

Days of Remembrance, Preface

Bahá'u'lláh

Translated



Days of Remembrance - Selections from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh for Bahá'í Holy Days.

Preface

The observance of holy days occupies a central place in every religion. Through their commemoration, the calendar year becomes the stage on which the signal events associated with the life and ministry of the divine Manifestations of God are annually remembered and honoured. This remembrance has both a personal dimension, providing a time for reflection on the significance of these events, and a social dimension, helping to deepen the identity and foster the cohesion of the community.

The coming of each Manifestation of God brings renewal and revitalization: “old things are passed away” and “all things are become new”. By His authority, former laws are abrogated and the manners and customs of the previous Dispensation are reformed. Through the creative power of Divine Revelation, fresh life is instilled into hearts and souls:

Reflect thou, how, in one hand, He hath, by His mighty grasp, turned the earth of knowledge and understanding, previously unfolded, into a mere handful, and, on the other, spread out a new and highly exalted earth in the hearts of men, thus causing the freshest and loveliest blossoms, and the mightiest and loftiest trees to spring forth from the illumined bosom of man.

This re-creation and revitalization of all things is reflected in the introduction of a new calendar and the designation of new holy days which recast the rhythms of communal life.

The Bahá'í calendar, known as the Badí' calendar, was introduced by the Báb and subsequently confirmed by Bahá'u'lláh, Who fixed its commencement at the year of the Báb's declaration, 1844 (A.H. 1260). As the Bahá'í Era was inaugurated by twin Founders, the Bahá'í Holy Days include events pertaining to the birth, declaration, and passing of both Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. In the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, the principal repository of



the laws of His Revelation, Bahá'u'lláh designates the two “Most Great Festivals”: Riḍván, “the King of Festivals”, commemorating the declaration of His prophetic mission during a period of twelve days, three of which are observed as Holy Days, and the Declaration of the Báb, the event that initiates the Bahá'í Era. Also named as festivals in that same Book are Naw-Rúz and the anniversaries of the Birth of the Báb and of Bahá'u'lláh. The anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Báb was commemorated as a Holy Day during the lifetime of Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá added the observance of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh.

The present volume offers forty-five selections from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh revealed specifically for, or otherwise relating to, these nine Holy Days. The selections represent different revelatory modes, each reflecting facets of the greatness, the preciousness, and the peerless nature of this Day in which all the promises and prophecies of the past have been fulfilled—this sacred Day “whereon God hath made His own Self known and revealed it unto all who are in the heavens and on earth”. Some of the Tablets and excerpts presented in the volume are addressed to the body of Bahá'u'lláh's followers and are expressed in a celebratory and uplifting tone, occasionally with repeated refrains, while others were revealed to individual believers, sometimes with a mention of the specific circumstances of their revelation or the names of the recipients. Many are among His best-known works and have long been familiar to readers of His Writings in the original languages.

Eight of the selections were previously translated by Shoghi Effendi and published in *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh* and *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. A table listing these and other passages translated by Shoghi Effendi can be found at the end of the book. The remainder of the selections are, for the most part, published here for the first time in English. The current translations endeavour to afford a glimpse of the poetic tone of these celebrated Texts, even though they can never convey their full beauty.

It is hoped that this volume will uplift the hearts and souls of the followers of the Blessed Beauty throughout the world and will enrich the gatherings they hold in commemoration of those days that stand apart from all other days through their association with Him and His Herald.



2 Corinthians 5:17. □ Kitáb-i-Íqán 51. □