

The Station of Bahá'u'lláh and His Revelation

INTRODUCTION: *Approaching the threshold...*

An adequate introduction to the station of Bahá'u'lláh and His Revelation is simply impossible, given the overwhelming magnitude of His claim and the stupendous extent of His Revelation. However, something must be said to at least initiate an exploration of this unfathomable topic.

Everything in the Bahá'í Faith finds its basis, its essence, and its purpose, solely in the belief that Bahá'u'lláh represents on earth the Presence of the Creator, and that He speaks as the voice of God Himself. Everything He did, and everything He said or wrote, as He attests in the upcoming statement, is inspired of God. That He is neither merely a guru, nor just a holy man, neither simply an inspired soul nor an ancient master, neither just a prophet nor a mystic seer, teacher nor mentor, wise-man nor genius, sage nor saint, but rather, the Supreme Manifestation of God on earth, is our unalterable conviction as Bahá'ís. He is the Divine Presence, manifest in the form of a human being, as has been the Way of God through successive Revelations of the past.

"The essence of belief in Divine unity," Bahá'u'lláh wrote, "consisteth in regarding Him Who is the Manifestation of God¹ and Him Who is the invisible, the inaccessible, the unknowable Essence [God] as one and the same. By this is meant that whatever pertaineth to the former, all His acts and doings, whatever He ordaineth or forbiddeth, should be considered, in all their aspects, and under all circumstances, and without any reservation, as identical with the Will of God Himself. This is the loftiest station to which a true believer in the unity of God can ever hope to attain. Blessed is the man that reacheth this station, and is of them that are steadfast in their belief."²

This study is only a beginning, or perhaps another small phase, in the ongoing effort the believer will make to fathom this most mystical and unapproachably glorious station of Bahá'u'lláh and His Revelation. May your heart be showered abundantly from the fountain of certainty.



A Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh
in His own handwriting

OBJECTIVES: *A look to the horizon...*

Facilitator

Review the following objectives with the participants:

1. An objective of this study is to understand the fundamental verities or basic truths regarding the station of Bahá'u'lláh, the Magnitude of His Revelation, how He and His Revelation are the fulfillment of all the religions of the past, and His twin nature as a Manifestation of God.
2. An objective of this study is to acquire a deeper love for our Creator and His Manifestation.

¹ **Manifestation of God:** Great Prophet Who reveals the Words, and exhibits the signs and qualities of God

² *GWB*, p. 167

THE STUDY PROCESS: *Attaining the water of life...*

Facilitator

Review the following study process with the participants. Then study the numbered quotations that follow, one at a time as described below.

1. **READING:** *A drink from the cup of guidance...*

Two volunteers take turns reading the quotation out loud so it is read twice.

2. **CONFIRMING MEANING:** *A spray from the fountain of light...*

PARTICIPANTS: To better understand certain words used in the quotation, take turns with the following:

A. Choose a word from the quotation and state it for the whole group to hear. (Like a fun game – pick a word!) Then...

B. Read out loud the sentence that contains the **word** you selected, **while substituting for that word**, its given phrase, definition, or synonym from the boxes below the quotation.

Repeat A and B above until everyone is satisfied with their understanding of the words.

3. **FINDING VALUE:** *Mining the gems of truth...*

Take turns stating each basic fact or truth you can find in the quotation about the station of Bahá'u'lláh or His Revelation.

QUOTATIONS: *Within the meadows of Thy nearness...*

1. He [Bahá'u'lláh] Who in such dramatic circumstances was made to sustain the overpowering weight of so glorious a Mission was none other than the One Whom posterity will acclaim, and Whom innumerable followers already recognize, as the Judge, the Lawgiver and Redeemer of all mankind, as the Organizer of the entire planet, as the Unifier of the children of men, as the Inaugurator of the long-awaited millennium, as the Originator of a new “Universal Cycle,” as the Establisher of the Most Great Peace, as the Fountain of the Most Great Justice, as the Proclaimer of the coming of age of the entire human race, as the Creator of a new World Order, and as the Inspirer and Founder of a world civilization.

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 93-94)

acclaim: recognize with enthusiasm and praise
circumstances: accompanying events and conditions
dramatic: moving and sensational
Establisher: One who causes the permanent founding
Founder: the One who brings into being and is the organizer
Fountain: sustaining source
Inaugurator: One who brings about the beginning
Inspirer: One who motivates effort or action by divine influence
Judge: One who sits in judgment
Lawgiver: One who gives codes of law
millennium: thousand-year period of happiness and peace
Mission: task assigned by God
Most Great Justice: “...the Justice [rendering of what is morally right and true] upon which the ↗

structure of the Most Great Peace can alone, and must eventually, rest,” (Shoghi Effendi, *PDC*, p. 5)
Most Great Peace: condition in the world of permanent peace and unity based on the principle of the oneness of humanity
Order: system for organizing and uniting the people
Organizer: arranger in an orderly way
Originator: One who brings into being or is the creator
posterity: all future generations
Proclaimer: One who formally declares publicly
Redeemer: One who frees others from harm, distress, or captivity by payment of a ransom
sustain: undergo and endure
Unifier: One who brings together or makes one
Universal Cycle: A very long period of time which begins with a Supreme Manifestation of God. (*SAQ*, pp. 183-84)

2. To Him [Bahá'u'lláh] Jesus Christ had referred as the “*Prince of this world,*” as the “*Comforter*” Who will “*reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment,*” as the “*Spirit of Truth*” Who “*will guide you into all truth,*” Who “*shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak,*” as the “*Lord of the Vineyard,*” and as the “*Son of Man*” Who “*shall come in the glory of His Father*” “*in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,*” with “*all the holy angels*” about Him, and “*all nations*” gathered before His throne.

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 95)

clouds: “By the term ‘clouds’ is meant those things that are contrary to the ways and desires of men.” (Bahá'u'lláh, *KI*, p. 71); “It is evident that the changes brought about in every Dispensation constitute the dark clouds that intervene between the eye of man’s understanding and the Divine Luminary which shineth forth from the day spring of the Divine Essence.” (Bahá'u'lláh, *GWB*, p. 26)

Comforter: “The Comforter Whose advent all the scriptures have promised is now come...” (Bahá'u'lláh, cited in *WOB*, p. 104)
glory: distinguishing honor and admiration; splendor; radiant beauty
heaven: “By ‘heaven’ is meant the heaven of divine Revelation...” (Bahá'u'lláh, *KI*, p. 44)
Prince: highest ranking One
referred: made clear and specific mention of
reprove: express blame or disapproval [with]

3. To Israel He was neither more nor less than the incarnation of the “*Everlasting Father,*” the “*Lord of Hosts*” come down “*with ten thousands of saints*”; to Christendom Christ returned “*in the glory of the Father,*” to Shí‘ah Islám the return of the Imám Husayn; to Sunní Islám the descent of the “*Spirit of God*” (Jesus Christ); to the Zoroastrians the promised Sháh-Bahrám; to the Hindus the reincarnation of Krishna; to the Buddhists the fifth Buddha.

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 94)

Christendom: the Christians or followers of the Manifestation of God Jesus Christ
Buddhist: followers of the Manifestation of God Buddha
descent: coming down from heaven
glory: distinguishing honor and admiration; splendor; radiant beauty
Imám Husayn: According to Shí‘ah Islám, he was the third appointed successor (Imám) to the Prophet Muhammad and the most eminent of all the Imáms. Shí‘ah Muslims await the return of one with his outstanding spiritual attributes.
Israel: Judaism; Religion of the Manifestation of God Moses, whose followers are Jews
Hindus: followers of the Manifestation of God Krishna
incarnation: appearance in human form
Islám: Religion of the Manifestation of God ☞

Muhammad, whose followers are Muslims
reincarnation: new appearance in human form
Sháh-Bahrám: The Prophet Zoroaster prophesied of Sháh-Bahrám, literally the World-Savior, Who would usher in an era of blessedness and peace after three thousand years of conflict and contention.
Shí‘ah Islám: One of two major sects of Islám, considered by the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh as the true sect of Islám, which had an appointed succession of authority through the Imáms.
Sunni Islám: The majority sect of Islám, which accepts the caliphs as the deputies of Muhammad and heads of Islám, denying the authority to succession claimed by the hereditary Imáms of Shí‘ah Islám.
Zoroastrians: followers of the Manifestation of God Zoroaster, living 660 BC to 583 BC

4. *That which hath been made manifest in this preeminent, this most exalted Revelation, stands unparalleled in the annals of the past, nor will future ages witness its like.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, cited in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 103-104)

annals: historical records
exalted: highly praised, raised to an elevated state, and glorified
manifest: known or evident
preeminent: outstanding or highly important

Revelation: Communication of God and His Will to man [by Bahá'u'lláh]
unparalleled: without equal or match
witness: see or know by personal presence

5. *The Tongue of Grandeur saith: By Myself that speaketh the truth! In this most mighty Revelation all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest and final consummation.*

(*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 244)

consummation: ultimate perfection or goal
Dispensations: religious Systems that regulate human affairs under divine authority

Tongue of Grandeur: Word of God
Revelation: communication of God and His Will to man [by Bahá'u'lláh]

6. *...He [God] hath ordained that in every age and dispensation a pure and stainless Soul be made manifest in the kingdoms of earth and heaven. Unto this subtle, this mysterious and ethereal Being He hath assigned a twofold nature; the physical, pertaining to the world of matter, and the spiritual, which is born of the substance of God Himself. He hath, moreover, conferred upon Him a double station. The first station, which is related to His innermost reality, representeth Him as One Whose voice is the voice of God Himself. ... The second station is the human station, exemplified by the following verses: "I am but a man like you."*

(*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 66-67)

assigned: given by appointment
Being: Manifestation of God
conferred: given from a position of authority
dispensations: religious Systems that regulate human affairs under divine authority
earth: "...by the term 'earth' is meant the earth of understanding and knowledge..." (Bahá'u'lláh, *KI*, p. 48); the physical sphere and dwelling place of mortals
ethereal: not earthly but heavenly
heaven: "By 'heaven' is meant the heaven of divine Revelation..." (Bahá'u'lláh, *KI*, p. 44); the spiritual sphere and dwelling place of God, his angels, and the blessed souls who have passed on
exemplified: shown or illustrated as an example

kingdoms: realms or dominions belonging to God
manifest: known or evident
mysterious: that excites wonder and curiosity while baffling efforts to comprehend
nature: type of essence
ordained: predestined by appointment
pure: free and clean from fault, blame, or sin [type of]
representeth: presents in place of someone else
Soul: Manifestation of God
stainless: free of and resistant to moral blemish or flaw [type of]
station: rank or position
substance: real content or essential nature
subtle: insightful and perceptive

7. *The Tongue of Wisdom proclaimeth: He that hath Me not is bereft of all things. Turn ye away from all that is on earth and seek none else but Me. I am the Sun of Wisdom and the Ocean of Knowledge. I cheer the faint and revive the dead. I am the guiding Light that illumineth the way. I am the royal Falcon on the arm of the Almighty. I unfold the drooping wings of every broken bird and start it on its flight.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Tabernacle of Unity*, ¶1.14)

Almighty: One having absolute power over all; God
bereft: deprived
bird: chosen believer
broken: weakened or crushed in spirit
cheer: instill hope, courage, and happiness to
the dead: those "...devoid of the spirit of faith...." ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *BWF*, pp. 370-71)
faint: weak, dispirited, and dejected
flight: figuratively — ascent above earthly things
illumineth: gives intellectual and spiritual knowledge, insight, and enlightenment to
Light: figuratively — source of emanating spiritual knowledge and goodness

Ocean: figuratively — greatest source
proclaimeth: formally and publicly declares
revive: return to spiritual life and activity
royal Falcon: Mythically, the royal falcon is a king's beloved, trained, hunting hawk, which is pure, loyal, and without equal. The Persian poet Rumi often uses the imagery of the king to symbolize God and the falcon to symbolize the pure and stainless soul.
Sun: figuratively — most brilliant or radiant source
Tongue of Wisdom: Word of God
way: rightful and true course of action
wings: appendages used for flight

8. “God testifieth that there is none other God but Him and that He [Bahá’u’lláh] Who hath appeared is the Hidden Mystery, the Treasured Symbol, the Most Great Book for all peoples, and the Heaven of bounty for the whole world. He is the Most Mighty Sign amongst men and the Dayspring of the most august attributes in the realm of creation. Through Him hath appeared that which had been hidden from time immemorial and been veiled from the eyes of men. He is the One Whose Manifestation was announced by the heavenly Scriptures, in former times and more recently. Whoso acknowledgeth belief in Him and in His signs and testimonies hath in truth acknowledged that which the Tongue of Grandeur uttered ere the creation of earth and heaven and the revelation of the Kingdom of Names. Through Him the ocean of knowledge hath surged amidst mankind and the river of divine wisdom hath gushed out at the behest of God, the Lord of Days.”

(Bahá’u’lláh, *Fountain of Wisdom*, pp. 39-40)

acknowledgeth: personally discloses or claims
attributes: inherent features and qualities
august: venerably majestic and grand
behest: authoritative command or order
Dayspring: origin of spiritual light
ere: before
gushed out: flowed suddenly and forcefully
Heaven of bounty: sublime or exalted provision of generous giving
Mystery: unknown truth of our origin and purpose in our relationship with God and His Manifestations
His signs: the indications of His presence or existence
immemorial: ancient beyond measure
Kingdom of Names: spiritual world(s) of God’s attributes
Manifestation: Prophethood; Messengership

Most Great Book: supreme Representation or Revelation of God
Most Mighty Sign: greatest indication of the presence and existence of God
ocean: immensity; “...the oceans of inner meaning and explanation...” (Bahá’u’lláh, *ESW*, p. 147)
revelation: communicated disclosure
realm: place or sphere
surged: risen suddenly and exceptionally
testifieth: serves as evidence or proof
testimonies: divine decrees attested in the sacred Writings [of Bahá’u’lláh]
Tongue of Grandeur: Word of God
Treasured Symbol: most loved and valued representation of God as His Manifestation
uttered: spoke or expressed
veiled: undisclosed or hidden

9. “O Living Temple! We have made Thee the Dayspring of each one of Our most excellent titles, the Dawning-Place of each one of Our most august attributes, and the Fountainhead of each one of Our manifold virtues unto the denizens of earth and heaven. Thereafter have We raised Thee up in Our own image betwixt the heavens and the earth, and ordained Thee to be the sign of Our glory unto all who are in the realms of revelation and creation, that My servants may follow in Thy footsteps, and be of them who are guided aright. We have appointed Thee the Tree of grace and bounty unto the dwellers of both the heavens and the earth. Well is it with them who seek the shelter of Thy shade and who draw nigh unto Thy Self, the omnipotent Protector of the worlds.”

(Bahá’u’lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 38, #72)

attributes: inherent spiritual qualities
august: noble, majestic, and awe-inspiring
bounty: generous gifts and favors
Dawning-Place: One where first appears the light
Dayspring: origin of spiritual light
denizens: inhabitants or residents
dwellers: residents or inhabitants
Fountainhead: origin and source
glory: radiant magnificence, majesty, and beauty
grace: gifted divine influence that makes people morally pure and strong
heaven(s): the spiritual world(s) of God
image: spiritual likeness or representation
manifold: numerous and varied
nigh: near
omnipotent: infinitely powerful and influential

ordained: established by command or order
Our: used by one in authority to denote himself [God]
raised: brought higher in rank or dignity
realms: places or spheres of reality
revelation: the spiritual worlds
servants: believers; followers
shade: protective influence
sign: indication of the existence and presence
Temple: a reference to Bahá’u’lláh
titles: distinguishing and descriptive names by which one is designated
Tree: source of spiritual fruits
virtues: spiritual qualities and traits
We: this is the voice of God addressing Bahá’u’lláh and written down by Bahá’u’lláh

SHARING: *A breath from the spirit of inspiration...*

Facilitator

Ask the participants to complete the statements below. When everyone has finished, have each person share, in a round, the one thing that was most outstanding or inspiring and how it made him or her feel. Please remind everyone not to remark on the comments of others.

The one thing from the quotations that was the most outstanding or inspiring to me was _____
It made me feel _____
Explain _____

SOME QUESTIONS: *A gentle breeze from the testing winds...*

Facilitator

Ask the participants to answer the following questions. They can usually find answers in the quotations just studied or in the introduction. When everyone has finished, review the questions, then share and discuss the answers.

1. There are numerous titles attributed to the station of Bahá'u'lláh by His followers that future generations will also recognize. Name any three of these titles: _____

2. Bahá'u'lláh is the "Redeemer of all mankind" because He _____

3. Bahá'u'lláh formally started . . .

<input type="checkbox"/> a. the Prophetic Cycle.	<input type="checkbox"/> c. a thousand-year period of happiness and peace.
<input type="checkbox"/> b. the long-awaited millennium.	
4. _____ referred to Bahá'u'lláh as the "Comforter" and the "Spirit of Truth."
5. Jesus Christ was talking about _____ when He spoke of the "Son of Man" Who "shall come in the glory of His Father."
6. _____ in past history or in the future can equal or match the greatness of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.
7. All the _____ of the past attain their highest and final perfection in Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.

<input type="checkbox"/> a. dispensations	<input type="checkbox"/> c. expectations of the Prophets
<input type="checkbox"/> b. religious systems	<input type="checkbox"/> d. fairy tales
8. Does Bahá'u'lláh speak on behalf of God? _____

Continued on the next page...

9. If someone said that Bahá'u'lláh was a man like others, would that be true? _____
10. Did all of the Manifestations of God have this same relationship with God? _____
11. Bahá'u'lláh fulfills all expectations the world's great Religions have of a promised Great Messenger of God. He is to the
- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ___ Hindus | a. the "Everlasting Father," and the "Lord of Hosts." |
| ___ Jews | b. the promised <u>Sháh</u> -Bahrám. |
| ___ Buddhists | c. the reincarnation of Krishna. |
| ___ Sunní Muslims | d. Christ returned "in the glory of the Father." |
| ___ Christians | e. the return of the Imám Husayn. |
| ___ Zoroastrians | f. the descent of the "Spirit of God" Jesus Christ. |
| ___ <u>Shí'ah</u> Muslims | g. the fifth Buddha. |
12. God is all-knowing and all-wise. Is Bahá'u'lláh all-knowing and all-wise? _____
13. If you found Bahá'u'lláh had written something difficult for you to believe, what do you think your attitude should be towards this difference? _____

14. Describe one outstanding feature of the station of Bahá'u'lláh. _____

Account of a visit with Bahá'u'lláh...

It was to Bahjí [the last residence of Bahá'u'lláh] that Edward Granville Browne, the distinguished orientalist and Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, then at the outset of his brilliant academic career, came in April, 1890. Returned home, he committed to paper the impressions he had received: "So here at *Behjé* was I installed as a guest, in the very midst of all that Bábísm accounts most noble and most holy; and here did I spend five most memorable days, during which I enjoyed unparalleled and unhopéd-for opportunities of holding intercourse with those who are the very fountain-heads of that mighty and wondrous spirit which works with invisible but ever-increasing force for the transformation and quickening of a people who slumber in a sleep like unto death. It was in truth a strange and moving experience, but one whereof I despair of conveying any save the feeblest impression. I might, indeed, strive to describe in greater detail the faces and forms which surrounded me, the conversations to which I was privileged to listen, the solemn melodious reading of the sacred books, the general sense of harmony and content which pervaded the place, and the fragrant shady gardens whither in the afternoon we sometimes repaired; but all this was naught in comparison with the spiritual atmosphere with which I was encompassed. ... The spirit, which pervades the Bábís [Bahá'ís], is such that it can hardly fail to affect most powerfully all subjected to its influence. It may appall or attract: it cannot be ignored or disregarded. Let those who have not seen disbelieve me if they will; but, should that spirit once reveal itself to them, they will experience an emotion which they are not likely to forget."

Edward Browne has left us a pen-portrait of Bahá'u'lláh. It is the only one of its kind in existence, and therefore of tremendous value to the student of the Bahá'í Faith. Today a visitor to Bahjí can read this document, before venturing into Bahá'u'lláh's chamber. Thus can one try to recreate in one's mind the interview granted to the English orientalist:

“...my conductor paused for a moment while I removed my shoes. Then with a quick movement of the hand, he withdrew, and, as I passed, replaced the curtain; and I found myself in a large apartment, along the upper end of which ran a low divan [couch-like piece of furniture], while on the side opposite to the door were placed two or three chairs. Though I dimly suspected whither I was going and whom I was to behold (for no distinct intimation had been given to me), a second or two elapsed ere, with a throb of wonder and awe, I became definitely conscious that the room was not untenanted. In the corner, where the divan met the wall sat a wondrous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt head-dress of the kind called *táj* by dervishes (but of unusual height and make), round the base of which was wound a small white turban. The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one’s very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow; while the deep lines on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet-black hair and beard flowing down in indistinguishable luxuriance almost to the waist seemed to belie. No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain!

“A mild dignified voice bade me be seated, and then continued: *‘Praise be to God that thou hast attained! ... Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile. ... We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer-up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. ... That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? ... Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the “Most Great Peace” shall come. ... Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold? ... Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. ... These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. ... Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind ...’*

“Such, so far as I can recall them, were the words which, besides many others, I heard from Behá [Bahá’u’lláh].”

(H. M. Balyuzi, *Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 61-63)

[Permission to reprint extract granted by George Ronald, Publisher]

ANSWERS: *Affirming treasures...*

1. any of the titles identified in quote #1
2. something similar to: because belief in Him, and obedience to Him, sets us free from spiritual harm, distress, or captivity, by His paying the ransom of a life of suffering
3. b and c
4. Jesus Christ
5. Bahá’u’lláh
6. nothing
7. a, b, and c
8. yes
9. yes
10. yes
11. c, a, g, f, d, b and e
12. yes
13. strive to be obedient to Bahá’u’lláh’s Message, and make conscious efforts to investigate the truth of His wisdom
14. All answers are valuable

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