. One early attempt was to give the number to “Nero Caesar”, but the literal value of his name (in Hebrew!) is only 616, fifty short of the required value.

Other attempts have been made to equate 666 to the gematrical value of the nations of the Pope, Luther, Napoleon, the Kaiser, and Hitler.

Most of these attempted solutions are too contrived to be considered seriously, since they employ such strategies as incorrect spelling,

abbreviations, and obscure notarikon. (See Note 6 of Part 1.) As an example of past efforts, the cabalists of the Vatican (Ref. 9, p. 161) have pointed out that Μαομέτης “Maometis” has the value 666. This is a possible, though somewhat contrived spelling of Mahomet, a corrupted form of Muḥammad derived from the Turkish spelling.

A satisfactory and a very ingenious solution is given by John Michell (Reference 9), who points out that the last sentence in verse 18—Καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς αὐτοῦ ἑξήκοντα ἑξάς—“And ‘his number is Six hundred threescore and six’”—has the value 2,368. This is identical to the value of Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Jesus Christ. Although it is valid in gematria to compute the value of a phrase or sentence, its significance is dubious unless the phrase is a name, a title, or expresses some important concept. But Michell offers further evidence for his solution by pointing out that the phrase ἡ εἰκόνα τοῦ θηρίου “the image of the beast”, has the same value as Ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Ανθρώπου, “The Son of Man”, 2,260.

It is because gematria is so flexible that it is often possible to devise some ingenious method of attaching 666 to a person’s name. The equivalence of “Jesus Christ” with the last sentence of Chapter 13 is probably a warning to the cabalists of all ages to disregard gematria in the solution of the riddle. Michel’s solution also suggests a profound sense of humour in Jesus, a humour that tests our wisdom at several points in the Apocalypse. Nevertheless, the confirmed cabalist may ask us to offer a gematrical solution to the riddle as a reassurance of the correctness of Abdu’l-Bahá’s explanation.

In order to solve the riddle, it is worthwhile to consider the number 666 from the viewpoint of the ancient numerologist. In spite of the historical prejudice that has grown up around the number, the number 666, the “trinity of sixes”, was a number held in high esteem among the ancients. The number 6 of which it is composed, was the symbolic number of beauty, harmony and mediation. Six is not only the triangular value of the Triad (1+2+3), but was considered to be the first perfect number. A perfect number is one that is the product of its divisors (i.e., 1×2×3) as well as the sum of its divisors (i.e., 1+2+3).

Furthermore:

6 was considered the number of the cosmos (“world”) (κοσμος = 600 → 6).

6 is the archetypal value of Jesus (Ἰησοῦς = 888 → 6).

The Messengers of God each had 6 wings (chapter 4, note 9).

The archetypal value of 666 is 9, the “Trinity of Trinities”.

666 is just one-half the literal value of “Alpha and Omega” ($\alpha\lambda\phi\alpha + \omega = 1332$). (See Chapter 1, Note 19.)

666 is the triangular value of 36 (See Part One, Note 17 and Chapter 15, Note 9.)

66 is the literal value of ‘Alláh by the abjad (Arabic gematria).

God created the world in 6 “days”. (Genesis 1:31).

The sum $6+6+6$ is 18, the number of Names of YHWH in each division of the Schemhamphoras. (Chapter 7, Note 10)

The product of $6 \times 6 \times 6$ is 216 (one-tenth of a Platonic month), one-half of 432 (the literal value of “new name”), one fourth of 864 (the literal value of “Jerusalem”), etc.

It is also interesting that the Babylonians reckoned in units of 6, 60, and 600. Remnants of this system survive in the letters of the Roman numeral system: I, V, X, L, C, and D. The sum of these numerals is 666. More significantly, 666 has a special meaning, being the number of the sun. Ancient numerologists had discovered several magic squares. A magic square is a square array of numbers, the sum of all columns, rows, and diagonals being equal. The ancients assigned the names of planets to seven of these squares. The sun was assigned to the magic square in Figure 22. (Ref. 46, p. 110ff; Chapter 15, Note 9)

The reader can determine for himself that every row, column, and diagonal has the sum 111, and that the sum of all its numbers has the value 666. The interested reader will also see that the square contains the first 36 numbers (1 to 36) and that the dimensions of the square are 6 by 6.

Early Christians were well aware (Ref. 9, Chapter 13) of the solar property of 666, and anti-papists often equated 666 with the Roman Church, since the sun is a symbol of authority, and the Church represented the authority within Christendom.

The fallacy in these and similar attempts is clear from the words in Revelations 13:18 where we are told that it is the number of a man. Nevertheless, the sacred nature of 666 is a clue as to the name itself. From the fact that 13:1 explains that the beast committed blasphemy by assuming the name or title, we can narrow down the list of names or titles that are sacred and are blasphemous if falsely assumed. One place to look for such names is in the Apocalypse itself.

13. The rise of the caliphate

6	32	3	34	35	1
7	11	27	28	8	30
19	14	16	15	23	24
18	20	10	9	26	12
36	5	33	4	2	31
11	27	11	27	11	27

Figure 22
666, the magic square of the sun

There are possibly twenty-nine names and titles in the Apocalypse. None of them have the value 666. Quite obviously the solution must be sought elsewhere.

A powerful clue is in the form of the number 666 itself. Its form is highly suggestive of the successorship, since 600 is the decadal successor of 60, and 60 is the decadal successor of 6.

The suggested solution, The Successor, will be investigated to see if its gematrical value might be made equal to 666.

From the outset we are confronted by the usual difficulties in transliteration. It is often impossible to transliterate a word between two languages as different as Arabic, a Semitic language, and Koine Greek, an Indo-European language. Indeed, this may be the implication of verse 9:11 in which “Destroyer” is translated into both the Hebrew and the Greek. Furthermore, direct transliterations, even if possible, would probably result in words that would be unrecognizable to the literate Greek of the first century. The Hebrew Yě-rūshalāim becomes transcribed as Hierousalem in Greek and as Jě-rūsá-lem in English. The Hebrew Yēshū’a, a contraction of Yehōshu’a, becomes Iēsous in Greek, Iesus in Latin, and Jē’sus in English.

Transliterations from Koine into Arabic also receive mutations. The Greek word ευαγγέλιον euangelion, the “evangel” or “gospel”, becomes Injīl in the Arabic of Muḥammad’s time. Indeed, there appears to be no known translation of the Apocalypse into Arabic until late medieval times.

About the best that can be hoped for is to derive a spelling of “The Caliph” that is recognizable to a modern Greek who is literate in Koine. Both ‘Ο Κελλαίφ, The C̄alleff, and ‘Ο Κελλαίφ, The C̄ällif meet this requirement. Both spellings also produce the value 666.

The solution ‘Ο Καλλαίφ is certainly no less plausible than the other known solutions, such as, for example, Muḥammad (Arabic) → Mahomet (Turkish) → Μαομετις Maometis. The solution meets the other

requirements. It is not ambiguous or contrived. Besides having the value 666, it is the number of a man, is sacred, and shares a solar property as the Commander of the Faithful. Furthermore, its assumption by the best of the Apocalypse was an act of blasphemy. The fact that 6 is the number of mediation is also consistent with the solution, since it could signify the act of mediation; that is, 666 could symbolize the Mediator (Six) to 'Alláh (Sixty-Six). Thus the sacred number 666 can only be conferred upon the Prophet by 'Alláh, or by Muḥammad upon His true Successor.

There are other curious coincidences that are worth noting. Muslim writings sometimes refer to "the beast" as "the spy" or "the sensual". These expressions may have been produced by attempts to vocalize the Greek number χξς* 666 into Arabic. (Ref. 63) The appellations are descriptive of the 'Abbásid and Umayyad dynasties. Furthermore, we recall that 6 was also the number of beauty. The Greek word for beauty was καλλονή, highly suggestive of καλλειφ.

[*] ζ is used here (used in last position instead of σ) to indicate the Greek number value sigma (see Part 1, page 12). This is based on the ancient Greek numerals rather than the modern Arabic numerals now used in Greece.

The solution 'Ο Καλλειφ will now be investigated to see if it is simply a fortuitous combination of letters. Anyone who has attempted to discover the name will attest to the difficulty of the task. A little mathematics shows why. The odds against a properly spelled name or title in Greek having the value 666 are about 2000 to 1. (The values of the names and titles in the Apocalypse are normally distributed with a mean of 998 and a standard deviation of 708.) Even considering alternative spellings of the same word, the odds are changed only slightly. (Alternative spellings can occur for borrowed words such as Jesus, Moses, Abaddon, Caliph, etc.) [For example, if a name has two alternate spellings, then the odds would increase from only from 2000 to 1 up to 2000 to 3.] Of those names and titles with the value 666, certainly no more than a small percentage, say 10 or 15%, could be considered blasphemous. This implies that only one name or title in about 20,000 will have valid spelling, will have the value 666 and could be considered blasphemous.

These words constitute a very small percentage of the total Greek lexicon, and alternate legitimate spellings of the same word will not alter significantly the odds of finding such a name.

But there are other specifications given for the beast, for example: (See Chapter 17)

7 heads

1 wounded, yet heals

13. The rise of the caliphate

5 are conquered

1 is (sovereign)

1 is not yet (in existence)

10 horns

And so on.

In the past 1,900 years of history there have been perhaps a dozen entities that have had the villainous roles and stature to qualify as candidates for the beast. It is obvious that the odds against any of those candidates, except the correct one, meeting all of the specifications, and having a name or title with the value 666 are astronomical.

14

The world-stage is set

In this chapter, six mediating angels prepare the world for the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh. These angels may represent Manifestations of Asia Whose Utterances warned of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh at the Last Day.* But first, those with the seal of God are introduced.

1. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

'Abdu'l-Bahá is shown alive on Zion¹ with those who have the seal of His Father, Bahá', Nine. The archetypal value of 144,000 equals 9. Zion or Sion is symbolic of the theocracy directly administered by God, the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. *"Out of Zion hath gone forth the Law of God, and Jerusalem, and the hills and land thereof, are filled with the glory of His Revelation."*²—Bahá'u'lláh

Bahá'u'lláh, Who came as the Manifestation of the Father³ is also the spiritual Father of Jesus Christ, Muḥammad, the Báb, and the other Manifestations of the past. Bahá'u'lláh reveals, *"In this most mighty Revelation, all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest, their final consummation."* "He it is", referring to Himself, *"Who in the Old Testament hath been named Jehovah, Who in the Gospel hath been designated as the*

* See *God Passes By*, pp. 94–96. <G #7>

Spirit of Truth, and in the Qur'án acclaimed the Great Announcement." "But for Him no Divine Messenger would have been invested with the robe of prophethood, nor would any of the sacred scriptures have been revealed." "Be fair, ye peoples of the world," He thus appeals to mankind, "is it meet or seemly for you to question the authority of one Whose presence 'He Who conversed with God' (Moses) hath longed to attain, the beauty of Whose countenance 'God's Well-beloved' (Muḥammad) had yearned to behold, through the potency of Whose love the 'spirit of God' (Jesus) ascended to heaven, for Whose sake the 'Primal Point' (the Báb) offered up His life?"⁴

Concerning the relation of Bahá'u'lláh to future Revelations, 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, "*Concerning the Manifestations that will come down in the future 'in the shadows of the clouds,' know verily that in so far as their relation to the source of their inspiration is concerned they are under the shadow of the Ancient Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh). In their relation, however, to the age in which they appear, each and every one of them 'doeth whatsoever He willeth.'*"⁵

2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:
3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders, and no man could hear that song but the hundred and forth and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.
4. These are they which are not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among man, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.
5. And in their mouth was found no guild: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

The voice of many waters is the voice of great knowledge,

Bahá'u'lláh. The new song⁶ is the new Message, but only those with the seal of Bahá' (9) can understand the Message.

To become defiled by harlots means to become seduced by a counterfeit of the true Word of God.

In one Age the Lamb is Jesus. In another He is the Báb or 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The undefiled will follow Him in every Age. The first fruits are the first to follow the new Revelation. Their mouths will not spread false doctrine.

6. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.
7. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgement is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Gospel means glad tidings. The gospel is everlasting because it is the same in every Age and Dispensation and is given to all nations and all peoples.

The fountains of waters are the Day-Springs of Divine Revelation.

8. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wind of the wrath of her fornication.

"Babylon" means literally "Gate of God". The "Holy City Jerusalem" means literally "The Holy City of Sacred Peace". Thus they are both sacred names and symbolize the Word of God. Jerusalem is transformed into Babylon and vice versa as the Sacred City decays and is renewed in successive Dispensations. The Word of God, though originally the Holy City, through corruption, becomes Babylon, the wicked city. "How is the faithful city become an harlot!"—Isaiah 1:21

The use of Babylon as a symbol of the corrupted word is based upon the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:9. It was at this place that the confusion of words was supposed to have originated. It requires the addition of only a single letter to convert the word *Bab-el*, Gate of God, into *bal-bel*, confusion.

Bahá'u'lláh explains* that the corruption of the Word of God does not mean the literal falsification or forgery of the Sacred Texts, but comes about as a result of misinterpretation in accordance with idle imaginings and vain desires. Old Testament prophecies⁷ foretell that in the last days the Word will be renewed at Babylon. But the site of old Babylon will be a ruin as explained by Jeremiah.⁸ Bahá'u'lláh revealed His mission and renewed the Word in the new Babylon, modern Baghdád, in CE 1863. "Baghdád" means literally "Gift of God".

9. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.
11. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

These verses promise punishment for those who admire the Muslim State (worship the beast and his image), who willingly pay the taxes that keep the beast alive (receive the mark in his forehead or in his hand), or to those who pretend to be Muslim (receive the mark of his name). Fire and brimstone symbolizes the unquenchable torment of remoteness from God. "*Separa-*

* *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 84-90.

tion from Thee, O Source of everlasting life, hath will nigh consumed me, and my remoteness from Thy presence hath burned my soul.” “Some have made haste to attain the court of the God of Mercy, others have fallen down on their faces in the fire of Hell, while still others are lost in bewilderment.” “They hasten forward to Hell fire, and mistake it for light.”⁹—Bahá’u’lláh

Smoke is a visible sign of spiritual torment. *“The moon of idle fancy hath been cleft, and the heaven hath given out a palpable smoke.” “What smoke more dense and overpowering than the one which hath now enshrouded all the peoples of the world, which hath become a torment unto them, and from which they hopelessly fail to deliver themselves, however much they strive?”¹⁰—Bahá’u’lláh*

12. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.
13. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

These verses explain that the martyrs of the last days will be instrumental in bringing forth the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh.

“To die in the Lord” also means to die from self in order to live in God. This is the final stage of man’s journey “from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland.” Bahá’u’lláh explains, *“Whoso hath attained this station is sanctified from all that pertaineth to the world. ... This is the station wherein the multiplicity of all things perisheth in the wayfarer; and the divine Countenance, dawning above the horizon of eternity, riseth out of the darkness; and the meaning of “All on the earth shall pass away, but the face of thy Lord” is made manifest.”¹¹*

14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon

the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the earth is ripe.
16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.
17. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.
18. And another angel came out from the altar, which had the power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.
19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

The One like unto the Son of Man is Bahá'u'lláh, Who is shown coming on a cloud of glory. <G #5> His crown symbolizes spiritual dominion. The sickle symbolizes His power to reap the harvest of the Ages. Mankind is likened to a vineyard as in the parable of Jesus Christ.¹² In the harvesting, Bahá'u'lláh, the Lord of the Vineyard, is assisted by the forces of heaven. The first angel may represent Muḥammad; the angel with the sickle represents the Báb <21:15 #1>, and the altar angel may represent Jesus Christ.¹³

20. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

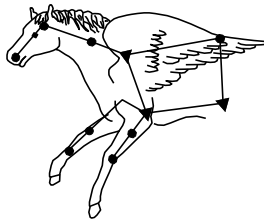
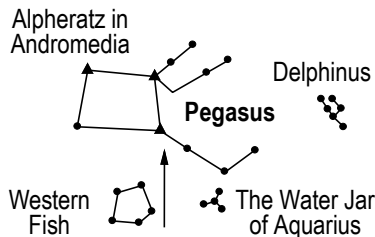
A horse's bridle is 7 spans¹⁴ (about 60 inches or 152 cm) high. A furlong¹⁵ is an earthly measure. 1600* has an archetypal value of 7.

* 1600 is "40-times-40". See Note 16.

The riddle says that the earth outside the Holy City of the Law of God will be the scene of great tests, trials, and torments “for a space of 7-times-7”.¹⁶

The prophecy can have two meanings. Remembering that 7 is the number of trial and punishment, the prophecy can be considered as emphasizing the great spiritual turmoil that will beset the world is a consequence of the Advents of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. But the prophecy also specifically predicts the duration of the period of Divine Revelation, beginning with the Declaration of the Báb in the year AH 1260 and ending with the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh in the year AH 1309, a space of 7-times-7, or 49 lunar years.¹⁶

Pegasus the Flying Horse is a constellation near Aquarius (Figure 23). Early star maps show only half of the horse and that upside down. There are about 7 spaces or spans of stars between its hoof and its jaw.



The Flying Horse

Figure 23
The horse in heaven

Notes

- 1 See John 4:21; Isaiah 2:3-4, 59:19-21; Zechariah 2:10-11.
- 2 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 13.
- 3 See Luke 9:26, Matthew 16:27. One meaning of “glory” is “manifestation”. See chapter 15, note 9.
- 4 *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 103-107.
- 5 *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 111.
- 6 See Isaiah 42:10, 43:19.
- 7 See Micah 4:10; Ezekiel 1:1, 28, 43:1-4; Zechariah 4. In these prophecies, the river Chebar or Kabar empties into the Euphrates at Babylon. “Zerubbabel” means Begotten, Scattered, Banished, or Stranger in Babylon. See chapter 5, note 5. (cf. Ezra 5:2 and Zechariah 4:9.)
- 8 See Jeremiah 51, e.g., verses 58, 64. Also see Isaiah 47 in which the daughter of Babylon becomes the harlot and is overcome by the Lord of Hosts.
- 9 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 14, 41-42.
- 10 idem, p. 40; *The Book of Certitude* pp. 76-77.
- 11 *The Seven Valleys, Call of the Divine Beloved*, p. 14.
- 12 Matthew 21:33-41. In the parable, Jesus is the Son of verse 37; Bahá'u'lláh is the Lord of the vineyard, verse 40. See also Mark 12:1-9; Luke 20:9-16.
- 13 See Revelations 8:5.
- 14 The span (from Greek σπαν, “to draw out”; spithame (Greek σπιθαμή, “span”) was an ancient measure equal to half a cubit, about 9 inches or 230 mm. As a scale for measuring a horse it has been largely superseded by the hand of 4 inches (100 mm).
- 15 Translated as “stadia” in RSV. The stadium was also a unit of earth measure widely used in the classical world.
- 16 “7-times-7” years is also a period of time specified in Leviticus 25:8-12. The span of time from the Declaration of the Báb until the Ascension of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá was “70-and-7” solar (Bahá'í) years, the period of history styled as the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Faith by Shoghi Effendi. See *God Passes By* pp. XIII, 309; Reference 45, p. 439; Matthew 18:21-22.

The earthly dimension of “40-times-40” or 1,600 furlongs, may signify

extreme trials of the flesh, or extreme testing of the spirit by the flesh as a process of purification. See Ref. 12, p. 112; Chapter 2, Note 14. Forty lunar years was the period of the Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh.

15

His name revealed

1. And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.
2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

The seven angels symbolize trials and punishments from heaven. The sea of glass is the Ocean of Truth.¹ It is mingled with fire to symbolize the wrath and indignation of God.

Verse 2 extols those who have overcome the false doctrine of the Umayyad and 'Abbásid dynasties (the beast and his image), have not falsely assumed the name (mark) of Muslim, and have rejected the blasphemous deception of wrongly-guided Caliphs (number of his name).

Bahá'u'lláh, speaking to His persecutors in the Muslim world said, *“Thou hast known how grievously the Prophets of God, His Messengers and Chosen Ones, have been afflicted. Meditate a while on the motive and reason that have been responsible for such a persecution. At no time, in no Dispensation, have the Prophets of God escaped the blasphemy of their enemies, the cruelty of their oppressors, the denunciation of the learned of their age, who appeared in the guise of uprightness and piety. Day and night they passed through such agonies as none can measure, except the knowledge of the one true God, exalted by His glory. Consider this wronged one. Though the clearest*

*proofs attest the truth of His Cause; though the prophecies He, in an unmistakable language, hath made have been fulfilled ... He hath rained upon men the showers of His manifold and Divinely-inspired knowledge; yet, behold how this generation hath rejected His authority, and rebelled against Him!"*²

Christians are not excluded from His denunciations. In a Tablet to the rulers of Christendom He said, "*O kings of Christendom! Heard ye not the saying of Jesus, the Spirit of God, 'When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you unto all truth.'* And yet, behold how, when He did bring the truth, ye refused to turn your faces towards Him, and persisted in disporting yourselves with your pastimes and fancies."³

3. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.
4. Who shall not fear thee, O lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgements are made manifest.

The song of Moses and the Lamb is the eternal Message, renewed and re-adorned in every Dispensation. Speaking of the Word of God, Bahá'u'lláh says, "*In the days of Moses it was the Pentateuch; in the days of Jesus, the Gospel; in the days of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, the Qur'án; in this day, the Bayán (Book of the Báb [literally, "Exposition"]); and in the Dispensation of Him Whom God will make manifest (Bahá'u'lláh), His own Book—the Book unto which all the Books of former Dispensations must needs be referred, the Book that standeth amongst them all transcendent and supreme.*"⁴

5. And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:
6. And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen

and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

The temple of the testimony is the Revelation of God descended upon man in the Temple of the Manifestation. *“These Tabernacles of Holiness, these Primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles.”*⁵—Bahá’u’lláh Elsewhere, Bahá’u’lláh asks of God, *“Aid me, O my Lord, to surrender myself wholly to Thy Will, and to arise and serve Thee, for I cherish this earthly life for no other purpose than to compass the Tabernacle of Thy Revelation and the Seat of Thy Glory.”*⁶

8. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter in to the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

In *The Book of Certitude*,^{*} Bahá’u’lláh explains: *“The symbolic term ‘smoke’ denotes grave dissensions, the abrogation and demolition of recognized standards, and the utter destruction of their narrow-minded exponents.”*

In this verse the name of Bahá’u’lláh, the Glory of God,⁷ is revealed for the first time in the Apocalypse.⁸ The verse also reveals that no man’s testimony will be complete until the seven last plagues are finished.

Glory of God Δόξα του Θεού has a literal value of 1,389 and an archetypal value of 3. The name Bahá’u’lláh, by the abjad <7, 10> has a literal value of 75, which also has an archetypal value of 3. The word Glory Δόξα <7, 8> has a literal value of 135 and an archetypal value of 9, identical to the literal value of Bahá’ in the abjad.⁹

* *The Book of Certitude*, p. 76.

Notes

- 1 See Revelations 4:6.
- 2 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 57, 58; Luke 17:22–25.
- 3 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 246. See Luke 17:25; John 16:12–15; Matthew 23:29–39; Acts 7:51–53.
- 4 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 270.
- 5 idem, p. 47.
- 6 idem, p. 311.
- 7 See Part 1, note 20.
- 8 The names and titles of the Prophets are often revealing. Bahá'u'lláh was the title bestowed upon Ḥusayn-'Alí by the Báb. Thus Bahá'u'lláh is analogous to the title “Christos” appended to the name Jesus. Ḥusayn-'Alí, the name bestowed upon Bahá'u'lláh at birth, literally means “The Good, The Exalted”. Jesus means “Help of Jehovah”. Muḥammad means “Praised”. Sidharta, the given name of Gautama Buddha, means literally “The Righteous One”.
- 9 The Greek word Δόξα is translated as Glory in English translations of the New Testament. In the Persian translation of the New Testament, δόξα has been translated into the word Jalál, another form of the word “Glory”. The inevitable ambiguity that accompanies translation would permit Δόξα to be read as either Bahá' or Jalál. There are similar difficulties in translating from Hebrew into Greek. V. O. Goldberg (Reference 4, p. 19) explains that Δόξα is a Greek rendering of the Hebrew *Kabod*, which can designate a primary materialization (i.e., a “Manifestation”) of the Divine Essence. For example, in Exodus 33:18, Moses desires to see the *Kabod* of Yahwah. (See also Psalm 73:24; Ref. 4, p. 79.)

The correspondences are not exhausted. The number 135 equals 3×45 , 9×15 , and $801 - 666$. The number 3 is sacred to many faiths while 45 is the triangular value of 9. The number 15 is the triangular value of 5. (See Part 1, note 17.)

The numerals 1, 3, 5 are used in John 21:11 where “Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, one hundred fifty and three.” (153 is the triangular value of 17. The fact that the exact number of fishes was specified has puzzled many biblical scholars and commentators. It is interesting that *The Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh is composed of 153 stanzas. (*The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. ii. This precious work has

been identified with the “Hidden Book of Fatimih”. idem, p. i.)

A summary of these and other correspondences is given in the following Table:

Expression	Literal value	Archetypal value	Components	Triangular value [N?]
Glory of God (Greek)	1389	3		
Bahá'u'lláh (Arabic)	75	3	5×15	
Glory, “Kabod” (Greek)	135	9	801-666 801+666-1332 9×15 3×45	
Bahá' (Arabic)	9	9	3×3	45 26 (by “klima”)
Alpha (and) Omega αλφά + ω	1332	9	2×666 36×37	
Alpha (and) Omega α + ω	801	9		
Báb (Arabic)	5	5		15
Adam (various)	45	9	5×9 36+9	
Eve (various)	15	6	5×3 6+9	
New Name (Greek)	432	9	6×72 1332-900	
Jerusalem (Greek)	864	9	6×144	
The Caliph (Greek, possible)	666	9	18×37	
The Glory of the God of Israel (Greek)	1746	9	1080+666	
A grain of mustard seed (Greek)	1746	9	1080+666	
(Yang, sun, etc.)	(666)	9		
(Yin, moon, etc.)	(1080)	9	3×360	
(Fishes in the net)	(153)	9		
(Stanzas in <i>The Hidden Words</i>)	(153)	9		
Bahá'u'lláh (Greek, possible)	144	9	See “numbers” below.	
Nine (Greek)	111	3	3×37	
Jesus (Greek)	888	6	24×37	
Christ (Greek)	1480	4	40×37	
Jesus Christ	2368	1	64×37	
YHWH	26	8		72 (by “klima”)
(Jehovah, Hebrew)				
Messiah (Hebrew)	35	8	7	
“Shiloh Come” (Hebrew)	35	8	7	

Sum of centre square	2×37
Sum of middle square	6×37
Sum of outer square	10×37
Sum of any four symmetrical nos.	2×37
Sum of any row, column, or diagonal	3×37
Sum of all numbers	18×37

Figure 22
In the magic square of the sun

Numbers	Archetypal value	Components	Triangular value [N?]
1	1		1
2	2		3
3	3		6
4	4		10
5	5		15
6	6		21
7	7	4+3	28
8	8		36
9	9	3×3 6+3 666-801+144	45
10	1		55
11	2		66
12	3	3×4	78
17	8	9+8	153
36	9	6×6 16+20 15+21	666
72	9	2×36 6×12 1332-1260	2,628
144	9	6×24 36+308 135+9 2×72 55+89 78+66	10,440
666	9	360×(3½) 30×42 7×180 9×140	794,430

144 is the eleventh member of the Fibonacci series (1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, ...) in which each term is the sum of the two previous terms. The ratio of any two consecutive terms in the series approximates the Golden Number: 1.61803 ..., the approximation becoming more precise the higher the order of the terms. Thus, 89/55 equals 1.61818 Certain living organisms, art, and ancient megalithic structures embody Fibonacci numbers. For example, in the Great Pyramid of Giza, the ratio of the slope

height (apothem) to its half base is 89.55. The pharaonic Egyptians considered the Golden Number to be a symbol of the creative function, that is, the *Logos* or “Word”. See Reference 6, p. 190ff; Reference 29; John 1:1; 144 is found in [Revelation] verses 7:4; 14:1, 3, and 21:17.

Multiplying the Fibonacci series by 9 results in another Fibonacci type sequence containing several sacred numbers (9, 18, 45, 72, 801), that is, (9, 18, 27, 45, 72, 117, 189, 306, 495, 801, 1296, ...). The numbers (18, 72, 666, 1080, 1746) are contained in another Fibonacci type sequence, the first nine members being (18, 72, 90, 162, 252, 414, 666, 1080, 1746).

The ratio 1080/666 equals 1.622, a good approximation of the Golden Number 1.618. It follows that 1746/1080 also approximates the Golden Number and that 1746/666 approximates its square (1.618)². For a summary of some of the more interesting properties of the Golden Number, see References 44 & 61.

The numbers 666 and 1080 may carry other secrets. Using these numbers as the sides of a right triangle, as was the penchant among the ancient Egyptians, we obtain an hypotenuse equal to 1269, the date of the third woe. <9:12 #1> The triangle is geometrically similar to that of the half-face of the Great Pyramid. Figure 24 shows some of the possible meanings of this particular triangle.

1260 is, of course, the date of the second woe, mentioned in Revelations 11:2, 11:3, 11:9, 11:11, 12:6, 12:14, and 13:5 and in Daniel 12:7.

In the Pythagorean system of number symbolism, 36 symbolizes the union of the male and female powers of nature, being the sum of 16 and 20. The number 16 is the sum of the first four odd (male) numbers (1+3+5+7), while 20 is the sum of the first four even (female) numbers (2+4+6+8). Plato considered 36 to be the number of the World Soul.

72 is the value of YHWH by “klima”, a kind of mystical number expansion (Reference 4, pp. 55, 60) and corresponds to a highly sacred Name of God. See also chapter 7, note 10. Twenty-six, the literal value of YHWH, is also the value of Bahá by klima.

Perfect squares of whole numbers, e.g., 9, 36, 144 are always composed of the sum of two triangular numbers. Thus $9 = 6 + 3$, $36 = 21 + 15$, $144 = 78 + 66$.

111 is the literal value of the word “nine” εννεα and is also the sum of the numbers of any row, column or diagonal in the magic square of the sun.

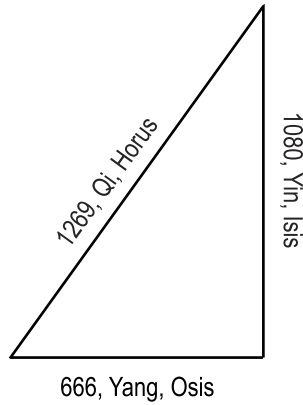


Figure 24
A mystic triangle

Multiples of 37 generate the triads. That is, 7×37 equals 333, etc.

The numbers (72, 90, 108, 135, 144) are represented as least-integer string length ratios in the basic Hindu-Greek musical scale (Ref. 57):

Length Ratios	72	80	90	96	108	120	135	144
	D	c	b-flat	A	G	f	e-flat	D

The tones e-flat (135) and b-flat (90) form a Perfect Fifth.

Least-integer string length ratios 432 and 864 bound the ancient Greek Phrygian mode, later adapted as the “Modus Primus” by Christian orthodoxy:

Length Ratios	432	486	512	576	648	729	768	864
	D	C	B	A	G	F	E	D

2160, the number of years in a Platonic month, is an unusually prolific number. Besides having an archetypal value of 9, it is divisible by one-half the numbers from 1 to 26. Some interesting divisors of 2160 are:

108×2	144×15	36×60
432×5	135×16	24×33×5 (cf. Ref. 46, p. 33ff)
360×6	72×30	1335×Φ

1335 is the date of the “blissful consummation” in the prophecy of Daniel. (See Appendix B.) 2,160 equals the product of 1,335 and the Golden Number Φ (1.618).

A rectangular prism with sides 666, 1080, and 1746 had a diagonal of, very nearly, 2160. That is,

15. His name revealed

$$\sqrt{666^2 + 1080^2 + 1746^2} = 2158.35 \approx 2160.$$

16

The end of the age

This chapter reveals the events that attended the Revelations of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. The setting is 19th century Persia, 'Iráq and the Ottoman Empire.

A modern traveller to those regions would find it difficult to visualize the conditions that prevailed there only a century ago. Observers* have described the region as technologically backward, and often with despotic governments and corrupted priesthoods. Modern progressive leaders have succeeded in revolutionizing the political, economic and religious life in those countries, and the conditions alluded to in the following verses of the Apocalypse no longer prevail.

1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

The Temple is the Manifestation.¹ The great voice out of the Temple is that of Bahá'u'lláh.

2. And the first went, and poured his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

The noisome and grievous sore caused by the first angel is the

* See, e.g., Lord Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question*.

clamour of religious controversy and the sore of spiritual distress that beset the Muslim world during the earthly sojourns of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

3. And the second angel poured his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

The second angel pours his vial upon the sea of the spirit.

Bahá'u'lláh explains that immediately prior to His Advent the former world passed away: *"Consider the hour at which the supreme Manifestation of God (Bahá'u'lláh) revealeth Himself unto men. ... at the very moment preceding His Revelation, each and every created thing shall be made to yield up its soul to God. This is indeed the Day of which it hath been written: 'Whose shall be the Kingdom this Day?' And none can be found to Answer!"*² But following His Advent, a new world was formed: *"Verily, We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all-subduing sovereignty. We have, then, called into being a new creation, as a token of Our grace unto men. I am, verily, the All-bountiful, the Ancient of Days."*³ In a prayer He says, *"Praise be unto Thee, O my God! Thou are He Who by a word of His mouth hath revolutionized the entire creation, and by a stroke of His pen hath divided Thy servants one from another. I bear witness, O my God, that through a word spoken by Thee in this Revelation all created things were made to expire, and through yet another word all such as Thou didst wish were, by Thy grace and bounty, endued with a new life."*⁴

4. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.
5. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou are righteous, O lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.
6. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements.

These verses explain that the mainstreams of spiritual grace and knowledge (rivers and fountains) will lose their life-giving power. The corrupted spiritual leaders and divines are condemned, and they are made to taste the blood of spiritual death.



The prophecies of the next seven verses describe the impact of the Revelations of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh upon the lands of Persia, Turkey, and the region of the Euphrates River.⁵



8. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.
 9. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

The fourth angel pours his vial upon the land of Persia whose emblem is the sun. The bigoted and corrupt among the Persians are made to feel the fire of spiritual torment. The last word of verse 9 refers to their failure to accept the new name of God, glory (Bahá'). (See Chapter 3, verse 12.)

The Bábí Revelation was born on 23 May 1844 in Shíráz, Persia (Írán). The claims of the Báb, the excitement caused in the Muslim world, and the rapidity with which the new Faith gained followers, caused the corrupt Muslim clergy to react violently. The help of the sháh was enlisted in an attempt to destroy the new Faith. The results were armed attacks upon the followers of the Báb and popular uprisings in Mázindarán, Nayríz, and

Zanján. Mass persecutions, torture and martyring were involved. Ultimately, the Báb was martyred in the public square of Tabríz, on 9 July 1850.

10. And the fifth angel poured his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.
11. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

The fifth angel pours his vial on Constantinople (Istanbul) in the land of Anatolia, the capital (seat) of the beast.⁶ The kingdom is filled with spiritual darkness and torment. As a consequence of the martyrdom of the Báb and the severe persecutions inflicted on the Bábís, on 15 August 1852, two obscure and demented Bahá'ís made a despairing and futile attempt on the life of the sháh. The results were renewed persecutions and the imprisonment of leading Bábís, including Bahá'u'lláh. It was during this imprisonment 1852–1853 that Bahá'u'lláh received the Holy Spirit and became the Promised One of All Ages.

On His release from the Black Pit of Tíhrán (Teheran), He was exiled to Baghdád, 'Iráq,⁷ where He arrived 8 April 1853. 'Iráq was then an Ottoman province. Shortly thereafter, the Ottoman Sultan and his ministers, as well as the sunní sacerdotal order, joined hands with the sháh and the shí'ah clerics of Persia and 'Iráq in an endeavour to stamp out, once and for all, the Faith and all it stood for. The result was a further wave of repressive measures.

12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

The sixth angel pours his vial on the region of the Euphrates River, 'Iráq and the surrounding regions. The water of spirituality is dried up and the way is made clear for the kings of the East.

Following His exile to Baghdád, 'Iráq, in the region of the Euphrates River, the Bábí Faith lost its spirituality. Because of internal conflicts and bickering, Bahá'u'lláh left the Bábí community and spent exactly two lunar years, the 12th of Rajab AH 1270 (10 April 1854) until the 12th of Rajab AH 1272 (19 March 1856) wandering in the mountain wilderness of Kurdistan. The way was being prepared for the kings of the East, Bahá'u'lláh and His Successors.

13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.
14. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Unclean spirits like frogs are evil principles and false teachings.

Although several would-be "Prophets" arose to proclaim themselves to the One foretold by the Báb, "the One Whom God will make manifest", the most notorious was the nominal head of the Bábí Faith, Mírzá Yaḥyá (Ṣubḥ-i-Azal). Through the influence and intrigues of the crafty and diabolical Siyyid Muḥammad-i-Iṣfahání, Mírzá Yaḥyá succeeded in causing a serious breach in the ranks of the Bábís-in-exile and prevented many of the very elect from recognizing the new Manifestation, Bahá'u'lláh. Reminiscent of the Súrih of Joseph as interpreted by the Báb, Mírzá Yaḥyá was a half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, and, as prophesied, the plots of Mírzá Yaḥyá and Muḥammad-i-Iṣfahání ended in ignominious failure.

The Great Day of God Almighty is the Day of God, the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh. Miracles are wonders; here they are not of Divine origin.

15. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that

watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

In this verse, the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh is announced. He comes as a “thief”, entering and departing “unseen”. Blessed is he who watches, and wears garments of purity and righteousness in order that he not be spiritually naked. (See Revelations 3:17.)

The Bábí community left behind in Baghdád continued to decline in spirituality and prestige. Finally, at the pleading of the Bábis, Bahá'u'lláh was induced to return. Following His return from the wilderness of Kurdistan, Bahá'u'lláh was able to renew the Faith of God through His teachings and spiritual power. Hatred, fear, and jealousy of the renewed vigour of the Bábí community by the corrupt Muslim clergy resulted in further persecutions and banishments of Bahá'u'lláh, first to Constantinople, thence to Adrianople, and finally to 'Akká, near Mount Carmel, in the Holy Land, thereby fulfilling many prophecies.⁸ (Carmel means literally “Vineyard of God”.)

However, before Bahá'u'lláh began the arduous journey to Constantinople, He revealed His Mission as the “*One Whom God will make manifest*”, prophesied by the Báb. His Declaration took place at the Festival of Riḍván (Paradise) 21 April to 2 May CE 1863.

It is an interesting fact that He departed from the “land of the Euphrates” immediately thereafter, going into exile and virtual invisibility. Even His incredibly direct and powerful Tablets to the kings and rulers of the earth revealing His Mission went unnoticed. Truly Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, like a thief, entered and departed unseen.

16. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

The unclean spirits (evil principles and false teachings) are to be the cause of the final conflict in the place called “Armageddon”.

Armageddon is composed of the two Hebrew words *har* (mountain) and *Magedon*. Magedon is a poetic adaptation of the vale of Megiddo or Megidon.⁹ This valley was the scene of great suffering by the Hebrews during the reign of Josiah. Hence, “mountain-of-Megiddo” means a piling up of sorrow like that which befell the Hebrews in the valley of Megiddo.

The conflict of Armageddon is symbolic of the world-wide distress that will result from false teachings and evil principles. The conflict follows the Declaration, the “hour”^{*} of Bahá’u’lláh and the third woe.

Since His Declaration in CE 1863, the world has indeed witnessed a great piling up of sorrow. Among the more notable sorrows have been imperialism and economic exploitation, two world wars of unprecedented ferocity and suffering, numerous smaller but deadly wars, the Great Depression, the rise of communism and the suffering brought by class struggle, racial struggle, genocide on a massive scale, and world-wide pollution of the air, soil, and the oceans. These sorrows are by no means finished and the testimony of the righteous is not yet complete.

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.
18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

The seventh angel pours his vial into the air, meaning that the afflictions to follow will not be localized but will be world-wide. There follow the voices of those who fall into trials and temptations, the thunder of the violation of the Covenant, and the lightning of the anger and wrath of God. There will be a great earthquake¹⁰ of doubts and disturbances in the world of man.

* See <11:13 @2> <16:16>

19. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.
20. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.
21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

The great city is the civilization of the corrupted Word of God, that is, Babylon. It will be divided into three parts personified as the “three false gods”, Nationalism, Racism, and Communism. (*The Promised Day is Come*, p. 117) Cities are institutions; islands are places of refuge, that is, churches; mountains are the great religions of the world. “*So blind hath become the human heart that neither the disruption of the city, nor the reduction of the mountain in dust, nor even the cleaving of the earth, can shake off its torpor.*”¹¹—Bahá’u’lláh

The great hail is a rain of spiritual tests. Talent comes from the Greek *talanton*—a balance, or a thing to be weighed. Hence it is a symbol of testing.¹² Man will be tested by the Book of God revealed by the Balance, the new Manifestation of God: “In this most perfect balance (the Book of God) whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed.” “The All-Merciful is come invested with undoubted sovereignty. The Balance hath been appointed, and all them that dwell on earth have been gathered together.” “*Say: This is the infallible Balance which the Hand of God is holding, in which all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth are weighed, and their fate determined, if ye be of them that believe and recognize this truth.*”¹³—Bahá’u’lláh

Notes

- 1 See Revelations 15:5.
- 2 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 151.
- 3 *idem*, p. 29.
- 4 *Prayers and Meditations of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 42; The Qur’án 39:65–70.
- 5 A detailed history of these events can be found in *God Passes By*.
- 6 The caliphate and sultanate were both located at Constantinople.
- 7 See chapter 5, Note 6.
- 8 See, e.g., Isaiah 35:2, 41:2, 65:9–10; Micah 7:12 (KJV); Matthew 24:27; Jeremiah 49:38; Ezekiel 42:2, 4; Hosea 2:15. In these prophecies, Assyria included old Babylonia, etc.; Elam was a region now in modern Írán.

“Achor” literally means “trouble”, a hidden name for modern ‘Akká.

- ⁹ See II Kings 23:29; Zechariah 12:11.
- ¹⁰ The “earthquake” can, of course, be accompanied by a physical earthquake as it was in Revelations 11:13.
- ¹¹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 39.
- ¹² See Matthew 25:14–30.
- ¹³ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 198, 40, 136.

17

Mysteries revealed

1. And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither; I will show unto thee the judgement of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:
2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

The great whore is the corrupted Word of God. She sits on the sea of humanity.* To commit fornication with the harlot means to make use of her services: false doctrine.

3. Se he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Scarlet is the colour of spiritual beauty among the Muslims. The seven heads and ten horns identify the beast as the Banú Umayyad dynasty and its image, the 'Abbásid dynasty. The harlot lives in the wilderness of spiritual desolation. "*... such souls as tread the valley of arrogance and pride, are lost in the wilds of remoteness, walk in the ways of their idle fancy, and follow the dictates of the leaders of their faith.*"¹—Bahá'u'lláh

* See Revelations 17:15 below.

4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

The harlot is blasphemously arrayed in the purple of royalty and the scarlet of spiritual beauty. She is bedecked with precious gifts bestowed upon her by her clientele, the corrupt priesthood and temporal rulers.

5. And upon her forehead was a name written, mystery, babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

This verse explains that the harlot, Babylon, the corrupted Word of God, is the secret source of all the world's abominations.

The harlot in the wilderness of spiritual desolation is contrasted with the Bride who flees into the desert wilderness of Ḥijáz for her survival in Chapter 12. The Bride is the undefiled Word of God. In her pure role she is THE HOLY CITY JERUSALEM. In her corrupted role she is BABYLON.²

6. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.
7. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.
8. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The angel explains that the beast “was” (existed as the Empire of Alexander), “is not” (did not exist in the first century CE), but will ascend out of the pit of error and will ultimately be destroyed. Those whose names were not written in the Book of Life will marvel when they behold the Empire of Alexander come into existence a second time.

It was the dream of ancient rulers and conquerors to re-establish the Empire of Alexander. The dominions ruled by both Alexander and the Bani-Umayyad rulers included large areas of the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe, and united East and West.³ The eastern borders of the two Empires were virtually identical.

9. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.
10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.
11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

The riddle explains that the harlot sits on an Empire of seven dominions or nations (mountains). Of the seven dominions symbolized by seven kings, five will be fallen, that is, under the control of foreign powers before their conquest by the beast.⁴ These five were the Roman (Byzantine) dominion around Damascus (Syria, Palestine), the dominions of Arabia, Egypt, Africa (Libya), and Andalusia (Spain). One dominion “is”, meaning that it will remain sovereign until the “hour” of the beast. This was Persia. The dominion that “is not come” was Turkestan-Transoxiana.

In the first century, the region now known as Turkestan was occupied by nomadic pastoralists and sedentary cultivators. The region became Turkish in the sixth century CE, about 500 years after the writing of the Apocalypse. It was conquered in the late seventh and early eighth centuries by the Banú Umayyad who gave the region the name of Má Wará’ an-Nahr, “the land

beyond the Oxus” or “Transoxiana”.⁴ Verse 10 explains that the dominion will continue a short space. The prophecy means that Turkestan-Transoxiana will cease to exist with the invasion of Genghis Khan CE 1218–1220.

Verse 11 explains that the beast will have an eighth ruler, who is one of the seven, and who will ultimately be destroyed. This refers to The Caliph. The caliphate was abolished by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 2 March 1924, less than three years after the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.⁵

12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

Verse 12 explains that the ten horns are the names of kings who did not have a kingdom in the first century CE. They will receive power for only an hour with the Banú Umayyad dynasty. An “hour” is a part of a “day”, and is therefore, a part of a “year” of 360 years. The Banú Umayyad had sovereignty for 89 years, about one-fourth of a “day”.

13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Verse 13 explains that the dominions and rulers of Islám will give power to the beast, personified in The Caliph. Verse 14 prophesies that the Muslim state will make war on the Báb and His followers, but that the Báb will gain the spiritual victory, because He is a Manifestation of God, that is, Lord of lords and King of kings.⁶ *“Verily He (the Báb) is the King of the Messengers and His Book is the Mother Book, did ye but know.”*⁷ *“... the Ancient Beauty appeared, in the year sixty (AH 1260), in the person of ‘Alí-Muḥammad, the Báb.”* *“Thy Lord, the Most*

High (the Báb), addresseth thee, from His realm of glory ...” “... this, the Lord of days, ... the Day in which the Beauty of the All-Glorious shone forth in the exalted person of Alí-Muḥammad, the Báb.”⁸—Bahá’u’lláh

15. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Verse 15 explains the symbol of the sea of humanity in verse 1.

16. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.
17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

These verses explain that the rulers of the Banú Umayyad will hate the harlot, the corrupted Word of God, destroy her beauty, and will condemn her with the fire of their words. God has put it into their hearts that they should satisfy His Will and agree with each other, giving their dominions to the beast until the words of the prophecy have been fulfilled.

18. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

This verse explains that the harlot is Babylon, the corrupted Word of God, that has dominion over the rulers of the earth.

Notes

- ¹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 18.
- ² The symbol of the corrupted bride who is once more united with her husband is used in Isaiah 54. See also the harlot in Isaiah 47.
- ³ A good discussion of the aspiration, successes, and failures of Alexander can be found in Reference 3, chapter 1.
- ⁴ From the first century to the beginning of Muḥammad’s Dispensation, Andalusia was dominated by Romans, Vandals, Visigoths and Byzantines. Syria was dominated by Romans, Persians and Byzantines. Egypt was dominated by Romans and Byzantines. Africa (Libya) was dominated by Romans, Vandals and Byzantines. Arabia was dominated by Romans, Byzantines, Abyssinians and Persians. West Turkestan, later to become Transoxiana, remained an amorphous region dominated in turn by various invaders. (See Reference 38.) Only Persia, under the Seleucids, Parthians and Sasanids remained sovereign.

By CE 632, the date of the Ascension of Muḥammad, most of the Arabian peninsula had become united under the banner of Islám. Arabia became

the platform from which the Caliphs launched their campaign of territorial expansion and unification.

- ⁵ Both the caliphate and the sultanate were abolished. The Arabic alphabet was outlawed, making it impossible to read the Qur'án in its original language. Muslim dress and Islamic law were abolished, and Friday was no longer an official day of prayer.
- ⁶ *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 123–124.
- ⁷ Bahá'u'lláh in *Bahá'í Prayers*, p. 209.
- ⁸ The Tablet of Aḥmad, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 77, 292, 145.

18

Encomium of victory

1. And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.
2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.
3. For all nations have drunk the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

Devils are deceptions and vices. In this instance, birds¹ are impure souls or spirits. *"... We have warned the faithful to anticipate the appearance of the Birds of Darkness. There can be no doubt whatever that the croaking of the Raven shall be raised in certain lands, as it hath been heard in recent years." "Like the bats of darkness, they lift not their heads from the couch except to pursue the transient things of the world, and find no rest by night except as they labour to advance the aims of their sordid life."*²—Bahá'u'lláh

But birds can also represent clean souls or spirits. *"Bursting through his cage, he will, even as the bird of the spirit, wing his flight to his holy and everlasting nest."*³—Bahá'u'lláh In Luke, in answer to the question, "Where Lord (shall be the kingdom of God)?" and he said unto them, 'Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.'⁴

4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.
5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.
6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

(RSV translates verse 6 as “Render to her as she herself has rendered, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed.”)

These verses and those to follow anathematize the whore, the corrupted Word of God and her city (institutions), Babylon.

7. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

The whore pretends that she is the Bride, the undefiled Word of God, and that she is married to the Lamb, that is, the living Covenant. That the Lamb has been slain is explained in Revelations 5:12. In 19:7 the Lamb, re-manifested and alive, is to be married to the Bride, the renewed and purified Word of God.

8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

The whore will be destroyed in the Last Day, and she will be burned with the fire of spiritual torment.

9. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning.
10. Standing afar off for fear of her torment saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgement come.
11. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:
12. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,
13. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.
14. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.
15. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,
16. And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

These verses remind us that the kings and merchants of the earth have become rich by making use of false doctrine, the services of the whore. Verse 10 informs us that her judgement will come at the “Hour”, the time of the end. Verses 12 to 14 describe the commodities of luxury that have been made possible through her activities and warn us that these things will be taken away.

17. For in one hour so great riches is come to nought.

And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off.

18. And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!
19. And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.
20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

Smoke is the visible or tangible evidence of spiritual torment. The destruction of Babylon will be apparent to everyone.

21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

The zodiacal band is likened to a great millstone* (Figure 4).⁵ The inexorable Precession of the Equinoxes will cause the Age of Prophecy to come to an end, and the Age of Fulfilment will begin. The verse promises us that the Word of God will never again be corrupted.

22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsmen, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;
23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall

* The "fabled mill of Amiodhi", etc. styled as "Hamlet's Mill" by de Santillana and von Dechend, Reference 58. See Note 5.

be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

These verses tell us that the music played in glorification of the whore will no longer be heard. Nor will the machinery of commerce be dependent upon her. The Candle of Guidance that she blasphemously carried will be snuffed out. Marriages will no longer be performed under her laws.

24. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

The whore, the corrupted Word of God, is the cause of war, the martyrdom of the prophets and saints and of all others who have been murdered for the Cause of God.

Notes

¹ The Bird can also be a Manifestation of God, e.g., “Bird of the Celestial Throne”, or “Bird of the Realm of Utterance”. The ancient Egyptians represented the ba (soul) by a bird. The ba or soul was supposed to contain the animating principles or attributes of the person and was contrasted with the knu or spirit. Ezekiel used the bird to describe a freed soul. (Ezekiel 13:20; cf. Psalm 24:7.) In antiquity, birds were often used to symbolize special attributes and principles.

The phoenix	Immortality (Egypt)
The phoenix	Prosperity (Persia)
The hawk	Keen vision (Egypt)
The raven	Messenger (Assyria)
The owl	Wisdom (Greece)
The swan	Beauty (Greece)
The dove	Constancy (Greece)

For examples: <G #4>

² *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 339–340, 181.

³ *idem*, p. 321.

⁴ Luke 17:20, 37.

⁵ In Islamic legend, Amlodhi was the Lord of the Golden Age. He owned a fabled mill that, in the Golden Age, ground out peace, plenty, happiness, etc. As times worsened the mill ground out salt. Finally the mill ends up at the bottom of the sea where it creates a vast whirlpool, the Maelstrom, and grinds out rock and sand. The thesis of *Hamlet's Mill* is that this myth has roots in extreme antiquity and derives from the Precession.

19

The triumph of Bahá'u'lláh

In this chapter, the nineteenth, Bahá'u'lláh triumphs over the beast and the false prophet.¹

1. And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:
2. For true and righteous are his judgements: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.
3. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.
4. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God, that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.
5. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and he that fear him, both small and great.

The voice out of the throne is that of Bahá'u'lláh, the Bird of the Celestial Throne.

6. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

The voice of many waters and of mighty thunderings is that of the Prophets.

7. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.
8. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.
9. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.
10. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

The marriage supper of the Lamb is the reunion of the Covenant with the Word of God, the Holy City.

(RSV translates “and he saith unto me ...” in verse 9 as “And the angel said to me ...”)

11. And I say heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Lord of Hosts, that is, the Lord of the heavenly armies,* is shown riding a white horse. In Chapter 6 the white horse was corrupted theology. Here, ridden by Faithful and True, it represents correct theology. By righteousness, He judges the spirituality dead and makes spiritual war upon the wicked.

Faithful and True Πιστός και Αληθινός has a literal value of 1,269 and an archetypal value of 9, the number of Bahá'.

Some of the titles of Bahá'u'lláh that can be considered as synonyms for the expression “Faithful and True” are: Bearer of the Trust of God, Fountain of the Root of Knowledge, Well

* See *The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 75.

Spring of Revelation, Bird of the Throne, Word of Truth, Sun of Truth, Day Star of Divine Revelation.

12. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew, but he himself.

His eyes of flame have been described in Chapter 1, verse 14. The many crowns He wears are His titles and His dominion over all the Divinely revealed Faiths. The name written that no man knew but He Himself refers to His name Bahá' given Him by the Báb on the White Stone, Chapter 2, verse 17. The Covenant is always transmitted through the Ages by the White Stone. Although false prophets will always attempt to claim the White Stone as their own, only the True Prophet, the Manifestation of God, is capable of revealing its hidden contents and through the power of His Utterance prove that its concealed Name refers only to Himself.*

13. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

His vesture dipped in blood² symbolizes the great suffering and persecutions of Bahá'u'lláh and His followers. *“By the righteousness of god! The tribulations We have sustained are such that any pen that recounteth them cannot but be overwhelmed with anguish. No one of them that truly believe and uphold the unity of God can bear the burden of their recital. So great have been our sufferings that even the eyes of Our enemies have wept over Us, and beyond them those of every discerning person.”*³—Bahá'u'lláh

Indeed, the sufferings of Bahá'u'lláh are monumental. Though born into a wealthy and powerful family (as was Lord Buddha), His property was confiscated, He was imprisoned in

* See, for example, Reference 21, Chapter 18.

dungeons and jails, bound by massive chains, banished from place to place over a period of forty years, was the victim of numerous conspiracies and attempts on His life, was poisoned twice, and underwent the torture of the bastinado. Throughout all His sufferings, Bahá'u'lláh displayed nothing but the highest patience, forgiveness, forbearance, and mercy toward His persecutors.

The reason Bahá'u'lláh accepted these tribulations He explains: *“The Ancient Beauty hath consented to be bound with chains that mankind may be released from its bondage, and hath accepted to be made a prisoner within this most mighty Stronghold* that the whole world may attain unto true liberty.”* *“The Lord Himself beareth witness to the truth of My words. We have sustained the weight of all calamities to sanctify you from all earthly corruption, and ye are yet indifferent.”* *“Fix your gaze upon Him Who is the Temple of God amongst men. He, in truth, has offered up His life as a ransom for the redemption of the world.”*⁴ In a deeper sense, Bahá'u'lláh, as the Father of the Prophets, sustained the manifold sufferings heaped upon those Holy Personages of other Ages.⁵

The Word of God Ο Λόγος του Θεού has a literal value of 927 and an archetypal value of 9, the number of Bahá'. Some of the titles of Bahá'u'lláh that are synonyms for this phrase are: “Pen of the Most High”, “Voice of the Ancient of Days”, “the Mystic Herald”, “Voice From the Burning Bush”, “Fountain of Wisdom”, “Tongue of Eternity”, “Spirit of God”, “Pen of the Most Great Name”.

14. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.
15. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
16. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a

* The walled prison-fortress of 'Akká.

name written, king of kings and lord of lords.

The heavenly armies (hosts) are the sanctified and angelic followers of Bahá'u'lláh, the Lord of Hosts.* He, with the Sword of Truth and the Rod of Spiritual dominion, is the Lord of the vineyard and a Manifestation of God, that is, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. <19:16>

17. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;
18. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captives, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.
19. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.
20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.
21. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

The angel stands against the Sun of Divine Guidance. The fowls in the midst of heaven are the souls with heavenly attributes. They will overcome the tyranny of the corrupt rulers,

* See *The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 75.

military leaders, the four horses of the Apocalypse (Corrupted Theology, War, Economic Injustice, and Ungodliness), the corrupt Muslim priesthood and the false prophet. These last two will be cast into the lake of spiritual torment.

Notes

- ¹ The triumph of Bahá'u'lláh in the 19th chapter may symbolize the fact that Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration occurred immediately following the 19th year of the Bahá'í Era. See *God Passes By*, p. 151.
- ² It is remarkable that, as a result of His exile to 'Iráq and the confiscation of His property in Persia, Bahá'u'lláh was left without even a cloak to wear. His loved ones pieced together remnants of apparel to make a cloak for Him. This cloak was dyed red. Compare with the story of Joseph in Genesis 37:31–33. Also see Isaiah 61:1–3 in which Bozrah (Bashrah), 'Iráq and Edom are mentioned. Edom literally means "red". (Reference 12, p. 251.)
- ³ Bahá'u'lláh in *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 47.
- ⁴ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 99, 307, 315.
- ⁵ See, e.g., *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 88–90.

20

Satan bound

1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.
2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.
3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be released a little season.
4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received the mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

These verses prophesy that the nations will not be deceived by false doctrine for a thousand years. Those who were martyred for the reality of Jesus Christ and for the Word of God, those who did not worship the beast or its image, nor had paid the taxes that kept the beast alive, will be “resurrected”, and live again with Bahá’u’lláh, the *Christos* (Anointed One) for the duration of the millennium. Those sitting upon the thrones in verse 4 are the members of the Bahá’í Universal House of Justice who will have the power of spiritual dominion and judgement during the millennium. <20:3, 20:4> <21:1-2 #2, 3> Bahá’u’lláh

assures us that another Manifestation will appear in no less than a thousand years. The Manifestation will be accompanied by another time of troubles. <20:4>

In *The Book of Certitude*,¹ Bahá'u'lláh explains the meaning of the term "resurrection". The Day of Resurrection is ushered in by a Manifestation of God: "*Such things have come to pass in the days of every Manifestation of God. Even as Jesus said: 'Ye must be born again.'*"² Again He saith, '*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*' The purport of these words is that whosoever in every dispensation is born of the Spirit and is quickened by the breath of the Manifestation of Holiness, he verily is of those that have attained unto 'life' and 'resurrection' and have entered into the 'paradise' of the love of God. And whosoever is not of them, is condemned to 'death' and 'deprivation,' to the 'fire' of unbelief, and to the 'wrath' of God. In all scriptures, the books and chronicles, the sentence of death, of fire, of blindness, of want of understanding and hearing, hath been pronounced against those whose lips have tasted not the ethereal cup of true knowledge, and whose hearts have been deprived of the grace of the holy Spirit in their day. Even as it hath been previously recorded: '*Hearts have they with which they understand not.*'"³

In a talk regarding "the Mystery of Sacrifice" [*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 449-452], 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains the meaning of other words used by Jesus: "*He (Jesus) said, 'If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.'* That is to say whosoever assimilates these divine perfections which are within Me will never die; whosoever has a share and partakes of these heavenly bounties I embody will find eternal life; he who takes unto himself these divine lights shall find life everlasting. How manifest the meaning is! How evident! For the soul which acquires divine perfections and seeks heavenly illumination from the teachings of Christ will undoubtedly live eternally. This is one of the mysteries of sacrifice."⁴

In the Gospel of John⁵ we read: "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." From these words of Jesus Christ, Bahá'u'lláh, and

'Abdu'l-Bahá, it is clear that whosoever assimilates the Divine Perfections of Jesus will have eternal life and will recognize Him in the last days when He is re-manifested. Those Christians who fail to understand the true meanings of the words of Jesus and to become as one with Him, shall be condemned to the fire of unbelief.

The words of verse 4 mean that the heavenly attributes and virtues of the saintly and righteous of former Dispensations will become re-manifested among those reigning with the Anointed One during the millennium.

5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.
6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

The first spiritual death befell those who rejected the Manifestation of Jesus Christ. The second spiritual death will befall those who reject the Manifestation of the Christ Returned, Bahá'u'lláh.⁶

7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.
8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.
9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.
10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

These verses prophesy another time of troubles following the millennium of peace. <20:4> “Gog and Magog” symbolize the rulers and peoples who are ruled by satanic forces. That these are not literal names can be inferred by comparing this use of the terms with their use by Ezekiel.⁷ In Ezekiel, Gog is the prince of the Rosh*,⁸ Mesehech, and Tubal in the land of Magog. These people, along with others from Pharas, Cush, Put, Togarmah, Gomer,⁸ and elsewhere, are to make war on Israel in the latter days following their return to the Holy Land. Clearly the Jews have returned already, and the conflict alluded to by Ezekiel is either underway or will happen in the near future. However, in Revelations 20:7 it is stated that a thousand years will expire during which Satan has been chained before Gog and Magog are gathered for battle. It is clear that the events referred to are different events, and “Gog and Magog” are used in Revelations in the same way as “Har-Magedon” and other symbols.

In a deeper sense, the use of symbolism illustrates the fact that the principles and forces underlying historical events transcend time and place, and are, in essence, the same, independently of the actors and the stage.

In verse 9, the “fire from God” may prophesy the next Manifestation Who will follow Bahá’u’lláh.

11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
13. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

* The KJV translates “Rosh” as “chief”.

14. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

These verses revert to the First Resurrection and the Second Death. The sequence of events is as follows:

Rejection of Jesus Christ = First Death
 Acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh = First Resurrection
 Judgement of the dead
 Rejection of Bahá'u'lláh = Second Death
 Satan bound a thousand years
 Satan released
 Gog and Magog wage war on the saints
 Another Manifestation (fire from God?) = Second Resurrection
 Satan bound a second time

In verse 11, no place is found for the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. "Heaven and earth" refer to the Law of God.⁹

The former Law disappears with the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh. The Law of God is both spiritual (heaven) and material (earth). The new Law, the new Jerusalem, will be the subject of Chapter 21.

In verse 12, the Holy Books of the world are unsealed. In verse 13, the sea of humanity, the spiritually dead, and those that are in the hell of remoteness from God are judged according to their actions. Verses 14–15 prophesy that the spiritually dead and those remote from God will be thrown in to the lake of spiritual torment and unbelief.

Notes

- ¹ *The Book of Certitude* pp. 47, 114, 115, 117, 118, 119, 143, 144, 158, 159, 170.
- ² John 3:7. See also I Corinthians 15:35–50; Luke 23:43; Ephesians 2:4–7; Daniel 12:2–3, 13.
- ³ *The Book of Certitude*, p. 118; The Qur'án, 7:178.
- ⁴ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 450–1. See also John 6:27, 33–37, 48–50, 52–58.
- ⁵ John 6:54.
- ⁶ Bahá'u'lláh states in *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 586: "Be thankful to God for having enabled you to recognize His Cause. Whoever has received this blessing must, prior to his acceptance, have performed some deed which, though he himself was unaware of its character, was ordained by God as a

means whereby he was guided to find and embrace the Truth. As to those who have remained deprived of such a blessing, their acts alone have hindered them from recognizing the truth of this Revelation. We cherish the hope that you, who have attained to this light, will exert your utmost to banish the darkness of superstition and unbelief from the midst of the people. May your deeds proclaim your faith and enable you to lead the erring into the paths of eternal salvation. The memory of this night will never be forgotten. May it never be effaced by the passage of time, and may its mention linger for ever on the lips of men."

⁷ Ezekiel 38:1-4

⁸ Possible meanings of the terms as used by Ezekiel are discoverable from the writings of ancient historians and writers such as Herodotus, Josephus and Pliny. From these sources it appears that the Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal may be early names for the people now known as Russians and Muscovites. Other sources suggest that Cush may be Ethiopia or the Black African nations. Gomer may be the Iron Curtain countries. Togarmah may be southern Russia and the Cossacks. (Reference 39)

⁹ See commentary on 11:3. As explained in Part I, Astrological Symbolism, the new heaven and earth also has an astrological meaning. At each new age, the Precession causes a dislocation of the four pillars of the square earth, a new pole star, etc.

21

The Holy City

1. And I was a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.
2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God..
4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

The new heaven and the new earth are the new spiritual and material Laws. There is no longer the sea of doubt and disbelief. In verse 2, new Jerusalem,* the Bride, is contrasted with Babylon, the harlot. In verse 3, the Tabernacle of God is the new Revelation descended upon man through the human Temple, Bahá'u'lláh. God will dwell with men through the Universal House of Justice, giving them unerring spiritual guidance. *“O ye beloved of God! O ye children of the Kingdom! Verily, verily the new heaven and the new earth are come. The holy City, new Jerusalem, hath come down from heaven on high in the form of a maid of heaven, veiled, beauteous, and unique, and prepared*

* The new Jerusalem also has a literal confirmation. See <21:1-2 #8>

for reunion with her lovers on earth."¹—'Abdu'l-Bahá <21:1-7 #1>.

Verse 4 promises the end of spiritual death and pain to those who live by the new Law.²

5. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
6. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.
7. He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

In verse 6,* the Manifestation identifies Himself as the Alpha and Omega (9), Bahá'. Verse 7 explains that those who accept the new Revelation and overcome false teachings will be sons of God. They will inherit the Kingdom.

8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

In this verse are listed those who will be condemned to "death" and "deprivation". Among them are those who are afraid to accept the new Manifestation even though they may believe in the truth of His words.

9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.
10. And he carried me

* See chapter 22, Note 4.

away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of the heaven from God,

11. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as a crystal.

The Bride, the renewed Word of God, is to be married to the Lamb, the Covenant, in the Person of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Bride is not a widow.

In verse 11, the name of Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, is given for the second time. The jasper stone, already mentioned in 4:3, symbolizes the oneness of humanity, being many colours but especially having the hue of the heart. Bahá'u'lláh's Mission includes especially the uniting of mankind. It was a common device in antiquity to symbolize principles and attributes through the use of precious stones that have analogous characteristics.³

12. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:
13. On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.
14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

We recall the zodiacal signs also bear the names of the Twelve Tribes. A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* clarifies the meaning of these verses. The purport of that Tablet is briefly summarized below:

There are twelve zodiacal constellations. According to the theories of the astrologers,[†] the world of physical possibilities is

* <21:10-17 #1>

† The theories of the astrologers are not to be taken literally. See *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 329-331.

determined by the dawning place of the phenomenal sun shining through those constellations. Similarly *“the Sun of Truth manifests and pours forth His bounty in twelve constellations of holiness.”*⁴ The twelve constellations of holiness have been manifested in different Ages as the twelve sons of Jacob, the twelve chiefs of tribes with Moses, the twelve Apostles of Jesus, and the twelve Imams of Islám. (*Some Answered Questions*, p. 66 <11 #1>.)

The Heavenly Jerusalem, the sacred Law of God, therefore has Twelve Gates or Stars of Guidance through which advancing souls enter into the City of God. The angels at the gates stand for the power of the confirmation of God. Therefore, each one of the holy souls in the twelve constellations of holiness has received the power of Divine confirmations. Since, symbolically, the Twelve Gates surround the whole universe, all existence is under the shadow of those souls, and these Gates are the foundation of the City of God, the Divine Jerusalem.

Verse 14 explains that the names of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus are written upon the foundations of the Holy City. This means that the “perfections, glad-tidings, virtues and high attributes” of those holy souls will be manifested in the new Jerusalem.*

Ezekiel⁵ gives further meaning to the twelve gates and the implications of the design. The twelve gates, three for each of the four cardinal directions, are intended as a reminder to the children of Israel of their iniquities; for through the grace of God, the Holy City, new Jerusalem, the renewed Word of God, is to be broadcast from the Holy Land to which they will be returned from every quarter of the earth.

15. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

“In this Greatest day the rod of the plant [reed] and the rod of iron

* See Joshua 4; Matthew 19:28.

[sword of Muḥammad] *are changed into a rod which is of pure gold and is from the endless treasuries of the Kingdom of God.*"⁶—'Abdu'l-Bahá <21:10-17 #1>

16. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Although many geometrical structures can have equal length, breadth and height, 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains <21:15 #1> that a pyramidal shape is intended for the Holy City. The shape and dimensions of the Holy City reflect the attributes of the new Law of God. The pyramid is the firmest and most enduring figure found in nature. Like the pyramids of Egypt, a figure of this shape will abide through the Ages. And so it is with the pure Word of God. A civilization based upon Divine Principles will be prosperous and secure, creating endless blessings for its inhabitants.

Although it is not clear from the Text exactly how the Holy City is measured, since the City is correlated with the twelve signs of the invisible zodiac, we infer that the 12 thousand furlongs* measure the perimeter of the City. The only dimension other than the perimeter that can be readily measured with a rod is the slant edge. We therefore infer that the slant edge of the pyramid is taken as the height of the City.

The geometry of the Holy City takes the shape of Figure 25. This particular pyramid fits perfectly into a hemisphere representing the Celestial Pavilion, that is, the new "heaven", the new Law of the spiritual realm. Since the furlong is an earthly measure, the pyramid itself represents the new "earth", that is, the new Law of the material realm. The base of the pyramid corresponds to the square earth (Figure 3) with its four corners

* Stadia in RSV. 12,000 years is the duration of the present "Kappa", the "Age of Divine Enlightenment" in Hindu chronology.

representing the four “pillars”. Since the twelve gates in the wall surrounding the City represent the invisible zodiac, that is, the twelve constellations of holiness that are the entranceways into the Kingdom, the apex of the pyramid represents the Apex of the world <21:1-2 #2> and points the way to the open door in heaven. The 3 gates in each wall not only correspond to the 4 annual seasons, but also to zodiacal seasons. The last season, beginning at the age of Taurus (calf or ox) and ending at the start of Aquarius (man), covered a period of about 6,500 years, roughly equal to the traditional duration of the Adamic Cycle.

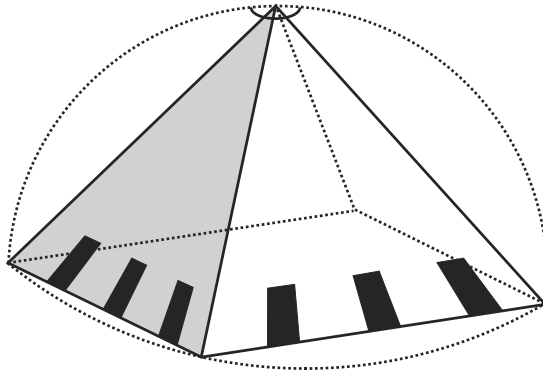


Figure 25
Geometry of the Holy City, the new Jerusalem

Archetypal values

Area of the base	9	Perimeter of each triangular face	9
Area of each triangular face	9	Total area of the four triangular faces	9
Total area of the pyramid	9	Volume of the pyramid	9

Since each edge of the pyramid is 3,000 furlongs it can be

shown that each of the following parameters of the pyramid has an archetypal value of 9:^{7, 11}

- The area of the base
- The perimeter of each triangular face
- The area of each triangular face
- The total area of the four triangular faces
- The total area of the pyramid
- The volume of the pyramid

Thus the pyramid contains the number 9, the number of Bahá', six times. A seventh clue is given in verse 17 in which the archetypal value of the wall is given as 144 cubits,⁸ which also has an archetypal value of 9. It should be understood that the true perimeter of the wall is 13,331 furlongs (or stadia), which is thousands of times greater than 144 cubits, giving the seeker a hint that the units of measure are not to be taken literally.

That the dimension of the Holy City contains hidden meanings is made clear by the emphasis placed upon them in Ezekiel and Zechariah.⁹ Ezekiel¹⁰ gives the dimensions of the Holy City as 4,500 measures on each side and 18,000 measures around the perimeter. Both of these numbers have archetypal values of 9. The dimensions of the altar¹¹ are given as 12 cubits on each side, which give archetypal values of 3 for each side and 9 for its area. The altar is purified for seven days.¹² The seven days symbolize the seven Days of the Lord that precede the Advents of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.¹³

17. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

This verse alludes to the "royal gift of the cubit", a custom of antiquity in which the forearm of the priest-king was designated as the cubit, that is, the unit of length that would prevail as the harmonizing Principle or "Neter". (see Note 8) The Manifestation, as both man and angel, is the Perfect Man and the Only Son of God

during His Dispensation. All things are to be measured by comparison to Him or His Exemplar.

The number 144 has many meanings, (see Note 8) among them being its archetypal value Nine, the Seal of Bahá'. The "cubit" being an "arm", the 144 also represents the twice-72 "working arms", the primal points or guardians who will nurture and protect the Celestial Garden, the new Jerusalem. (Verse 7:4)

Since the cubit is a "spiritual measure", its use is appropriate as a measure of the new heaven. In astrological symbolism, the 144 cubits measure the spiritual attributes emanating from the heavenly realm that will enrich, guide and protect the inhabitants of the Holy City. In past Ages, each gate of the invisible zodiac emanated about six attributes.¹⁴ In the new Age, twice-six attributes are to emanate from each gate.

The dimensions of the Holy City are suggestive of the Bahá'í place of worship, the Mashriq'u'l-Adhkár,* the essential features being prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh as having a dome, nine sides and nine doors. (See Figure 26.) It can be shown with a little mathematics¹⁵ that, if we allow one measure for each of the nine sides, then the following seven dimensions will each have archetypal values of 9:

The perimeter of the wall
 The area of the wall
 The area of the dome
 The volume of the dome
 The area of the floor
 The total area of the exterior
 The total enclosed volume

In the Mashriq'u'l-Adhkár, the 9 symbolizes the highest unity, <G_10> being the greatest single digit number [in the conventional decimal numbering system]. The 9 doors represent the unity of man and the essential unity of the Divinely revealed Faiths, notably the seven listed in Chapter 1 and the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths.

* Pronounced Mash-Reck-ol-Az-car, meaning "Dawning Place of God's Praise".

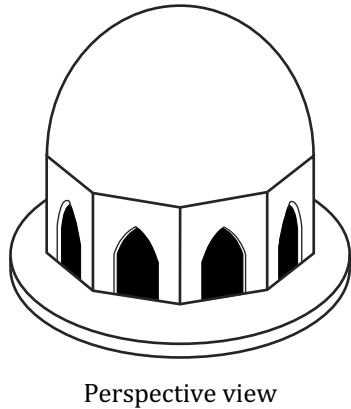
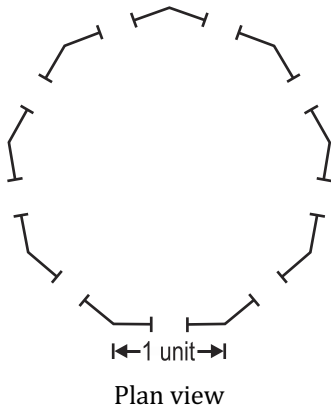


Figure 26
Geometry of the Bahá'í Mashriqu'l-Adhkár

Archetypal values

The perimeter of the wall		The area of the wall	9
The area of the dome	9	The volume of the dome	9
The area of the floor	9	The total area of the exterior	9
The total enclosed volume	9		

- 18. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.
- 19. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;
- 20. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

The material of the wall is jasper, symbolizing the Oneness of the World of Humanity, since it comes in all hues but especially the hue of the human heart. The City is pure gold, clear as glass, meaning that only purity and heavenly virtues are to be found inside, and that the knowledge of god will be as clear as glass. The foundations of the wall of the City are garnished with many different precious stones, symbolic of the Twelve Basic Principles_/12 of the City of Bahá', the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. <21:19-20>

[This description of the meanings of the twelve stones is a pilgrim's note; its provenance is given at the end of <21:19-20 #1>.]

The first foundation stone is jasper. Jasper means the principle of the Oneness of the World of Humanity.

The second foundation stone is sapphire.¹⁶ It is true blue, the blue of the dome of heaven. The sapphire is the colour of faith, inspiration, loyalty, and truth and means the principle of the Independent Investigation of Truth.

The third foundation stone is chalcedony.¹⁶ It is white, the colour of purity, reflecting all seven colours (seven Faiths) equally well. The chalcedony means the principle that The Foundation of All Religions is One, since the origin of all religions is pure, and a brother to every other religion, and all truth is one.

The fourth foundation stone is emerald. It is green, the colour of harmony and unity, since it harmonizes with every other colour. It is also the colour of immortality and humility. The emerald means the principle that Religion Must be the Source of Unity.

The fifth foundation stone is sardonyx.¹⁶ It is a stone of two layers, one white and one red. The sardonyx symbolizes the two in one, and means the principle of The Equality of Man and Woman.¹⁷

The sixth foundation stone is sardius.¹⁶ It is red or brown according to the way it is held; and so it is with science and religion. The sardius means the principle of the Agreement of Science and Religion.

The seventh foundation stone is chrysolite. It is exquisitely clear green and is the material of the Chrysolite Tablet. It

symbolizes absolute sincerity and truthfulness, purity and selflessness. Only when our hearts are pure and free from every form of prejudice and superstition can they become the Chrysolite Tablet whereon may be engraved our thoughts of our brother man. The chrysolite stands for the principle of the Elimination of All Prejudice.

The eighth foundation stone is beryl. It is a bluish-green. The blue symbolizes the blue of faith and loyalty to our brother man. The green symbolizes humility and unity. The colour of the beryl symbolizes the harmonious blending into one symmetrical whole of these attributes. These attributes established in the hearts of men will lead to universal peace. The beryl stands for the principle of Universal Peace.

The ninth foundation stone is topaz.* It is a golden yellow, the colour of the sun, and symbolizes the light of knowledge and the glory of wisdom that will follow when universal education is established in the world. The topaz means the principle of Universal Education.

The tenth foundation stone is chrysoprasus. It is a clear green that embodies truthfulness, justice, sincerity and purity. These are the prerequisites necessary for the Spiritual Solution of the Economic Problem.

The eleventh foundation stone is jacinth. Like one form of the jasper, it is a clear red, the universal colour, the hue of the heart. The heart of one race can understand the heart of another only when it can speak the same language. The jacinth means the principle of an Auxiliary Universal Language.

The twelfth foundation stone is amethyst. It is violet and symbolizes spiritual light, reverence, healing, serenity and poise. The tribunal of all nations must be as the ultra-violet rays of the sun for the healing of the nations, and it must seek spiritual light in all reverence that it may fulfil its high calling, imparting a sense of security, poise and serenity to the hearts of all humanity.

* The oriental topaz (Greek: *topazos, τoπάζι*) is intended.

The amethyst means the principle of a World Tribunal or Parliament of Man.

21. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.
22. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

No temple means that no churches or synagogues are needed in the City.¹⁸
<21:22-23 #1>

23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.
24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.
25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.
26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.
27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

No sun or moon means that no priestly hierarchy will be needed in the City.* The reason is that Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of

* Compare Isaiah 60:11, 19-20.

God, and the Lord of the Covenant, will lighten the City, while 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant, will be its light. <22:3> No night means that there will no longer be spiritual darkness or ignorance.

In verse 23, the name of the new Manifestation, Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, is revealed for the third and last time in the Apocalypse. <21:23 #2> John follows the ancient formula of repeating the name thrice to emphasize its superlative nature. The notion that “three” represents the best or greatest has extremely ancient roots. The Greek word *trismegistos* means thrice-greatest or superlatively great. The Latin word *ter felix* means thrice-happy or happiest. The Pantocrator is thrice-holy. (Verse 4:8) The concept was probably based on 3 being the first “complete” number, having a beginning (1), a middle (2), and an ending (3).

The practice of repeating 3-times was, and still is, used to emphasize a prayer or sacred ritual.¹⁹ The formula was adapted by practitioners of the occult arts in carrying out their rituals and incantations. (Third time's a charm!) Samuel Taylor Coleridge used it in his masterpiece *Kubla Khan*, the closing lines of which might best be applied to Bahá'u'lláh:

“And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.”

Notes

- ¹ *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 350. See also Isaiah 54:15, 65:17–19; Galatians 4:27.
- ² The explanation of the elimination of spiritual “death” and “sorrow” in the new Jerusalem is best left to professional psychiatry. Drawing on the experience and theories of the Jungian school (Ref. 2, 64), it would seem that many practitioners of the established religions suffer from the absence of meaningful symbols. A “dead” religion is one in which “living” inner meaning has been replaced by “dead” outward formalism. The decay of a religion from meaning to formalism is probably inevitable as the pure Truths of the Manifestation's Utterance become increasingly confused and obscured by successive overlays of theological speculation. Also, the “idle imaginings” of well-meaning but humanly limited theologians are often the cause of spiritual suffering. In the specific case of Christianity, for example, the evolutionary development of the theory of the “original sin” by early theologians ranging from Paul to Augustine has resulted in especially painful consequences for the Christian psyche. In

this connection we refer to the “sick soul” as defined by William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. James cites the example of the morbid melancholy of John Bunyon: “... my original and inward pollution, this was my plague and my affliction. By reason of that, I was more loathsome in my own eyes than was a toad; and I thought I was so in God’s eyes too.”

- 3 Ref. 1, pp. 205, 207, 208–211, 217, 232–235; Ref. 17.
 4 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in *Bahá’í Scriptures*, p. 489.
 5 Ezekiel 48:30–35, 43:10–11.
 6 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í Scriptures*, p. 490.
 7 Let L be the length of each edge of the pyramid. Then:

The area of the base = L^2

The perimeter of each triangular face = $3L$

The area of each triangular face = $\sqrt{3} / 4$

The total area of the triangular faces = $\sqrt{3} L^2$

The total area of the pyramid = $(1 + \sqrt{3}) L^2$

The volume of the pyramid = $L^3 / (3\sqrt{2})$

These parameters will have an archetypal value of 9 if L^2 and $3L$ have an archetypal value of 9. One third of all integers meet this requirement. For a discussion of the computational methods in antiquity, see References 53, 56.

Many authorities believe that each edge of the Holy City is intended to be 12,000 furlongs. Regardless of which assumptions are used, most of the parameters of the Holy City will have an archetypal value of 9.

The cube 12,000 furlongs on each edge is also interesting. Its dimensions that have archetypal values of 9 are: the area of each wall, 144 million square furlongs; the combined area of all six walls, 864 million square furlongs; the volume enclosed by the cube, 1,720,000 million cubic furlongs; the length of the twelve edges of the cube, 144,000 furlongs. The Hebrew Holy of Holies was a cube (I Kings 6:20) as is the Muslim sacred Kaaba. “Kaaba” comes from the Arabic *Ka’b* (cube).

Three of the dimensions of the cube are suggestive of the divisions of the Yugas, ages of the world, a sacred Hindu chronological system. Some authorities define the Yugas as follows:

432,000 years	Kali Yuga
864,000 years	Dvapara Yuga
1,296,000 years	Treta Yuga

1,728,000 years Krta Yuga.

The sum of these numbers is 4,320,000 years, the Mahā Yuga, the period in which a new type of man is born. 8,640,000,000 years, the longest period of time reckoned in the ancient East, is known as “one day and night of Brahma”. Furthermore, there are 86,400 seconds in a 24 hour day.

432 and 864 bound the Greek Phrygian mode (Chapter 15, Note 9). 432 is the literal value of “new name” καινού όνομα, while 864 is the literal value of “Jerusalem” Ιερουσαλήμ. New name 432 is three-times 144; Jerusalem 864 is six-times 144.

Michell (Reference 9) points out that a sphere with a perimeter of 14,400 cubits is a model of the earth with a scale of 1 foot per hundred miles. In his calculations he lets a cubit equal 1,728 feet, the approximate length of the royal cubit of Memphis, Egypt. That the ancient priests of the Middle East had a precise knowledge of the dimensions and shape of the earth has been suggested by various scholars. (Ref. 6, 40, 62) There is also evidence to suggest that the modern English system of measurement (inch, foot, acre, barrel, etc.) derives from ancient Egyptian systems of measure.

The pyramid of the new Jerusalem and its enclosing hemisphere suggest a possible meaning of the Great Pyramid of Giza. Although the Great Pyramid is not enclosed in a physical hemisphere, its dimensions and orientation are highly suggestive of the harmonization of the spiritual and material Laws. Since the perimeter of its base is 2π times its altitude, the base effectively “squares the circle”, symbolic of the marriage of the material Law (the square) and the spiritual Law (the circle). There are other curious facts about the Great Pyramid worth noting:

Its faces are oriented exactly North, South, East, and West, corresponding to the four zodiacal seasons.

Since most authorities agree that the Great Pyramid was built about 2500 BCE, it was probably built about two Platonic months prior to CE 1844, the beginning of the Bahá'í Era.

It is located at very nearly 30° E longitude and 30° N latitude. Thus if one extends the southern slant edges of the Pyramid along their great circles, they will intersect the equator near the Greenwich prime meridian and near the meridian at 60° East longitude. In the two Platonic months since the Pyramid was built, the equinoxes have precessed the same amount, that is, $2/12 \times 360^\circ = 60^\circ$.

The sum of the diagonals of the base of the Great Pyramid in pyramid

inches is very nearly equal to the number of years in a Platonic year.

According to the so-called “Pyramid prophecies” (Ref. 65, 66, 67) two very important dates built into the Great Pyramid are CE 1844 , corresponding to the “great step”, and CE 1953, corresponding to the far wall of the king’s chamber. The importance of 1844 has already been noted. 1953 is important in Bahá’í history as the launching point of the Bahá’í Ten-year Crusade and to what ‘Abdu’l-Bahá announced and the “Inception of the Kingdom of God on Earth.” (*God Passes By*, p. 351)

Many authorities (e.g., Ref. 6, p. 190) give the apothem of the Great Pyramid as 89 units and its half-base as 55 units. The sum of these numbers is 144 while their ratio is the Golden Number Φ . We recall that the base is related to the altitude through π (see above). Thus it is possible to show that the Pyramid’s dimensions imply that

$$6 \times \Phi^2 \cong 5 \times \pi$$

The error in this astonishing approximation is only about one part in 65,000. Besides the sheer mathematical beauty of this unexpected relationship, viewed numerologically, one possible interpretation of the equation is that the crossing of the mediation number 6 and Φ^2 (the Perfected Logos) results in the marriage (crossing) of Man 5 and the harmonized Law π .

The square of a number is its “perfection”. Thus Φ^2 is the perfected form of the Golden Number. Among many other interesting properties of Φ ,

$$\Phi^2 \cong \Phi + 1$$

that is, the perfection of Φ results from the fusion (+) of Φ with the Monad (1).

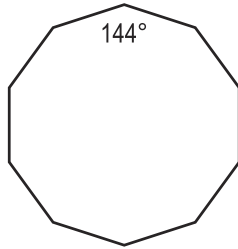
- ⁸ See also chapter 7, Note 11; chapter 15, Note 9. The 144 cubits of verse 17 is measured relative to the Perfect Man as was the Temple in Revelations 11:1. 144 is the first number in the Fibonacci series to have an archetypal value of 9.

The wording of the verse suggests that 144 contains the name of the Manifestation. Indeed it does, since it is the fusion of 135 and 9, that it, it contains both Glory (Kabod) and Bahá’.

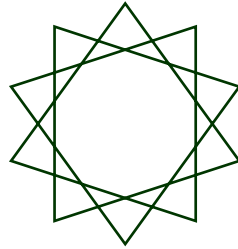
The writer also investigated the possibility that 144 is the literal value of Bahá’u’lláh in Koine Greek. For this purpose, e.g., the possible spelling Βησαολλα, [another is Μπαχαολλα] which has the value 144, was considered. Without divulging the full nature of the problem, suffice it to say that there are serious difficulties in attempting to transliterate this

particular Arabic word into Koine. As far as this writer is concerned, the question remains unsettled.

144 is the harmonizing Principle of Neter (see below) of the regular 10-sided figure called the decagon. (See Figure 27.)



Decagon



Star-decagon or decagram

Figure 27

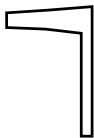
The decagram contains the angles 36°, 72°, 108° and 144°.

Like the Pentagram, the Decagram is highly prolific in the Golden Number.

It will be remembered that the decagon is the primary recurrent pattern of the DNA helix. (Part I, note 22; chapter 7, note 10.) Among the ancient Pythagoreans, the decagon symbolized the World, the macrocosm, the perfection and consummation of all things. (Ref. 61, p. 115) The inscribed 10-pointed star-decagon may symbolize the double Manifestation, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, their individual Pentagrams (ch 7, note 11) being interwoven in perfect harmony throughout the ages.

The “Neter”, explained with great profundity by Schwaller de Lubicz in Reference 62, is intimately connected with the cubit.

Indeed, the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs for Neter (Principle), cubit and arm are closely related. (See Figure 28.) The Neter can be considered as the seed that summarizes all the harmonic possibilities of a particular “rhythm”. It is the “Principle”, the “Platonic Idea” from which emanate the particular manifestations latent in the Principle.



Neter



Arm



Cubit

Figure 28

Extrapolating from the logic of Schwaller de Lubicz, the number Five (especially through its derivative the Golden Number Φ), is the Neter that summarizes biological growth, etc. Six is the Neter that summarizes the balanced, stable growth of a crystal, a new Faith, etc. Nine is the Neter that summarizes finality, judgement, the unification of man, etc. The Golden Number Φ is the Neter that summarizes the Logos, the creative Word, etc. The number 144 is the Neter that summarizes the structure of the new Jerusalem, etc. π (3.14159) is the Neter that summarizes the squaring of the circle, the harmonization of the material and spiritual Laws, etc.

The concept of the Neter suggests connections between the various realms of the ancient cosmogony. For example, the Neters of certain primary polygons correlate with tones of the basic Hindu-Greek musical scale (ch 15, Note 9), that is:

Neter	Polygon	No. of sides	Musical tone
72	golden triangle	3	D
90	square	4	b-flat
108	pentagon	5	G
120	Hexagon	6	f
135	octagon	8	e-flat
144	decagon	10	D

Since the 144 cubits of verse 17 is radically inconsistent with the other dimensions of the Holy City, some have suggested that the 144 cubits is the thickness and/or height of the wall surrounding the City. Even if one chooses this hypothesis, the number 9 is nonetheless indicated by this dimension and remains a redundant clue.

Since the number $144 = 12 \times 12$, the mediation number in the new Age will be 12 instead of 6. Curiously enough, 12 seems to be the mediation number appropriate to the modern world. On the “flat earth” of the Piscean Age, it requires 6 circles to fit perfectly around the perimeter of a central circle of the same radius.

Analogously, on the modern spherical earth of 3 dimensions, it requires 12 spheres to fit perfectly around the surface of a central sphere of the same radius.

⁹ Zechariah 2:1–5; Ezekiel 43.

¹⁰ Ezekiel 48:33–35.

¹¹ idem 43:16.

¹² idem 43:26.

¹³ idem 43:27.

¹⁴ Astrologers describe the attributes of a sign of the phenomenal or visible zodiac in such terms as masculine or feminine

diurnal or nocturnal
 commanding, melancholy, phlegmatic or sanguine
 earth, airy, fiery or watery
 hot or cold
 dry or wet

We recall that there were 72 Names in the Divided Name of YHWH. (See chapter 7, Note 10.) One wonders if these Names were intended to correspond to 6-times-12 attributes emanating from the spiritual or invisible zodiac. This theory would also explain why the 72 Names were subdivided into 4 groups of 18; that is, to correspond to the 4 cardinal directions of the zodiac.

¹⁵ These results follow from the “circular” property of 9, viz., that the product of any number multiplied by 9 will have an archetypal value of 9.

¹⁶ This interpretation of the twelve foundations stones was given to Shahnáz Waite by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and should be considered a “pilgrim’s note”. The listing of the Twelve Principles of the Bahá’í Faith is not wholly arbitrary. Roughly speaking, twelve Principles have been used to expound the Faith by Bahá’u’lláh and His Successors. However, the number can be varied slightly by elaborating, combining or sub-dividing some of the Principles. (See and compare *God Passes By*, pp. ix, 216–9, 281–2; *Paris Talks*, pp. 135–166; *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 449–50. The Twelve Basic Principles corresponding to the twelve stones in Rev. 21:20 can be found in several issues of *Star of the West* beginning with the March 20, 1920 issue, Volume 10, pp. 358–9. <21:19–30>

In the Apocalypse, as in many ancient writings, Twelve is a sacred number. The modern reader of the West usually finds ancient number symbolism laboured and of doubtful validity. Nevertheless, the Jungian school of psychiatry claims that number symbolism still persists as a numinous component of our collective unconscious. (References 1, 2)

The RSV and KJV differ slightly in their translations of some of the twelve foundation stones. The KJV is a precise and literal translation of the original Greek.

The sapphire is also found in Exodus 24:10 and Ezekiel 1:26. The chief

priests of ancient Egypt wore necklaces of the image of truth and justice made of sapphire.

- 17 Ancient Egyptian paintings sometimes show the woman as white and the man as red.
- 18 The Jewish word for temple was either “beth Jehovah” or “hecal Jehovah”, meaning a residence or palace of Jehovah. (See I Kings 6:11–19.) In the history of Palestine, the Temple was periodically rebuilt in times of peace and destroyed in times of war. For example, Solomon’s Temple was destroyed by Nubuchadnezzar; Zerubabbel’s Temple was profaned by Syrians and Romans; Herod’s Temple was destroyed by Titus. Thus the Temple became a symbol of man’s alienation from God. “No temple” as used in 21:22 symbolizes the fact that in the City of Bahá, man’s closeness to God will no longer be dependent upon the turns of capricious fortune. (See Reference 12, p. 107.)

Because a destruction of Jerusalem and the physical Temple had occurred in CE 70, the tragic event was fresh in the minds of John and the early Christians when the Apocalypse was written.

What could be more comforting than a “new Jerusalem” that is not physical and therefore needs no physical Temple?

The ancient notion that God’s home could be constructed by man at some prominent spot overlooking one’s own city was a comforting and reassuring thought. Among primitive and uneducated peoples, safety, harmony, and successful crops depended primarily upon careful attention to ritual, sacrifice, and a virtuous priesthood. The occasional destruction of the physical temple and the priesthood by capricious and irrational forces was a deeply traumatic experience. The modern dream of the Jewish people to rebuild their Temple is exemplary of their ancient quest for identity and closeness to God.

In another sense, the Temple symbolizes the human tendency to indulge in fantasy. The “temple” need not be a physical structure, (See, e.g., Malachi 2:8; Mark 7:5–8.) and the modern world is filled with inhabitants whose fantasy-temples are flimsy intellectual constructions that are poorly suited to withstand the onslaughts of scientific, historical, and sociological advances. Nor will the narrow prejudicial views that formed the foundations of the ancient intellectual temples be firm enough in a modern technological world that is no longer flat. “No temple” from this viewpoint therefore means that the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem will not be required to build intellectual structures that are not in harmony with physical, intellectual, and spiritual realities. The progression of

mankind away from temple worship, whether the temple be physical or intellectual, represents an evolutionary advance as profound as that symbolized by Adam's partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The English word "temple" comes from the Latin *templus*, meaning a place "cut off". The concept of the ancient temple, and, indeed, of most temples down to the present day, was borrowed from the ancient Egyptians, and consisted of a holy place or sanctuary where the great body of worshipers assembled, and the cell of Holy of Holies, into which only the priests were allowed to enter. Thus the word "temple" as used in 21:22, to some extent, implies a cutting off of direct communion with God and the requirement of a priest as intermediary between man and his Creator. In the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, this concept has been replaced by the institution of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, meaning a "Dawning Place of God's Praise". This structure, (sometimes inaccurately called a temple) is without a priesthood, without separated chambers of "degrees of holiness", without even a pulpit, and is a place in which God is worshipped without ceremony or ritual. In due time, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is to be supplemented by accessory institutions of social service in its vicinity, such as "an orphanage, a hospital, a dispensary for the poor, a home for the incapacitated, a hostel for travellers and a college for the study of arts and sciences."—(*God Passes By*, p. 350) Although, ultimately, these structures will be built in each Bahá'í community, the most sacred of the Bahá'í institutions is the Nineteen-Day Feast, observed on the first day of each Bahá'í month, and usually held in private homes. The Feast provides for community prayer and reading from the Sacred Writings, consultation on Bahá'í affairs, and social association of the friends. <21:22-23 #1>

¹⁹ Ref. 12, p. 102.

22

Epilogue

There are several voices in this chapter. Following the closed quotes of the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the probable voices are as follows:

Verses	Voice
1-5	John
6-7	An angel speaking for God and His Manifestations. John speaks the last sentence of verse 7.
8	John
9	The angel
10-13	The angel speaking for Bahá'u'lláh
14-15	John
16	The angel speaking for Jesus
17-21	John

Spoken by John:

1. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as a crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.
2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
3. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:
4. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.
5. And there shall be no night there; and they need no

candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

John recites the blessings of those living in the Holy City, safely gathered beneath the Covenant, the companions of the Crimson Ark. [22:3] The Twin Holy Trees are the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.¹ The twelve kinds of fruit are the blessings flowing from the Laws and Principles that are the twelve foundation stones upon which the City is founded. "Seeing His face"² means that the inhabitants of the City will behold the countenance of God in His Manifestation. No night means no spiritual darkness. No candle nor light of the sun means no formal church with a priestly hierarchy.

6. And he said unto me,

Spoken by the Angel:³

These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

7. Behold, I come quickly:

Spoken by John:

blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Spoken by John:

8. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things.

Spoken by John.

9. Then saith he unto me,

Spoken by Angel:

See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets,

and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

Spoken by the angel:

10. And he saith unto me,

Spoken by the Angel for Bahá'u'lláh:

Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.
12. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.
13. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Spoken by John:

14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.
15. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Spoken by the Angel for Jesus:

16. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Jesus is the Root of David, being the Spirit of Abraham and descended from Abraham. He is also the offspring of David, being the Spirit of David and descended from David. As a bright morning star, He is the Herald of a new Day of God.

Spoken by John:

17. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:
19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.
20. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.
21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

the end

In verse 17, John explains that salvation is attainable without cost.⁴ In verse 18 and 19, John warns those who hear or read the Apocalypse against falsifying the text. In the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "*What deviation can be greater than breaking the Covenant of God? What deviation can be greater than interpolating and falsifying the words and verses of the Sacred Test?*"⁵ Such practices are also condemned by Bahá'u'lláh: "*Corrupt not the holy, the all-embracing, and primal Word of God, and seek not to profane its sanctity or to debase its exalted character.*"⁶

Misinterpretations and accidental perversion of the Sacred Text have been the cause of much confusion and schism among the world's religions.* In spite of the warning in verses 18 and 19, there is evidence that some early Christians may have unwittingly modified some versions of the text of the Apocalypse in Chapter 13, verse 18, to change the number of the beast to 616 to conform with the literal value of "Nero Caesar". Probably

* e.g., compare KJV and RSV versions of I John 5:7.

because of its highly allegorical style, the Apocalypse appears to have been kept relatively free of such distortions, whether by accident, by friend, or by foe, and it has been possible in these, the last days, for the Lion of Judah to “open the book and loose its seven seals”.

Babylon, the corrupted Word of God, “has been thrown down and shall be found no more.” In the City of Bahá, distortions of the Sacred Text are no longer possible. The Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh bear His own seal and are protected in vaults in the sacred mountain of Carmel in the Holy Land. Although every inhabitant of the City of Bahá has translations of many of these Tablets and is enjoined to study and meditate upon their meanings, access to the original Sacred Texts and their official application is entrusted to the Universal House of Justice, democratically elected and re-enfranchised by the City every five years. “*They who are its appointed interpreters, they whose hearts are the repositories of its secrets, are, however, the only ones who can comprehend its manifold wisdom.*”⁷—Bahá’u’lláh

A question often asked is: “Why have the Holy Books been sealed? Would it not have been better if their meanings had been made apparent to everyone?” The answer may lie in the wide diversity of temperaments and capacities of understanding of the sea of humanity. The Holy books, through the use of allegory and symbol, contain meanings and life-giving sustenance for every sincere seeker, whether he be a poor unlettered serf on a medieval manor or a polished philosopher on a university campus. “*Even as it hath been said: ‘Not everything that a man knoweth can be discussed, nor can everything that he can discuss be regarded as timely, nor can every timely utterance be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it.’*”⁸—Bahá’u’lláh

Notes

¹ RSV translates verses 1 and 2 as:

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

See also *The Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 1; Genesis 2:9; Zechariah 4:3, 12–14 (KJV); Qur’án 79:6–7, 13.

² In Exodus 33:17–21, Moses was unable to see the countenance of God. See Chapter 15, Note 8.

³ For an explanation of angels, see *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 25, 78–80.

- 4 Verse 17 probably alludes to a practice among the Mystery cults of the time. Initiation rites in those cults required the payment of a fee, thereby denying the poorer people access to salvation through those media.
- 5 *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 6.
- 6 *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 325.
- 7 idem, p. 175.
- 8 idem, p. 176.

Appendices

Appendix A

The number of Bahá in the Apocalypse

There can be little doubt that the name of the Manifestation of the last days is Bahá'u'lláh. Besides revealing His name three times in 15:8, 21:11 and 21:23, there are many expressions and numbers that refer to Him, His City, His Law, or His Seal that have the archetypal value of 9, the number of Bahá. These are:

Expressions and numbers	Freq. of 9	Chapter and verse
Alpha (and) Omega	4	1:8, 11; 21:6; 22:13
Jerusalem	3	3:12; 21:2, 10
New name	2	2:17; 3:12
144,000 (Seal of God)	3	7:4; 14:1, 3
Faithful and True (Name)	1	19:11
The Word of God (Name)	1	19:13
Dimensions of the Holy City	6	21:16
144 cubits (Wall of the City)	1	21:17

Besides these clearly significant occurrences of 9, there are other occurrences that are probably significant. These are the references to Glory as a name of God in 14:7, 16:9, and possibly in 4:9, 4:11, 15:4, and 19:1. The Greek word for Glory has an archetypal value of 9, identical to the value of Bahá (Glory) in Arabic. The 1,260 years, given seven times in 11:2, 11:3, 11:9, 11:11, 12:6, 12:14, and 13:5, also has an archetypal value of 9. The Almighty "Pantocrator" appears 9 times in the Apocalypse, verses 1:8, 4:8, 11:17, 15:3, 16:7, 16:14, 19:6, 19:15 and 21:22. This appellation occurs only once elsewhere in the New Testament, II Corinthians 6:18.

There are still other uses of the number 9 that are possibly significant. For example, the number 666 in 13:18 has an archetypal value of 9. Furthermore, there are 9 chapters (14–22) that are devoted to the last days and the Advents of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. The 142,794 days* of 9:15 have an archetypal value of 9. The Greek word “Apocalypse” Αποκάλυψη, which means “Revelation”, has a literal value of 1,512 and an archetypal value of 9.

We now consider the possibility that the occurrence of nines is entirely a matter of random chance. Fortunately, it is a simple matter to estimate the probability that the nines result from chance.

For each number and verbal expression, the probability that the archetypal values will be 9 is about $1/9$. The probability that the dimensions of the Holy City will contain nines is $1/3$ (ch. 21, Note 7.) Considering only those expressions and numbers that are given by the Table, the probability that all eight expressions and numbers will have archetypal values of 9 by random chance is about:

$$1/9 \times 1/9 \times 1/9 \times 1/9 \times 1/9 \times 1/9 \times 1/9 \times 1/3 \approx 0.0000006969.$$

To appreciate how small the probability is, its reciprocal 14,348,907 is equal to the number of seconds in 5 months and 2 weeks.

* Or the 142,731 days. See chapter 11, Note 4.

Appendix B

Correlation of some dates in the Book of Daniel

The Book of Daniel is, of course another Sacred Text that may be as difficult to interpret as the Apocalypse. However, His Holiness 'Abdu'l-Bahá (*Some Answered Questions*, Chapter 10) has left us several clues that should eventually permit the complete decoding of the book and its correlation with the Apocalypse.

In Daniel 9:24-25, seventy weeks are given from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the martyrdom of Jesus Christ. Since each "week" is 7 years (see Table, Chapter 2 of this book), 70 "weeks" are 490 years. There were four decrees to rebuild Jerusalem.

These were:

1. The decree of Cyrus in 534 BCE, recorded in the first chapter of Ezra [1:1-4]. This decree was unfulfilled.
2. The decree of Darius in 519 BCE, recorded in the sixth chapter of Ezra [6:1-12]. This decree was also unfulfilled.
3. The decree of Artaxerxes in 457 BCE [Ezra 7:1-28]. This decree was fulfilled by the fourth decree.
4. The decree of the same Artaxerxes in 444 BCE, a continuation of the third decree, recorded in the second chapter of Nehemiah [2:1-8].

The 70 weeks or 490 years begins at the third degree in 457 BCE. Remember that since the Birth date of Jesus is taken at CE 1 instead of Zero, there is one year missing in the Christian calendar. Consequently, the prophecy places the date of the Crucifixion at:

$$490 - 457 + 1 = \text{CE } 34$$

In 9:25, Daniel gives a second way of reckoning the martyrdom of Jesus as 7 weeks and 62 weeks. The explanation of this date is given in 9:26 in which it is indicated that the second

date begins after the termination of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The 7 weeks (49 years) are the duration of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The additional 62 weeks (434 years) brings us to the year CE 27, and it was during the last week “after 62 weeks” (CE 28–34) that Jesus, the Messiah, was martyred.

The daily sacrifice was taken away during the Dispensation of Muḥammad. (See <5:6 #1>.) The end of “the abomination that makes desolate” is given in 8:14 as 2,300 days. Using the same origin as for the calculation of the Crucifixion (457 BCE), the result is:

$$2300 - 457 + 1 = \text{CE } 1844$$

This was, of course, the date of the Edict of Toleration that permitted the Jews to resettle the Holy Land. The same date coincides with the Declaration of the Báb and the Birth of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Jesus gives the end of the abomination as the date immediately preceding the re-manifestation of the Son of Man (Matthew 24:15, 29–30).

The date of the Manifestation of Bahá’u’lláh is calculated as follows:

In Daniel 12:7, the “time, times, and half a time” is 1,260 lunar years, dated from the Hijrah. This date coincides with CE 1844 and the Declaration of the Báb. However, in 12:11, Daniel gives another method of calculation as 1,290 days. The origin of this date is the first public Declaration of Muḥammad of His Prophethood in Ḥijáz. This even was 10 lunar years before the Hijrah. The 1,290 days thus becomes AH 1280 or CE 1863–1864, the date of the first public Declaration of Bahá’u’lláh in the Garden of Riḍván (Paradise).

Later in 12:12, we read, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” This is the period in solar (Bahá’í) years from the firm foundation of the Faith of Muḥammad until the firm foundation of the Bahá’í Faith.

(The Bahá'í Writings indicate that the firm foundation of the Bahá'í Faith was fulfilled by the completion of the Ten Year Crusade and the foundation of the Universal House of Justice in CE 1963. It can be inferred, therefore, that the 1,335 "days" must be counted from CE 628. It was in that year that Muḥammad concluded the Truce of al-Ḥudaybiyyah with the idolaters of Mecca. History has shown that this Truce had profound consequences for the future success of Islám, establishing the legitimacy of Islám and resulting in many important converts to the Faith. The interested reader may consult the Qur'án 48:19; Ref. 37, Chapter 12; Ref. 41, p. 250; *God Passes By*, p. 151; and the following issues of *Bahá'í News*: No. 202, p. 3; No. 261, p. 4; No. 313, p. 7.)

(The prophecy in Daniel 4:13–23 concerning the "7 times" probably dates from 604–602 BCE when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem. "Seven times" is 7×360 or 2,520 years. In the lunar calendar of 'Iráq, this is the span of time between 602 BCE and CE 1844. See Reference 28, p. 27.)

Appendix C

Origins of gematriot and number symbolism

The origins of gematriot and number symbolism are lost in antiquity. Carl Jung (Ref. 2, p. 71) contends that the roots of number mysticism are prehistoric. Neugebauer (Ref. 53, p. 9) suggests that number mysticism may have originated among primitive civilizations when counting was considered a difficult and “magical” task comparable to spelling the name of a god.

It is generally believed that numbers preceded letters. It seems likely that numbers were first associated with the fingers. Dr Barry Fell in his fascinating book *America B.C.* (Ref. 55) describes an early alphabet also based upon the fingers. Could not the same finger represent both a number and a sound? The origin of an early gematria becomes obvious.

Some suggest that the origins of the historical gematriot lie in ancient Egyptian and Babylonian cosmology. In the history of the Western use of number symbolism, Pythagoras of Samos (circa 582–500 BCE) is probably the most noteworthy. He is supposed to have travelled and studied in Egypt, Babylonia and India. While in Babylon, he may have studied under the neo-Zoroastrian Nazaratas. (Ref. 4, p. 62) His sojourn there almost coincided with the Jewish Babylonian Captivity. On his return, he originated a school of philosophy in Crotona, a Greek colony in southern Italy. Pythagoras is reputed to have discovered the numerical ratios governing musical harmony, the famous theorem regarding the hypotenuse of a right triangle that bears his name (probably erroneously; see Ref. 53, pp. 35ff, 148, 149), and many other things that have influenced other philosophers, scientists, and mathematicians down to the present day. He is sometimes called “the father of numerology”.

Plato (circa 427–347 BCE) discusses the rudiments of gematria in his *Cratylus*, in which he claims that the force of a name

is to be found in its numerical value, while words and phrases of the same value may be substituted without loss of meaning.

The Hebrew cabala, the mystical system of philosophy that includes the Hebrew gematria, has been used for thousands of years as a method of interpreting the Sacred Text. The Old Testament apparently contains hidden meanings in the literal and archetypal values of expressions and numbers, possibly encoded by the prophets. The authoritative documents of the cabala are the *Book of Formation* (the *Sefer Yezirah*) and the *Book of Brightness* (the *Zohar*). The origins of these books are ancient and uncertain.

Plilo Judaeus, a Jew of Alexandria (circa 30 BCE–CE 50) (Reference 42) attempted to reconcile Hellenistic and Jewish thought through number symbolism. Saint Augustine (CE 354–430) in his book *The City of God* and elsewhere (Reference 43) also attempted such a reconciliation.

Most pertinent to the discussion of the Apocalypse, perhaps, was the use of gematria by the ancient Gnostics, a religious movement in competition with early orthodox Christianity. Before their period of decadence, they appear to have had many worthy leaders and may have had a considerable influence on Christian doctrine. (See Reference 14, p. 70 and Reference 9.) The Church was so effective in suppressing overt Gnosticism that, until the recent discovery of a Gnostic library at Nag-Hammadi, our principal knowledge of them came through their critics and enemies, notably Saint Irenaeus, the second century Bishop of Lyons, who reveals many prejudicial, though informative, details concerning the Gnostics in his book *Against Heresies*. As an example, he discusses the fact that the Gnostics saw in the name of Jesus Ἰησοῦς a numerological connection with both the 8 and the 6, since His name has a literal value of 888 and an archetypal value of 6. Other details quoted by Saint Irenaeus indicate that the Gnostics probably built their system of gematria on more ancient sources. It is interesting that the Gnostics claimed to have esoteric knowledge from Jesus privately transmitted by Him to His Disciples. (Reference 14, p. 70)

Occultists find the gematria and number symbolism a rich source of material for speculation because of its mysterious and esoteric nature. The fascination of numerology is not limited to the West and the Middle East. The Chinese book of divination, the *I Ching*, one of the six Chinese Classics and probably the oldest book in existence, has as its premise that all human destiny can be reduced to a limited set of numbers based upon combinations of Yang and Yin symbols. Many reliable people have attested to the value of the *I Ching*. However, all forms of divination and other occult practices are forbidden to Bahá'ís, not because they are necessarily inoperative, but because such practices are disruptive to human development, both in the realm of earth and in the realm of heaven.

Both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh have employed the abjad, the Arabic gematria, as a means of concealing meanings, and, at other times, to reveal extended meanings in certain words and phrases. This is certain to revive interest in number symbolism and gematria. Let us hope that the occultists of the first Bahá'í millennium will use number symbolism more wisely than they have in the last.

Appendix D

The Arabic and Hebrew gematriot

		Arabic	Hebrew
1	(á, a)	Alif, Hamza	Aleph
2	(b)	Beh	Beth
3	(j)	Jím	Ghimel
4	(d)	Dal	Dallet
5	(h)	Ha	Hay
6	(w, v, ú)	Waw	Waw
7	(z)	Ze	Zayn
8	(h)	He	Hhayt
9	(t)	Tá	Tayt
10	Ye	Yod	(y, í)
20	Kef	Khaf	(k)
30	Lám	Lammed	(l)
40	Mím	Mem	(m)
50	Nún	Noun	(n)
60	Sín	Sammekh	(s)
70	Ain	Ayn	(')
80	Fe	Phay	(f)
90	Sád	Tsadde	(s)
100	(q)	Qáf	Qof
200	(r)	Re	Raysh
300	(<u>sh</u>)	Shín	Sheen
400	(t)	Te	Tay
500	(<u>th</u>)	Se	final Khaf
600	(<u>kh</u>)	<u>Kh</u> e	final Mem
700	(<u>dh</u>)	Zál	final Noun
800	(d)	Dád	final Phay
900	(z)	Zá	final Tsadde
1000	(<u>gh</u>)	Ghain	large Aleph

Appendix E

Glossary of symbols

ABADDON, APOLLYON—lit. The Destroyer, Abú-Sufyán

ADULTERY—to share false doctrine

ADVENT—the Coming of a new Manifestation of God

AIR—1. spirituality, nearness to God; 2 unlocalized (16:17)

ALPHA (and) OMEGA—1. lit. Nine, the number of Bahá; 2. the Lord God; 3. Bahá'u'lláh; 4. Jesus Christ; 5. the Word of God; 6. the Manifestation

ALTAR—a place of offering to God

AMEN—1. lit. Faithful and True, Muḥammad; 2 so be it, etc.

ANGEL—1. a purified soul; 2. a celestial (spiritual) messenger; 3. a Revelator; 4. a spiritual leader; 5. fallen angel—a spiritual leader fallen from grace; 6. angel of light (12:7)—good spiritual principle; 7. angel of darkness (12:7)—evil spiritual principle (see Four Angels, Mighty Angel, Seven Angels)

ANTIPAS—lit. Against All, Lord Buddha

APOSTLE—trusted messenger

APOLLYON—lit. The Destroyer, Abú-Sufyán

ARK OF THE TESTAMENT—1. Book of God's Testament and the Epistle of the Covenant; 2. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant

ARMAGEDDON—Heb., lit. mountain of conflict, hence: piling up of sorrow

ARMIES—1. (in heaven) spiritual forces; 2. (hosts) sanctified followers of Bahá'u'lláh (19:14)

BABYLON—(from *Bab-el*, Gate of God and *bal-bel* confusion), the city of the corrupted Word of God

BAGHDÁD—lit. Gift of God

BALAAM, DOCTRINE OF—1. idol worship; 2. materialism

BALANCE—1. power of judgement; 2. Book of God; 3. new Manifestation

BATTLE—conflict

BEAR—Media-Persia

BEASTS—1. rulers; 2. Empires; (also see Four Beasts, First Beast, Second Beast)

BEAST THAT WAS AND IS NOT—Empire of Alexander the Great

BED—bed of heedlessness, misery and shame

BELOVED CITY—probably Jerusalem

BIRD—1. soul; 2. animating principle; 3. attributes

BLACK—loss of spiritual light (illumination)

BLASPHEMY—see Name of Blasphemy

BLOOD—1. life-force; 2. sacrifice; 3. opposite of water: “turn water into blood” means to convert source of spiritual life into a source of spiritual death; 4. suffering (14:20); 5. shed blood—kill (16:6)

BOOK OF LIFE—the Book containing the names of those who deserve salvation and are firm in the Covenant of God

BOOK OF SEVEN SEALS—the Holy Books of the seven Faiths of Asia

BOTTOMLESS PIT—pit of theological error

BOW—false propaganda

BRASS—or BRONZE blended metal, hence the blending of mankind

BRIDE—the renewed Word of God

BRIDLE—see horse’s bridle

BRONZE—blended metal, hence the blending of mankind

BURN—condemn

CALF—see ox

CAMP OF SAINTS—possibly the Bahá’í Universal House of Justice

CANDLE—formal Church

CANDLESTICK—1. source of spiritual light (guidance); 2. a Faith; 3. a Prophet; 4. a formal Church

CARMEL—lit. Vineyard of God

CENSER—piety

CHILD (man-child)—1. the Báb; 2. the Twelfth Imám

CHRIST—lit. from Gr. *Christos*, The Anointed One

CHURCH—1. a Divinely revealed Faith; 2. Church of Jesus Christ; 3. earthly Church imperfectly representing the Divine Church (see also Seven Churches)

CITY—1. institutions, civilization; 2. inhabitants; 3. the abode of

the soul; 4. the Holy City Jerusalem of the true Word of God (14:20); 5. the great city Babylon of the corrupted Word of God (16:19)

CLOUD—1. a veil between man and heaven; 2. trouble; 3. cloud of glory

CLOTHING—see Garment

COLD—spiritual indifference

COLOURS:

WHITE—purity

BLACK—1. injustice; 2. unspiritual

RED—war

PALE—indifference

SCARLET—spiritual beauty (Muslim)

PURPLE—royalty

COUNTENANCE—spiritual aspect or appearance

CREATURES— people with various attributes

CROWN—1. authority; 2. reward; 3. rulership

CUBIT—a sacred measure, usually equal to the forearm of the reigning priest-king; two spans

CUP—see drink

DARKNESS—lack of spiritual understanding

DAY—1. a year; 2. a “time” of 360 years; 3. an era of arbitrary duration; 4. a Day of God or a Lord’s Day, i.e., a Dispensation

DAY OF GOD—the Dispensation of a Manifestation of God

DEAD BODY—outward appearance without spiritual reality

DEATH—1. spiritual unawareness; 2. First Death—failure to accept Jesus Christ; 3. Second Death—failure to accept Bahá’u’lláh

DESOLATION—spiritually destitute

DESTROY—see kill

DEVIL (from Gr. *Diabolos*)—1. The Deceiver, the principle of deception whereby the Word of God becomes corrupted; 2. evil principle

DEVOUR—destroy

DIE IN THE LORD—1. to die in one’s self to live in God; 2. to sacrifice one’s life for the Cause of God

DISPENSATION—a Day of God, the calendrical period during

which a Manifestation is predominant in the contingent world

DOOR—1. a test; 2. the Báb; 3. the opening into a new Age

DRAGON—1. the Serpent (Devil); 2. evil ruler

DRINK—to experience

DRY UP—to remove the source of spiritual grace and knowledge

EAGLE—1. majesty, authority, victory; 2. sharp vision; 3. Great Eagle—Muḥammad; 4. the ancient name for the zodiacal sign Scorpio; 5. Flying Eagle—Shoghi Effendi [4:7] (see also Two Wings of a Great Eagle)

EARS—capacity for understanding spiritual teachings

EARTH—1. the world of man; 2. the Law of God concerning the contingent world; 3. the world of matter; 4. earthly grave (12:4); 5. ruins (13:11)

EARTHQUAKE—1. a shaking of the world of man; 2. a literal earthquake (11:13)

EAST—land to the east of Israel: Persia, 'Iráq, etc.

EAT—1. accept; 2. eat flesh—see devour

ELDERS—see Twenty-four Elders

END OF THE AGE—the end of the Age of Prophecy. The Age of Prophecy began with the Prophet Adam and ended with the Báb.

EPHESUS, CHURCH OF—lit. family hearth, the Sabean Faith

EYES—1. capacity for spiritual vision; 2. eyes within—spiritual insight

EYES OF FLAME—1. the eyes of Bahá'u'lláh; 2. vengeance

FACE OF GOD—the attributes of God reflected in His Manifestation (22:4)

FACE OF MAN—unity of mankind

FAITHFUL AND TRUE (name)—The Bird of the Celestial Throne, Bahá'u'lláh (19:11)

FALSE PROPHET—1. a pretender to Divine Revelation; 2. Mírzá Yaḥyá

FAMINE—to be without spiritual sustenance

FATHER—1. God; 2. Station of the Father—the spiritual rank of Bahá'u'lláh

FEARFUL—afraid to accept the new Manifestation

FEED—sustain

FEET—source of worldly strength

FIRE OR HEAT—1. suffering; 2. wrath; 3. purification; 4. tribulation; 5. rebuke; 6. fire and brimstone—severe spiritual torment that cannot be distinguished; 7. fiery speech; 8. Greek fire (13:13)

FIRST BEAST—the Baní-Umayyad dynasty, personified by Abú-Sufyán

FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD—Jesus Christ, the first to be raised from spiritual death during His Ministry

FLEE—to disappear, pass away (20:11)

FLOOD—flood of deceptive words (12:15)

FLYING EAGLE—see eagle [(4:7)]

FOREHEAD—1. head, as in “head tax”; 2. brow, as in “seal on his brow”

FORNICATION—false doctrine

FOUNTAINS OF WATER—sources of spiritual grace and knowledge

FOUR ANGELS—power of the world of man

FOUR BEASTS—1. four paragons of virtue, rulers who are destined to accept Bahá'u'lláh; 2. the Four Pillars of the age of Aquarius-Leo; 3. the four Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith

FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH—1. the celestial directions corresponding to the equinoxes and solstices; 2. the constellations corresponding to the equinoxes and solstices

FOUR HORNS—voices of the Four Winds

FOUR HORSEMEN, FOUR HORSES—see colours, horse]

FOUR QUARTERS OF THE EARTH—1. the four hemispheres: Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western; 2. the four cardinal directions, North, South, East, West

FOUR WINDS OF THE EARTH—the winds of prophecy

FOWL—see bird

FROGS—unclean principles and false teachings

FRUITS—1. blessings; 2. consequential outcomes

FURLONG—an earthly measure

GAIN THE VICTORY—to overcome

GARMENT, RAIMENT, ROBE—1. attributes of the soul; 2. garment to the foot—heavenly attributes

GATE—see Twelve Gates

GEMS—see precious stones

GLASS—clearly understood (see also sea of glass)

GLORY OF GOD—lit. Bahá'u'lláh

GOG AND MAGOG—rulers and peoples motivated by satanic forces

GOLD—1. excellence and perfection; 2. Divine

GOLDEN GIRDLE—1. spiritual power; 2. a new Faith

GOSPEL—lit. glad tidings

GRASS—1. people of the earth; 2. green grass—righteous people

GRAVE—a place for (see) dead bodies (11:9)

GREAT TRIBULATION—persecutions of righteous peoples

GREAT WHORE—1. false theology, the corrupter of the Word of God (see woman)

GREEN GRASS—righteous people

HAIL—missiles of Divine punishment

HARLOT—theologies or priest who prostitutes the Word of God (see woman)

HARPS—contemplation

HARVEST—mankind in its various degrees of spiritual growth

HEAD—1. a projectile (9:19); 2. a dominion (12:3) (see Seven Heads)

HEAR—to understand the true meanings of spiritual teachings

HEAT—see fire

HEAVEN—1. the realm of the spirit; 2. closeness to God; 3. the realm of Divine principles reflected imperfectly in the world of man; 4. the Law of God concerning eternal verities; 5. the source of Divine prophecy

HELL—remoteness from God

HIDDEN MANNA—1. spiritual sustenance from heaven; 2. Divine Revelation

HIM WHICH IS, AND WHICH WAS, AND IS TO COME—1. the Lord God; 2. the Hebrew Trinity, Yahweh; 3. God's recurring Manifestations

HOLY CITY—1. Jerusalem; 2. the Law of God

HORN—1. a name of a ruler (12:3); 2. the name of an office (13:11); 3. a name of authority (5:6) (see also ten horns, two horns)

HORSE—1. a potent force; 2. White Horse—theology (corrupted, 6:2; true, 19:11); 3. Red Horse—war; 4. Black Horse—economic

injustice; 5. Pale Horse—ungodliness, spiritual indifference; 6. cannons (9:17); (also see white horse, colour)

HORSE'S BRIDLE, HEIGHT OF—seven spans

HOT—religious zeal

HOUR—1. a short time; 2. a part of a year; 3. (cap.) the person of the Manifestation of God; 4. (cap.) the time when the Manifestation declares His Mission; 5. The “Hour”—the “Time of the end”

HOUR OF TEMPTATION—1. the temptation to deny or martyr the Báb; 2. the “Hour”

HUNGER—to need spiritual sustenance

HUSBAND—1. the Centre of the Covenant; 2. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

IMAGE OF THE BEAST—the Second Beast, the ‘Abbásid dynasty, a revived replica of the First Beast

ISLAND—1. a place of refuge on the sea of the spirit; 2. a place of refuge on the sea of humanity; 3. a church

JERUSALEM—lit. Sacred Peace; 2. the City of the renewed and purified Word of God

JEW—1. a lover of righteousness; 2. one who accepts the Manifestation

JEZEBEL—daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon, who introduced the doctrine of Balaam into Israel. She symbolizes idol worship, false priesthood, etc.

KEY—power to open and close

KEY OF DAVID—the power to open a new Age

KEYS OF HELL AND DEATH—the power to bring people back to God and to resurrect the spiritually dead

KILL—1. to overcome or vanquish; 2. to destroy spiritual reality (11:7)

KING—see Seven Kings, ten horns

KING OF LOCUSTS—Abú-Sufyán (also king of the First Beast)

KING OF THE FIRST BEAST—Abú-Sufyán

KINGDOM OF GOD—the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh

KINGS OF THE EAST—Bahá’u’lláh and His Successors

LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE—extreme spiritual torment

LAMB—1. “Leader of the flock;” 2. Holy Figure sacrificed for the Covenant; 3. the Centre of the Covenant; 4. Jesus Christ

5. The Báb; 6. 'Abdu'l-Bahá; 7. meekness (13:11); 8. Aries, the first sign of the zodiac

LAMP—see Seven Lamps

LAODICEA, CHURCH OF—lit. just people, the Muslim Faith

LEAVES OF THE TREE—teachings

LEOPARD—Empire of Alexander

LIAR—corrupter of the Word of God

LIFE—to be spiritually aware

LIGHTNING—anger and wrath of God

LINEN—see white linen

LION—1. kingly majesty and strength; 2. Babylonia; 3. Leo, the sign of the zodiac; 4. the Lion of Judah, Bahá'u'lláh

LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH—Bahá'u'lláh

LITTLE BOOK—the Word of God

LOCUSTS, PLAGUE OF—mounted warriors

LORD'S DAY—1. the duration of the Dispensation of a Manifestation of God; 2. Lord's day (lower case)—Sunday

LUKEWARM—bigoted

MAN—1. unity of man; 2. Aquarius, the sign of the zodiac; 3. the Báb

MAN-CHILD—1. the Báb; 2. the Twelfth Imám

MANNA—see Hidden Manna

MARK—1. stigma; 2. name; 3. mark on the right (working) hand—land and business tax (*kharaaj*); 4. mark on the forehead—head tax (*jizyah*)

MARRIAGE—reunion of the Word of God with man

MICHAEL—lit. One Like God, the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh

MIGHTY ANGEL—the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh (10:1)

MIRACLE—a wonder, not necessarily supernatural

MONTH—thirty years

MOON—1. a reflector of the light of heaven; 2. a prophet or a Manifestation; 3. leaders of the worldly Church; 4. emblem of Turkey (12:1)

MOUNTAIN—1. a nation; 2. a religion; 3. a people; 4. a place of refuge

MOUTH—1. the opening of a cannon (9:19); 2. speech (10:9); 3. a devourer (12:16); 4. centre of command (Capital or throne) (13:2)

MYSTERY OF GOD—1. hidden meanings of prophecy (10:7);

2. 'Abdu'l-Bahá

NAKED—lacking in spiritual attributes (raiment)

NAME OF BLASPHEMY—The Caliph (The Successor), 666

NAME WRITTEN—see White Stone

NEW JERUSALEM—the City of the renewed Word of God, the City of Bahá

NEW NAME—1. Bahá; 2. Bahá'u'lláh

NEW SONG—the new Message

NICOLAITANES—followers of Nicolas, i.e., Covenant breakers

NIGHT—the period between two Divine Revelations when the Sun of Truth is not manifest among men

NUMBERS:

3—Divinity; holiness, heaven; Yahweh

4—world of man

7—union of heaven and earth; opportunity; expiation and sacrifice, trial and punishment, the union of Divinity and the world of man (3 + 4)

9—Bahá, the Greatest Name of God; Bahá'u'lláh; the Trinity of Trinities; the Completed Triad; the unity of religions and mankind

12 = 3—(cabalistic contraction); the Twelve Tribes of Israel; the Twelve Apostles of Jesus; the Twelve Basic Principles of the Bahá'í Faith; the signs of the zodiac; the unity of heaven and earth (3×4); the Twelve Imams of Islám; etc.

144 = 9—(cabalistic contraction); the twice-72 primal points of the Bahá'í Dispensation; (possibly) Bahá'u'lláh Μπαχαλλά*

666 = 9—(cabalistic contraction); The Caliph; Yang; the sun; the source of Divine inspiration (uncorrupted); the worldly Church (corrupted)

1,600 = 7—(cabalistic contraction); "40-times-40"

12,000 = 3—(cabalistic contraction)

144,000 = 9—(cabalistic contraction); the "first fruits"

200,000,000 = 2—(cabalistic contraction)

ODOURS—(perfumes)—prayers

OFFSPRING OF DAVID—1. a descendant of David; 2. the Spirit of David; 3. Jesus Christ

* Original was Βηααολλα.

OVERCOME—to resist and overcome false doctrine

OX (calf in KJV)—1. strength and servitude; 2. Taurus, the sign of the zodiac;
3. the Servant of Bahá, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

PAIN—spiritual suffering

PALMS—glad tidings, victory

PARADISE—1. heaven; 2. closeness to God; 3. Riḍván

PASS AWAY—see flee (21:1)

PERGAMOS, CHURCH OF—lit. parchment, the Hindu Faith

PHILADELPHIA, CHURCH OF—lit. brotherly love, the Christian Faith

PRECIOUS STONES—(see Chapter 21):

AMETHYST—1. spiritual light; 2. reverence, healing, serenity, poise; 3. world tribunal or parliament of man

BERYL—1. faith, loyalty, humility, unity; 2. universal peace

CHALCEDONY—1. purity; 2. all religions are one

CHRYSOLITE—1. the Chrysolite Tablet; 2. sincerity, truthfulness, purity, selflessness; 3. elimination of prejudice

CHRYSOPRASUS—1. truthfulness, sincerity, justice, purity; 2. spiritual solution of the economic problem

EMERALD—1. harmony and unity; 2. religion must be source of unity

JACINTH—1. universal colour; 2. hue of the heart; 3. auxiliary universal language

JASPER—1. unification of man; 2. red of the heart

PEARL—innocence

SAPPHIRE—1. truth, faith, inspiration, loyalty; 2. independent investigation of truth

SARDINE—unity of material and spiritual worlds

SARDIUS—science and religion agree

SARDONYX—1. two in one; 2 equality of man and woman

TOPAZ—1. light of knowledge, glory of wisdom; 2. universal education

PROPHETS—see Two Prophets

QUEEN—married to the Lamb (Compare widow)

RAIMENT—see garment

RAIN—bounty from heaven

RAINBOW—the Covenant between God and man that He will

always send man a Manifestation provided we will follow His Laws

REED—a flute played by the Divine Flute Player

RESURRECTION—1. renewal of spiritual life (awareness); 2. First Resurrection—to become spiritually revived through the acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh

RICH—to have spiritual assets

RIGHT HAND—1. hand of might and power; 2. working hand

RIVERS—streams of spiritual grace and knowledge

ROBE—see Garment

ROCKS—strongholds, places of refuge (also see stone)

ROD—shepherd's tool held by the Divine Shepherd

ROD OF IRON—symbol of power and authority

ROOT OF DAVID—1. Abraham; 2. descendant of Abraham; 3. the Spirit of Abraham; 4. Jesus Christ; 5. Bahá'u'lláh

SACKCLOTH—old attributes

SAINTS—holy and righteous people who follow the Manifestation

SAND OF THE SEA—people of all nations

SARDIS, CHURCH OF—lit. stone, the Buddhist Faith

SATAN—from Heb., lit. The Adversary, the principle of resistance to the Law of God

SATAN'S SEAT—degraded spiritual condition

SCORPION—1. a quick firer of arrows; 2. Scorpio, the sign of the zodiac

SEA—1. movement, uncertainty, fluidity; 2. sea of the spirit; 3. sea of humanity; 4. sea of tribulation; 5. sea of doubt and disbelief (21:1); 6. sea of death

SEA OF GLASS—the Ocean of Truth, the Wellspring of all knowledge and wisdom

SEAL OF GOD—1. chosen for eternal spiritual life; 2. the number Three (Yahweh); the number Nine (Bahá)

SEASON—a part of an Era

SEAT—1. throne of power and authority; 2. Capital; 3. seat of the beast: Constantinople, Turkey

SECOND BEAST—the 'Abbásid dynasty

SECOND DEATH—failure to accept Bahá'u'lláh

SEE—1. to understand; 2. to have spiritual vision

SEED—spiritual descendants

SEVEN ANGELS—1. the seven Prophets of the seven Faiths of Asia; 2. messengers of trial and punishment

SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA—Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islám, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Sabaeanism

SEVEN HEADS—the seven dominions ruled by the Banú Umayyad: the Roman-Byzantine dominion around Damascus, Persia, Arabia, Egypt, Africa, Andalusia, Turkestan-Transoxiana

SEVEN KINGS—the seven dominions (ruled by kings) of the Banú Umayyad dynasty; five are fallen—the five dominions that had been conquered; one is (sovereign)—Persia; not yet come—Turkestan-Transoxiana

SEVEN LAMPS—seven Spirits (Manifestations of God)

SEVEN SPIRITS—1. Revelators of the Seven Churches: Jesus Christ, Moses, Krishna, Gautama Buddha, Muḥammad, Zoroaster, and possibly Adam, Noah, or Enoch; 2. the seven letters in the names HYSYN 'ALY (Ḥusayn 'Alí) or BHA'LLH (Bahá'u'lláh)

SEVEN THUNDERS—voices of the seven Spirits

SHIPS—1. places of refuge on the sea of tribulation; 2. churches

SICKLE—power to reap the harvest of mankind

SIN—disobeying God's Laws; 2. Enslavement to animal passions; 3. attachment to the contingent world of attributes and duality

SION OR ZION—theocracy directly administered by God, the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh

SMITE THE EARTH WITH PLAGUES—to chastise, correct, and educate the wicked

SMOKE—1. obscuring to truth; 2. torment; 3. visible evidence; 4. grave dissensions, abrogations of recognized standards, the destruction of their narrow-minded exponents, etc.

SMYRNA, CHURCH OF—lit. myrrh, the Jewish Faith

SODOM AND EGYPT—the Near East (11:8)

SON OF MAN—1. Jesus Christ; 2. One Like the Son of Man—Bahá'u'lláh

SON OF GOD—1. (capitals) a Manifestation of God; 2. (lower case) one who receives the Word of God

SORCERIES—deceptions

SORE—spiritual distress

SPIRIT—1. an energizing principle emanating from God; 2. a Manifestation; 3. the prophetic attitude; 4. unclean spirits—evil principles and teachings (see also SEVEN SPIRITS)

STAND UP—to become spiritually re-manifested (11:11)

STARS—1. spiritual leaders; 2. Revelators; 3. fallen star—leader fallen from grace; 4. morning star—Herald of a new Day of God (Jesus Christ, the Báb); 5. twelve stars—the Twelve Imams of Islám; 6. third of the stars of heaven—descendants of Muḥammad; 7. Seven Stars—the seven Revelators of the seven Churches of Asia; 8. the seven letters in the names HSYN'ALY (Ḥusayn 'Alí) or BHA'LLH (Bahá'u'lláh)

STONE—1. truth; 2. concept; 3. hailstone—spiritual test (16:21) (see also WHITE STONE)

STREET—place of activity

SUN—1. God; 2. God's Manifestation; 3. God's Faith; 4. ubiquitous tribulation (heat); 5. emblem of Persia (12:1); 6. source of the light of God (19:17); 7. Reality

SUN, MOON, AND STARS—1. the hierarchy; 2. the laws and teachings of the hierarchy

SWALLOW—to devour (12:16)

SWORD—1. weaponry; 2. the Sword of Truth

TABERNACLE OF GOD—1. see Sion; 2. a Manifestation; 3. the Universal House of Justice

TAIL—1. breech of a cannon (9:19); 2. last ruler of the Baní-Umayyad dynasty, Marwán II (12:4); 3. a quiver (9:10)

TALENT—a spiritual test

TEMPLE OF GOD—1. see Tabernacle of God; 2. the Holy of Holies, the spiritual Law of God

TEN HORNS—the ten (unrepeated) names of the rulers of the Baní-Umayyad dynasty: Abú-Sufyán, Mu'áwíyah, Yazíd, Marwán, 'Abdu'l-Malik, al-Walíd, Sulaymán, 'Umar, Hishám, Ibráhím

TEN KINGS—see ten horns

THIEF—one who enters and departs unseen

THIRST—to crave spiritual knowledge

THRONE—seat of power

THUNDER—1. violation of the Covenant; 2. powerful utterance (see also Seven thunders)

THYATRIA, CHURCH OF—lit. (prob.) cypress tree, the Zoroastrian Faith

THYINE WOOD—a scented wood used for perfume

TIME, A—360 years

TIME OF THE END—the time between the Hour of the Báb and the Hour of Bahá'u'lláh

TREE—1. source of spiritual guidance; 2. Tree of Life; 3. everlasting spirit (see also Twin Holy Trees, Two Olive Trees)

TREE OF LIFE—1. source of spiritual sustenance, light, and life; 2. a Manifestation of God; 3. Bahá'u'lláh

TRUMPET—a herald

TWELVE GATES—hold Figures of the invisible zodiac; (also see door)

TWELVE STARS—the twelve Imams of Islám

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS—the twenty-four leading Figures of the Bahá'í Faith (except Bahá'u'lláh, Who sits on the throne)

TWIN HOLY TREES—the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh

TWO EDGED SWORD—the Sword of Truth

TWO HORNS—the caliphate and sultanate

TWO OLIVE TREES—two sources of spiritual light, Muḥammad and 'Alí

TWO PROPHETS—Muḥammad and 'Alí

TWO WINGS OF A GREAT EAGLE—'Alí and Fátima

TWO WITNESSES—Muḥammad and 'Alí

UNCLEAN SPIRITS—evil principles and teachings

VINE OF THE EARTH—mankind likened to a vineyard

VOICES—1. utterings of doubters and hypocrites; 2. utterings of angels

WAR IN HEAVEN—conflict of principles

WATER—1. spiritual grace and knowledge; 2. words (12:15);

3. waters—the sea of humanity; 4. many waters—great spiritual knowledge

WATER OF LIFE—heavenly grace and knowledge that revives spiritual life

WEEK—seven years

WHITE—purity

WHITE HORSE—(ridden by Faithful and True) correct theology

WHITE LINEN—attributes of purity and cleanliness of soul

WHITE STONE—1. a scroll addressed by the Báb to His followers and Bahá'u'lláh revealing the name of the next Manifestation, Bahá'u'lláh; 2. a sealed prophecy revealing the name of the next Manifestation

WHORE—the corrupted Word of God

WIDOW—opposite of queen

WIFE—see Bride

WILDERNESS—1. desert of Hijáz, place of the Word; 2. spiritual desolation (17:3)

WIND—message from God

WINE—1. wine of wrath—consequential punishment; 2. deception; 3. intoxication (17:2)

WINGS—spiritual flight

WITNESSES—see Two Witnesses

WOE—the dawning of a Day of God, a new Revelation

WOMAN—1. (Bride) the Law of God descended upon mankind; 2. “woman”—see harlot

WORD OF GOD, THE (name)—The Pen of the Most High, Bahá'u'lláh (19:13)

WORMWOOD—1. bitterness; 2. Constantine the Great

WOUND—calamity

WOUNDED HEAD THAT HEALED—Andalusia (Spain)

YEAR—360 years

ZION see SION

Appendix F

Chronological table

1 solar year	365.242 days	
1 lunar year	354.367 days	
1 solar year	1.03069 lunar years	
1 Platonic month	2160 solar years	2226.3 lunar years

Biblical term	Calendar time
1 "day"	1 year or 1 "time" (360 years) or 1 era (arbitrary period)
A "day"	a Dispensation
1 "week"	7 years
1 "month"	30 years
1 "time"	360 years
1 "year"	360 years
1 "hour"	a short time, a part of a year
The "Hour"	the "Time of the end"

To determine the span of time between a date BCE and a date CE, recall that one year is missing in the Christian calendar, since, by the ancient Roman reckoning, Jesus was born at One CE instead of Zero. Thus, for example, the span of time in solar years from 602 BC until CE 1844 is about

$$1844 + 602 - 1 = 2445 \text{ solar years.}$$

The same time span in lunar years is about

$$2445 \times 1.03069 = 2520 \text{ lunar years or 7 "times"}$$

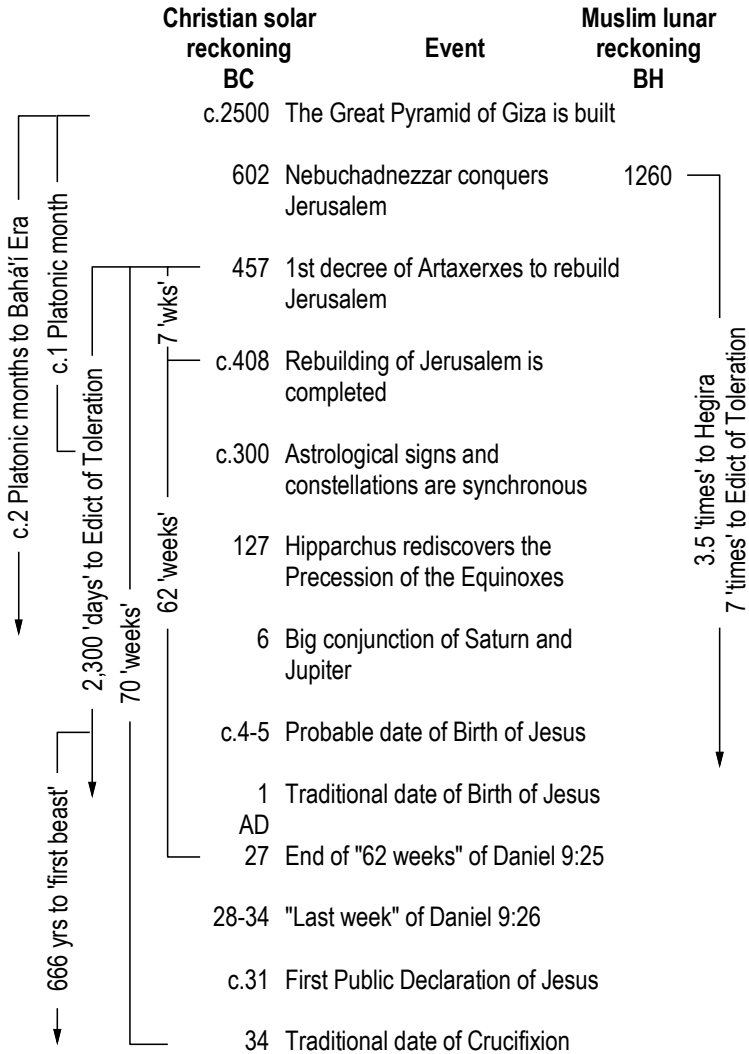
To convert a date in the Christian solar calendar to its approximate Muslim lunar equivalent, recall that the Hijáz occurred in CE 622. Thus CE 1844 is about

$$(1844 - 622) \times (1.03069) = \text{AH } 1259.5$$

Because of leap years, different starting points in the seasons of the different calendars, and other irregularities, the conversion between calendar dates as derived in the above manner may be in error by a year or so.

Many ancient dates are disputed by various authorities.

F. Chronological table



70 Rome sacks Jerusalem, destroys the Temple

c.79 John writes the Apocalypse

110-238 1st Great Persecution of Christians

249-311 2nd Great Persecution of Christians

325 Constantine's Council of Nicea

408 Alaric initiates fall of Christendom

610 Muhammad receives His Revelation

613 First Public Declaration of Muhammad

10-11

622 The Hijrah

0

628 Truce of al-Hudaybiyyah

AH

632 Beginning of Muslim invasions of Asian and African Christendom

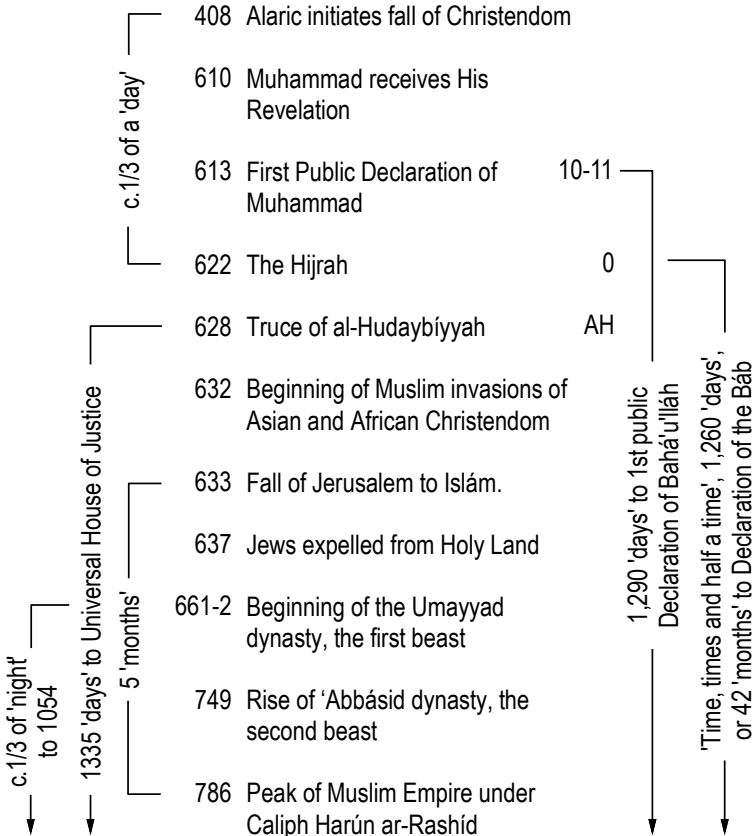
633 Fall of Jerusalem to Islám.

637 Jews expelled from Holy Land

661-2 Beginning of the Umayyad dynasty, the first beast

749 Rise of 'Abbásid dynasty, the second beast

786 Peak of Muslim Empire under Caliph Harún ar-Rashid



F. Chronological table

	Ascension of Twelfth Imám	260	
	1054 Great Schism of Christian Church. Supernova in Crab Nebula. Circa end of Dark Age of Europe		
	1218-20 Invasion of Islám by Genghis Khan		
	1431-1517 Beginning of Protestant Reformation		
↑ 'Year, month, day' to the 'Hour'	1453 Fall of Constantinople and eastern Christendom to Islám		
	1755 The Lisbon Earthquake		
	1780 The Dark Day		
	1817 Birth of Bahá'u'lláh	1233	
	1819 Birth of the Báb	1235	
	1833 The Great Star Fall		
	1843 The Great Comet		
	1844 Declaration of the Báb. Edict of Toleration. Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	1260	
	1845-6 Biela's Twin Comet		
	1850 Martyrdom of the Báb. Earthquake at Shíráz	1268	
1852 First imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh			
1852-3 Bahá'u'lláh receives His Revelation	1269		
1863 First public declaration of Bahá'u'lláh	1279		
1892 Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh	1309		

The 'Heroic Age' - 70 & 7 yrs to 1921

1,000 years to Declaration of the Báb

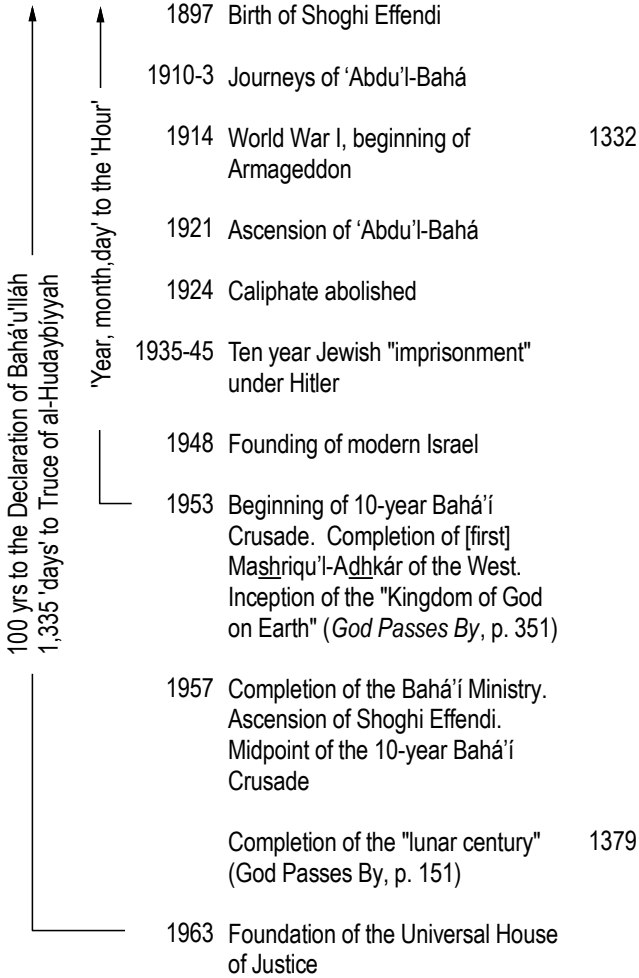
1,260 'days' to the Hegira

'Year' nine

The 'Hour' - 19 years

40 years

7 times 7 years



Appendix G

Some Bahá'í Apocalyptic Writings

General

- G#1 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Scriptures*, Section 92.
Explains that there are many meanings to each word of the Apocalypse.
- G#2 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. II, pp. 285–6.
Advises us to peruse Saint John's Revelation since many signs spoken of in that vision will soon be revealed.
- G#3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. II, p. 294.
Cites an individual believer's knowledge of the significances of the Revelation of Saint John.
- G#4 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. III, pp. 678–81.
Analyzes the vision of an individual believer in which many apocalyptic symbols appear, including birds, the Heavenly Table, manna, white garments, the Throne, the Bride, the Lamb's Book of Life, the white horse.
- G#5 *Star of the West*, VIII:13, p. 180.
This Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá contains the meanings of many apocalyptic symbols, including the Throne, clouds, the invisible zodiac, the new song, birds.
- G#6 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 57–8.
Explains the "Prophetic Cycle" and the "Cycle of Fulfilment", the relationship of the Báb and the Covenant, the "Second Woe", the two "Witnesses", the "Man Child", and several apocalyptic symbols.
- G#7 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 93–100.
Lists some of the Titles of Bahá'u'lláh, His ancestry, and references made to Him by other Manifestations and prophets. He explains that John referred to Bahá'u'lláh as the "Alpha and Omega" and the "third

woe". The Law of Bahá'u'lláh was described by John a "a new heaven and a new earth". The Tabernacle of God, the "Holy City" and the "New Jerusalem". Shoghi Effendi quotes 'Abdu'l-Bahá Who compares the Revelations of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in zodiacal imagery.

- G#8 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 48–9, 238–40.
Describes the role of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of the Covenant, and explains that John referred to 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the "Ark of God's Testament". The reference describes episodes surrounding the violation of the Covenant by Mírzá Yaḥyá and Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí, and explains the "lightnings", "thunders" and "earthquake" attending the violation of the Covenant.
- G#9 *Star of the West*, II:1, pp. 3–4.
Mírzá Asadu'lláh asserts the belief that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures have become (largely) fulfilled by the events of the mid-nineteenth century.
- G#10 Mírzá Asadu'lláh-i-Núr, *Sacred Mysteries*, pp. 112–9.
Explains gematria, the numerological significance of the number Nine, and several other numerological mysteries.
- G#11 *Bahá'í Scriptures*, Section 804.
'Abdu'l-Bahá explains the significance of the number Nine and several other numerological mysteries.

Specific

- 1:4#1 *Bahá'í News*, No. 77, Sept. 1933.
Shoghi Effendi refers to certain statements of Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl about the Seven Religions of the past, explains that only the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are truly authoritative, but that if His statements cannot be discovered, we are free to tentatively accept the opinions of scholars.
- 1:4#2 16, 20. "You have asked about the meaning of the

'seven churches' mentioned in the Book of Revelation. In a Tablet 'Abdu'l-Bahá has explained that the seven spirits and the seven stars mentioned in the Apocalypse refer to the seven letters of the alphabet that constitute the Most Great Name (in Arabic and Persian the names of 'Bahá'u'lláh' as well as 'Husayn-'Alí' consist of seven letters each). In the same Tablet He points out that the seven churches refer to the 'holy souls who were ignited with the fire of the love of their Lord.'" (From a letter of behalf of the Universal House of Justice dated 7 August 1978, to an individual believer.)

- 1:4#3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 205–6.
Explains the meaning of "was, is, and shall be".
- 1:7 Bahá'u'lláh, *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 71–2, 216–7.
Explains the symbolism of "clouds".
- 1:8#1 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 51.
Explains that one meaning of the "Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last" is Jesus Christ.
- 1:8#2 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 95.
Explains that Bahá'u'lláh is the "Alpha and Omega" of the Apocalypse.
- 1:8#3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 294.
Elaborates on the meaning of the "Alpha and Omega" in reference to Jesus Christ.
- 1:8#4 Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablet to the Jews*.
Explains the meaning of the "Alpha and Omega" as the Word of God.
- 1:8#5 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 13.
Gives a meaning of the "Alpha and Omega" as the Lord God Omnipotent.
- 2:17#1 Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 195.
Explains that the "Bread which cometh down from Heaven" is Divine Revelation.
- 2:17#2 *Star of the West*, XI:16, p. 275.

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá expounds on the "manna that came down from heaven".
- 2:17#3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. III, p. 677.
Expounds on the "Heavenly Table" and the "Bread".
- 4:4#1 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 7-8.
Places the Eighteen Letters of the Living among the Twenty-four Elders of the Apocalypse.
- 4:4#2 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 96-7.
Describes the Succession of Prophets in zodiacal imagery.
- 4:4#3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 39.
Mentions the invisible zodiac.
- 5:6 Mírzá Asadu'lláh-i-Núr, *Sacred Mysteries*, pp. 52-71.
Explains the removal of the daily (physical) sacrifice of the killing of lambs and cattle under the Dispensation of Muḥammad and its replacement by a spiritual sacrifice. The reference gives AH 1260 as the end of Muḥammad's Dispensation, and explains the number Five as applied to the Báb. The sacrifice becomes increasingly spiritual under the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, requiring the "chanting of the Verses of God and being firm in the Covenant of God."
- 6:12-13 Bahá'u'lláh, *The Book of Certitude*, pp. 33-4, 36-41.
Explains the symbolism of "sun, moon and stars".
- 9:12 Shoghi Effendi, *This Decisive Hour*, pp. 124-5.
Discusses the "Year Nine" and gives it as the date of the "Third Woe".
- 11#1 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 61-81.
The complete explanation of Chapter 11 of the Apocalypse.
- 11:11-14 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 49-50.
Discusses Quddús and his role as one of the two "Witnesses".
- 11:13#1 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 53-54.
Describes the Shíráz earthquake of AH 1268.

- 11:13#2 Mírzá Asadu'lláh-i-Núr, *Sacred Mysteries*, pp. 16–7.
Explains the “Hour” as (1) the person of the Manifestation, (2) the “time of the end”, (3) the time when the Manifestation declares His Mission, and (4) the time between the Declaration of the Báb and the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh.
- 12#1 ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 87–90.
Explains the new Jerusalem, the “new heaven and the new earth”, and verses one to six of Chapter 12 of the Apocalypse.
- 13:8 *Star of the West*, Vol. 3, No. 14, p. 14.
Louis Gregory and Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl in *A Heavenly Vista* explain that the “Lamb” of the “Book of Life” is ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.
- 13:18#1 “Regarding the Apocalypse of St. John, the beast the numerical value of whose name is 666: the intent is the year, inasmuch as that beast who is the Umayyad king, appeared in the year 666 of the Christian era. This prophecy relates to the Holy Land.”— ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, a Tablet to an individual believer.
- 13:18#2 “As to the beast referred to in the Apocalypse, he was a soul who sought with his utmost power to destroy the Cause of God. He was the King of Persia, that is one of the early kings.”— ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, a Tablet to an individual believer.
- 16:16#1 *Star of the West*, Vol. X:3, p. 33.
‘Abdu'l-Bahá prophesies the beginning of “Armageddon” in AD 1914.
- 16:16#2 H. M. Balyuzi, *‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 259
Another war, World War II, is prophesied by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.
- 16:16#3 H. M. Balyuzi, *‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 259.
‘Abdu'l-Bahá expresses His disappointment with the Treaty of Versailles.
- 16:16#4 H. M. Balyuzi, *‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, p.438.
‘Abdu'l-Bahá expresses His disappointment with the

- League of Nations and explains that the Supreme Tribunal described by Bahá'u'lláh will bring Universal Peace.
- 16:16#4 Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 4-7.
Quotes dire prophecies by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá of future catastrophes.
- 19:16 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 206.
Quotes Bahá'u'lláh as declaring Himself to be "the King of Kings".
- 20:3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. III, pp. 659-60.
Explains the millennium as the beginning of this Manifestation until the end of its predominance throughout the contingent world.
- 20:4#1 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. II, pp. 396-7.
Uses several terms such as "Resurrection", "Day of Judgement", "sun", "stars", "balance", "fire", "paradise".
- 20:4#2 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. II, pp. 429-30.
Explains that the "Promised Christ" of the "Second Coming" is Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb.
- 20:4#3 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. III, pp. 643-4.
Explains the "Return" as the return of qualities, virtues, perfections, etc., not the literal return of persons and souls.
- 20:7 *Bahá'í News*, No. 89, Jan. 1935, p. 1.
Shoghi Effendi explains that a Manifestation is to follow Bahá'u'lláh after a thousand years or more Who will be subjected to persecutions but will ultimately triumph.
- 21:1-2#1 *Star of the West*, Vol. 18, p. 197.
'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that the new Jerusalem is divine civilization.
- 21:1-2#2 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. III, pp. 538-40.
Describes the new Jerusalem and explains that "Emanuel" was the forerunner of the "Second Coming of Christ".

- 21:1-2#3 *Bahá'í News*, No. 134, Mar. 1940, p. 2.
Shoghi Effendi explains that "His Holiness Emanuel" in the above Tablet refers to the Báb.
- 21:1-2#4 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 17-8.
'Abdu'l-Bahá mentions the "divine Jerusalem" and the "bride of Zion".
- 21:1-2#5 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 97-8.
The new Jerusalem is the divine civilization.
- 21:1-2#6 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 35-6.
Likens a new Dispensation to the Vernal equinox.
- 21:1-2#7 Mírzá Asadu'lláh-i-Núr, *Sacred Mysteries*, pp. 37-40.
"... the Words are sealed until the time of the end." The new Jerusalem has both a literal and an allegorical interpretation.
- 21:1-2#8 Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 144-5.
Gives the literal meaning of the new Jerusalem as the renewed vigour of Zion, Palestine, 'Akká and Jerusalem.
- 21:1-2#9 Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 213.
Explains that the new Law is the "new heaven" and the "new earth", the Tabernacle of God, the Holy City, the "Bride", and the "New Jerusalem".
- 21:1-2#10 Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 204-6.
Alludes to the new Jerusalem and the "coming of age of the human race".
- 21:1-2#11 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 84.
The new Jerusalem is "not built of material stones and mortar".
- 21:1-7 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, pp. 350-1, and *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, pp. 12-3.
The new Jerusalem is the Bride.

- 21:2#1 Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, pp. 64–7.
Describes the Day of Bahá'u'lláh.
- 21:2#2 ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, pp. 380–1.
The new Jerusalem is the heavenly religion.
- 21:10–17 ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. I, pp. 92–4, and
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 164–7.
Describes the twelve doors of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the
“golden rod”, “angels”, etc.
- 21:15#1 ‘Abdu'l-Bahá explains that the new Jerusalem is a pyramid
because it is a natural, enduring shape, etc. The Two Reapers
are the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. In one sense, 666 refers to
Napoleon. Bahá'u'lláh is the Prince of Peace—(From a pilgrim's
note. The answers were purportedly given by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá in
response to questions by Mr. E. T. Hall of Manchester, England
on 28 February 1920 and translated by Dr Luţfu'lláh Ḥakím of 3
April 1920.
- 21:19–20#1 The new Jerusalem and its twelve foundation stones
The first Bahá'í Principle, THE ONENESS OF THE WORLD OF HUMANITY.
Hands may be black, white, brown or yellow, but the hue of the
heart is one. The first foundation stone is jasper. It is a clear
red like the hue of the heart.
The second Bahá'í principle, THE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION OF
TRUTH. The second foundation stone, the sapphire, is a clear
blue, ‘true blue’, and is the colour of faith, inspiration, loyalty
and truth. Man must be free to soar in this ‘dome of heaven's
blue’ and loyal to a truth when he finds it.
The third Bahá'í Principle, THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RELIGIONS IS ONE.
The third foundation stone, the chalcedony, is pure white.
‘While white

G. Some Bahá'í Apocalyptic Writings

is apparent, yet in it are hidden and concealed the seven colours.' White is the symbol of purity, and in its origin each religion is pure and a brother to every other religion, for all truth is one.

The fourth Bahá'í Principle, RELIGION MUST BE THE SOURCE OF UNITY. The fourth foundation stone, the emerald, is green. Green is the colour of harmony and unity. There is no colour known with which green will not harmonize, just as the green foliage blends with every hued flower. Green is the colour of immortality and humility.

The fifth Bahá'í Principle, SCIENCE AND RELIGION MUST AGREE; NEITHER MUST DENY THE OTHER. [Out of order: see note on p. 305.] The fifth foundation stone, the sardonyx (see footnote [Chapter 21, Note 16]) is red or brown according to the way it is held. And so it is with science and religion; they are essentially one, but different in colour or manifestation. The virtues of man are many, but science is the most noble of them all. ... It is the bestowal of God; it is not material; it is Divine. Science is an effulgence ... the power of investigating the means by which man finds a pathway to God.

The sixth Bahá'í Principle, THE EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN; THEY MUST BE AS TWO WINGS OF THE SOUL, EACH EQUALLY DEVELOPED. [Out of order: see note on p. 305.] The sixth foundation stone, the sardius (see footnote [Chapter 21, Note 16]) is a stone of two layers, one white and one red, symbolic of the two in one.

The seventh Bahá'í Principle, REMOVAL OF ALL PREJUDICE, RELIGIOUS, RACIAL, ETC. The seventh foundation stone, the pure chrysolite, is an exquisitely clear green. We read in the ancient philosophies of the Chrysolite Tablet. It is a symbol of absolute sincerity and truthfulness, of purity, of selflessness. Only when our hearts are free and pure

from every form of prejudice and superstition can they become the Chrysolite Tablet whereon may be engraved our thoughts of our fellow man.

The eighth Bahá'í Principle, UNIVERSAL PEACE. The eighth foundation stone, the beryl, is a bluish green, the blue of faith and loyalty to our brother man, and the green of humility and unity. These are harmoniously blended into one symmetrical whole, like a beautiful bouquet of flowers. These established in the hearts of men will establish UNIVERSAL PEACE.

The ninth Bahá'í Principle, UNIVERSAL EDUCATION. The ninth foundation stone, the topaz, resembles the [golden yellow] glory of the sun. It is symbolic of the light of knowledge and the glory of wisdom that will result when UNIVERSAL EDUCATION is established in the world, and when the light of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are understood and lived.

The tenth Bahá'í Principle, SOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM. The tenth foundation stone, the chrysoprasus, is, like a chrysolite, a clear green which embodies truthfulness, justice, sincerity and purity. These are the requisites necessary for the SOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM. The stone represents the golden rule put into practice, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'

The eleventh Bahá'u'lláh Principle, A UNIVERSAL AUXILIARY LANGUAGE. The eleventh foundation stone, the jacinth, is, like jasper, a clear red, the universal colour and the hue of the heart. The heart of a race can understand the heart of another only when it can speak the same language.

The twelfth Bahá'í Principle, A WORLD TRIBUNAL OR PARLIAMENT OF MAN. The twelfth

foundation stone, the amethyst, is violet. It symbolizes spiritual light, reverence, healing, serenity and poise. The Tribunal of All Nations must be as the ultraviolet rays of the sun for the 'healing of the nations'. It must seek spiritual light in all reverence, that it may fulfil its high calling, imparting a sense of security, poise and serenity to the hearts of all humanity.

[NOTE:] (The above explanation of the twelve foundation stones was purportedly given to Shahnáz Waite by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It should be considered a "pilgrim's note" and therefore, not an authentic Writing. This version of the pilgrim's note was obtained from Flora Brooks, a Bahá'í of Staunton, Virginia, who obtained it from Ruth Moffett. It is not clear from the text of the note which words are direct quotes from 'Abdu'l-Bahá and which are interpretations of interpolations by Shahnáz Waite or later transcribers.

(The writer of the present book has taken certain minor liberties with the text to make it more readable, and also has reversed the order of the fifth and sixth Principles in the main text of Chapter 21. It is clear that the characteristics of the sardonyx and sardius have somehow gotten interchanged in the above version.)

- 21:19–20#2 *Star of the West*, Vol. XI:1, pp. 4–5.
Lists of the Twelve Basic Bahá'í Principles as they appear in the Apocalypse.
- 21:22–33 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, Vol. I, pp. 10–11.
Explains that the Bahá'í spiritual meetings are inspired by God.
- 21:23 *Bahá'í Scriptures*, Section 47, p. 117.
Bahá'u'lláh explains that He is the Glory of God in Revelations 21:23.
- 22:3 *Star of the West*, II:14, pp. 12–14.

In the article *In Praise of the Greatest Branch*, Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl identifies 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant, as illuminating the new Jerusalem, and says that the Book of Life is under the dominion of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Appendix H

Late changes and errata

'Abdu'l-Bahá's explanation of the 1,335 days (copied from *I, Daniel*)

From reference 20, p. 51ff:

'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that the 1,335 years are counted in solar rather than lunar years, because a *century* must elapse between the Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh and the firm establishment of "*the teachings of God ... upon the earth*". Apparently, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was referring to some prophecy in sacred writings.

Also, Shoghi Effendi explains that the 1,335 years end at the year CE 1963, the date of the Foundation of the Universal House of Justice. Unfortunately, neither 'Abdu'l-Bahá nor Shoghi Effendi shed enough light in their brief explanations for this writer to determine the exact method of computation. In *The Apocalypse Unsealed*, Appendix B, it was suggested that the beginning point for the 1,335 years could be the Truce of al-Ḥudaybiyyah in CE 628. This would result in the year CE 1963 as the end date of the 1,335 solar years.

It is interesting that different methods of reckoning have little effect on the result. Regardless of what assumptions are made, it is certainly true that the man would be happy who waited and lived to see the completion of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

The Two Lambs of the Bahá'í Dispensation

In *The Apocalypse Unsealed*, (ref. 19) (see Chapter 5, Note 4), this writer named the two Lambs of the Bahá'í Dispensation as the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. At that time, Volume 3 of Adib Taherzadeh's magnificent work, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, was not available. It is now clear that Bahá'u'lláh considered Mírzá Mihdí, The Purest Branch, to be a Lamb of the Bahá'í Dispensation. This can be inferred by referring to Taherzadeh's book (Ref. 19), Chapter 10, in which we read that the "death of the Purest Branch must be viewed as Bahá'u'lláh's own sacrifice, a sacrifice on the same level as the crucifixion of Christ and the martyrdom of the Báb."

Since Bahá'u'lláh's Dispensation has two Lambs instead of the usual one, this writer has now concluded that the two Lambs are probably Mírzá Mihdí and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Báb would then be the Lamb of His own Dispensation.

The beast that was, is not, yet is

In Chapter 17 of the Apocalypse, there is a riddle concerning a “beast that was, is not, yet is”. In *The Apocalypse Unsealed*, this writer gave the answer to the riddle as the empire of Alexander, since it seemed to come into existence a second time under the Umayyad dynasty.

In researching for *I, Daniel*, this writer studied some of the work of great historian Arnold J. Toynbee. Professor Toynbee points out that the empire of Alexander did not produce a permanent change in the civilization introduced to the region under the Persian empire. When Islám reconquered the region, the civilization introduced under Islám more closely resembled the former Persian civilization rather than the more recent Hellenistic civilization.

That being so, the answer to the riddle is probably as follows:

The beast that was: the Medeo-Persian empire;
is not: the empire of Alexander;
yet is: the Umayyad dynasty.

The One who stands at the door and knocks

Riggs originally stated that this Personage, in Revelation 3:20, referred to Bahá'u'lláh. He now indicates that this verse most probably refers to Muḥammad, as this is His letter to the Muslim Faith.

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- KJV—the King James Version of the Holy Bible
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