

# The Princeton Theological Review

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JESUS' MISSION, ACCORDING TO HIS OWN  
TESTIMONY

(SYNOPTICS)

Under the title of "*I came: the express self-testimony of Jesus to the purpose of His sending and His coming,*" Adolf Harnack has published a study of the sayings of Jesus reported in the Synoptic Gospels, which are introduced by the words "I came" or, exceptionally, "I was sent", or their equivalents.<sup>1</sup> These, says he, are "programmatic" sayings, and deserve as such a separate and comprehensive study, such as has not heretofore been given to them. In his examination of them, he pursues the method of, first, gathering the relevant sayings together and subjecting them severally to a critical and exegetical scrutiny; and, then, drawing out from the whole body of them in combination Jesus' own testimony to His mission.

It goes without saying that, in his critical scrutiny of the passages, Harnack proceeds on the same presuppositions which govern his dealing with the Synoptic tradition in general; that is to say, on the presuppositions of the "Liberal" criticism, which he applies, however, here as elsewhere, with a certain independence. It goes without saying also, therefore, that the passages emerge from his hands in a very mauled condition; brought as far as it is possible to bring them, even with violence, into line with the "Liberal" view of what the mission of Jesus ought to have been. It is reassuring, however, to observe that, even so, they cannot be despoiled of their central testimony. That Jesus proclaimed Himself to have come—to have been

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<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1912, xxii, pp. 1-30.

## THE BAYAN OF THE BAB.\*

It is pleasing to see members of the consular service taking interest in the antiquities, history, literature and religions of the countries in which they reside. America has had many literary Consuls who have brought honor to our country and fame to themselves. English diplomats, like Sir John Malcolm, Sir Henry Rawlinson and James Morier have added to our knowledge of Persia. At present Mr. Minorsky, of the Russian service, late of the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission, is making a first-hand study of the Ali-Allahi sect. Mr. A. L. M. Nicolas has followed his illustrious predecessor, Count Gobineau, Minister at the Court of Mohammed Shah, in investigating the religions of Persia and enlightening the western world about them. Count Gobineau published *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale* and collected manuscripts which have been a valuable mine of information, especially about Babism. Mr. Nicolas has investigated the modern sects of the Shiahs and has published not a little regarding the Sheikhis and Babis. Among these are *The Science of God*, an essay on Sheikhsim, translations of the Bab's work, *The Seven Proofs*, *The Arabic Bayan* and a *Life of the Bab* from original sources. Mr. Nicolas has special qualifications for this work, having been born in Persia where his father was in the diplomatic service, and having lived many years in the country. At present he is Consul at Tabriz. As a near neighbor, it has been my pleasure to converse with him and Mr. Minorsky regarding the religious conceptions and conditions of the Persian people. Now Mr. Nicholas has completed a difficult and laborious task in giving to the world the translation of the *Bayan of the Bab*. It will enable the western world to form

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\* *Le Béyan Persan* traduit du Persan par A. L. M. NICOLAS. Consul de France, Tauris (Geuthner, Paris). *Kitab-i-Nuqtat-ul-Kaf*. The Earliest History of the Babis, compiled by HAJJI MIRZA JANI of Kashan, edited by EDWARD G. BROWNE, professor in Cambridge University, England.

a truer conception of Babism, the source of Bahaism, of which Americans hear considerable and whose new prophet Abdul Baha visited America in 1912.

The other work before us is the *Nuktatul-Kaf* by Mirza Jani. This is published in the Persian text from a unique manuscript preserved and brought to Paris by Count Gobineau. It is an invaluable treatise on the early history of Babism. With this is published in English an Index of the Bayan. Professor Browne is a high authority on Babism, having investigated in Persia its history and conditions and spent a lifetime in the study of its literature. He has published besides the above, the *Episode of the Bab, or the Traveller's Narrative*, and *The New History*, both translations from the Persian, with copious and valuable notes, *A Year among the Persians* and extended articles on Babism in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. These all contain information about the Bayan.

#### I. THE AUTHOR OF THE BAYAN

In considering the Bayan, I must content myself with a brief reference to its author; for any adequate consideration would occupy a whole article. Mirza Ali Mohammed, a Sayid, was born at Shiraz in 1819, 1820, or 1821. He was educated in the Sheikhi sect of the Shiah under the influence of Haji Kasim of Resht, the successor of Sheikh Ahmad of Ahsa. These were regarded as divinely inspired guides. At the age of twenty-four M. Ali Mohammed put forth the claim to be the Bab or Door of Communication of Divine knowledge. Afterwards he advanced his station, claiming to be the Kaim or Mahdi, the return of the twelfth Imam. Still advancing he took the title of Nukta or Point of Divinity. He proclaimed his Manifestation at Mecca. On his return to Persia he was arrested and confined at Shiraz and Ispahan. Owing to the activity of his propagandists and the consequent agitation, he was taken to the extreme northwest of Persia and confined at Maku, under the shadow of Ararat, and

later at Chirik near Salmas. Thence he was taken to Tabriz in 1850 and executed.

The Bab made known his "revelations" in a number of books. His writings<sup>1</sup> are said to comprise five hundred thousand verses. Some of these were *Commentaries* on the Koran, one was on the Surah-i-Yusuf, others were on Surah-i-Kawsar, Surah-ul-Asr, Surah-ul-Bakara. Besides there were the *Seven Proofs*, the *Names of All Things*, Prayers, Communes, and especially the Bayans. Many of his writings are lost; some may have remained hidden in Persia; others were taken by the Babi exiles to Turkey and may be in manuscript at Acca. Others have been collected at the Institute of Oriental Languages at St. Petersburg, in the Nationale Bibliotheque at Paris, and at the British Museum. Most of the Bab's writings are in Arabic, but some important ones are in Persian. The term Bayan is applied to all the writings of the Bab in a larger sense, meaning the "explanation" of the Truth. In the narrow sense there are two Bayans, one Arabic and one Persian. A third is mentioned by Gobineau, a summary in Arabic of the other two. But Mr. Nicolas<sup>2</sup> and Professor Browne<sup>3</sup> believe that some general work must be referred to and not a book technically called the Bayan. The *Kitab-ul-Ahkam*, Book of Precepts, was translated into French by Gobineau. A French translation of the Arabic Bayan by Mr. Nicholas has been followed by this rendering of the Persian Bayan. This is in four volumes, the text comprising 630 pages, besides prefaces and valuable tables of contents. In connection with it may be used the *Index of the Persian Bayan* which occupies pages liv-xcv of Professor Browne's volume. The Bayan in the original has never been printed.

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<sup>1</sup>Lists of these are given in Mr. Nicolas' *Life of the Bab*, pp. 20-47, by Professor Browne in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1889 and in his *Traveller's Narrative*, p. 335-340.

<sup>2</sup>*Life of the Bab*, pp. 1-7.

<sup>3</sup>*Traveller's Narrative*, p. 346.

## II. THE TIME AND PLACE OF ITS WRITING

The Bayan was written during the Bab's imprisonment at Maku, <sup>4</sup> a frontier fortress of Azerbaijan, off from the centers of Persian life. There<sup>5</sup> the Bab's imprisonment was light. He was allowed to write treatises as well as correspond with his followers. This was 1847 to 1849. When he was removed to Chirik, his confinement was stricter.

After the great persecutions of 1846-1853, the Babis were fearful and scattered. Babi books, including the Bayan, were prohibited. Soon (1867) the Bahai "revelation" abrogated and superseded them. The Bahais neither cared to preserve nor to circulate them. The manuscripts became scarce and hard to procure. Professor Browne says,<sup>6</sup> "The Babi books ceased to be renewed and for the most part reposed undisturbed and forgotten on shelves and in boxes." They were "buried in an oblivion most profound and most complete. They have been almost utterly unknown to the European world."

## III. STYLE AND LANGUAGE

Many of the writings of the Bab are in Arabic and in the form of "verses." These verses were regarded as the highest proof of the truth of the Manifestation. As Mohammed pointed to his Surahs as the proof of his mission, so the Babi converts with profound admiration for the "verses" declared them to be the inspiring cause of this faith. Yet to unbelievers, whether Persian Mullahs or foreign savants the language and style of the Bab's writings are not inspiring but are positively distasteful. Professor Browne says,<sup>7</sup> "The Arabic treatises are of interminable length, at once florid and incorrect in style, teeming with grammatical errors the most glaring,

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 230, 274, 292, also *Life of Bab*, p. 71, and Abdul Fazl's *Bahai Proofs*, p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> The writer has visited Maku. It is strongly situated for old time warfare.

<sup>6</sup> *New History*, xxvii.

<sup>7</sup> *New History*, xii, xxvi.

iterations the most wearisome, and words the rarest and most incomprehensible." Again, "They were voluminous, hard to comprehend, uncouth in style, unsystematic in arrangement, filled with iterations and solecisms." Of the Surah-i-Yusuf, he says,<sup>8</sup> "It is obscure and ungrammatical"; of the Book of the Pilgrimage, "It has the faults of grammar and obscurity of all the Bab's books." Baron Rosen of Petrograd, another eminent student of Babism, agrees with this. He says:<sup>9</sup> "As to the innumerable grammatical errors which abound in the Arabic text and in the Persian Commentaries, they are the result without doubt of the author himself, and it would be ridiculous to correct them." He calls them jargon and adds, "The reader should throw off all logic and good sense, then he will be successful in understanding the literary monuments which adepts of the faith call with unconscious irony "the clear exposition."

The Persian Ulema likewise criticized them. At his trial in Tabriz, when the Bab repeated "verses," they said,<sup>10</sup> "We do not undersand such verses." Mirza Abul Fazl, the Bahai apologist, discusses the subject in his book *Farayad*.<sup>11</sup> He admits the criticisms and says that the Bab silenced his opponents by showing similar examples of bad grammar in the Koran. In truth the Bab seems to have been fully aware of the weakness of his grammar for the Persian Bayan<sup>12</sup> says that by "Harut and Marut," the imprisoned angels, are meant two habits,—*accidence* and *Syntax*, from which, in the Bayanic Dispensation, all restrictions have been removed. The Bayan<sup>13</sup> prohibits the criticizing of its grammar and also the study of grammar except in so far as it is necessary in order to understand

<sup>8</sup> *Journal, Royal Asiatic Society*, 1889, pp. 907, 900.

<sup>9</sup> Nicolas' *Beyan*, Vol. II., Preface, and *Life of Bab*, p. 56.

<sup>10</sup> *New History*, p. 287.

<sup>11</sup> *Bahai Proofs*, p. 262-263. He adds that objection was afterwards made to Baha Ullah that "his words contain no grammatical errors, so they do not resemble Divine Words."

<sup>12</sup> *New History*, p. 22.

<sup>13</sup> *Bayan*. Unity II. chap. 1. IV, 10.

the Bayan. In accordance with this, Browne says that the Bab and his earlier followers entertained a profound contempt for grammar. Mr. Nicolas<sup>14</sup> on the other hand, maintains that the errors of the Bab's writings are attributable to imbecile copyists, who, frozen with fear of persecution and in secret, copied the manuscripts. He says; "As to the grammar, can we really believe that the author of an infinity of volumes, written in Arabic, did not know that language? Did the Bab voluntarily fill them with mistakes? The Koran contains errors which they have attempted to justify, in entire grammars written to prove that rules ought to be taken from revealed books." He quotes testimony to show the admirable language of the Bab's writings from one who had seen faultless manuscripts and others that were faulty and declared that the original documents were inerrant and are corrupted by the crass ignorance and stupidity of the copyists.<sup>15</sup> He pleads that critics should not crush the Bab with disdain on account of faults which he has not committed, seeing it is quite impossible to conceive of the Bab having such a profound influence on learned men of Persia so that they lost their heads and were ready to prostrate themselves before him as the Manifested Imam Mahdi, if his "verses" were so incoherent and faulty! Anyhow it is well that the translator tries faithfully to understand and interpret the text, and does not do as others who, he says, "allow themselves to twist the text with scandalous fantasy, and act towards the book as towards a conquered city."

#### IV. THE CONTENTS IN GENERAL

The Bab's writings he divides into five classes. (1) The Verses, written in the poetic style of the Koran. (2) Supplications and Prayers. (3) Commentaries and homilies. (4) Scientific Treatises. (5) Books in the Persian

<sup>14</sup> *Bayan Persian*. Vol. II, Preface, and *Life of Bab*, pp. 57-60.

<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to read of a modern instance of appeal from a text as found to an original inerrant text.

language.<sup>16</sup> In general character they are metaphysical, allegorical, almost whimsical. To one acquainted only with strict Mohammedanism, they seem to be a farrago of heterodox imaginations. But in reality the beliefs are found in the Shiah sects of past ages and many of them among the Sufis, Sheikhis, Ali Allahis and others of the present time. Professor Browne finds the greatest resemblance to the Ismielis, Hurufis and Ghulats. Of the doctrines,<sup>17</sup> "there was hardly one of which he could claim to be the author," and "fascinating as they were to the Persian mind, they were utterly unfitted for the bulk of mankind." They set forth a "new religion designed to replace and supersede all existing creeds—visions of a New Creation, of a Reign of God's Saints on Earth, and of a Universal Theocracy conformed in every detail to a mystical Theosophy, wherein are blended, under the guise of ultra-Shiite nationalism, theories of numbers more fantastic than those of Pythagoras or Plotinus, with theories of the Divine Names and Attributes more intangible than those of the Cabbala or of Spinoza."

To arrive at an understanding of the doctrines is no small task for "percepts have but a small proportion to dogma and dogma a still smaller proportion to doxologies and mystical rhapsodies of almost inconceivable incomprehensibility." "Great conceptions, noble ideals, subtle metaphysical conceptions exist, but they are lost in trackless mazes of rhapsody and mysticism, weighed down by trivial injunctions and impractical ordinances." Count Gobineau says, "The Bayan is enigmatical and circuitous, and needs a commentary." Mr. Nicolas acknowledges its obscurity but says,<sup>18</sup> "It needs a key as do the books of philosophy of the Sufis. The majority of Persian readers would not understand it. It is written in a special language of the savants, under a profound sense of the intimate world of appearances. These savants do not show any

<sup>16</sup> *Unity*, VI, 1., III, 17, *Traveller's Narrative*, pp. 343-345.

<sup>17</sup> *New History*, xii, xiii, xxvi.

<sup>18</sup> *Life of Bab*, p. 3.



desire to make known their knowledge of God to the people and the reader of their works needs a long apprenticeship. They turn the words to a different sense." Both the bad grammar and unintelligibility may be largely accounted for by what Abul Fazl, with pride, refers to when he says:<sup>19</sup> "Although the Bab had not studied the Arabic language yet the verses flowed from him without pause or reflection." It is their boast<sup>20</sup> that the Bab was not educated in the schools and wrote without meditation or correction as many as a thousand verses in three hours.

The Bayan is the last form of the doctrine of the Bab. His adherents claim<sup>21</sup> that had he lived longer he would have developed it more fully. Mr. Nicolas doubts this, but it is quite possible that he would have announced himself as "He whom God should manifest." We can not dogmatize on this point, but there had previously been a development, if not in the Bab's conceptions, at least in his promulgations of doctrine. His first books are but little removed from Shiah doctrine. Thus in the *Commentary on the Surah-i-Yusuf* and the *Ziarat-Nama* he does not break with Islam nor declare the Koran abrogated. Ramazan is still the fast. He is simply the Bab—the door of communication with the Imams. So, Mr. Nicolas says, "His first book *Risala-i-Fiqqiya* is essentially Mussulman. The Bab hid his ideas for a time and restrained his disciples from publishing them." To this purpose of concealment, Mr. Nicolas attributes part of the obscurity of his style, in that he envelops his thought in metaphors and in folds of rhetoric yet not so but that those not blind could see it. He had to act like a teacher of infants—using sugar-coated pills—giving out truth step by step, for people were more fanatical than the Jews of Christ's time.

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<sup>19</sup> *Bahai Proofs*, pp. 29-30, 67-68.

<sup>20</sup> *New History*, p. 112.

<sup>21</sup> See Writer's "Claims of Bahaim" in *The East and the West*, July, 1914.

## V. THE CLAIM OF THE BAYAN TO AUTHORITY

What is the witness of the Bayan to itself. It claims divine origin and inspiration. God says,<sup>22</sup> "This is my Word by the tongue of the Person of the seven letters, the Bab of God." The proof of this is the "Verses" (*ayat*, signs), which like the Koran, can only be produced by divine power, and are the essential, appropriate and permanent evidence of a prophet's mission. While in popular esteem the eloquence and poetic diction of these verses is higher, yet wisdom which shows adaptation to men's minds and the needs of the age is said to be the criterion in the new Dispensation. One Bayan was revealed in Arabic to be a more cogent proof to Moslems. The Bayan is incomparable, inimitable like the sun, of such excellence that "all creatures working together could not produce the like of it." It proceeds from the same Tree of Truth as the Koran and, though identical in substance of teaching, surpasses it as the Koran excels the Gospels; and henceforth it demands obedience in place of the Koran, and will continue to be the standard till the next Manifestation. Without divine aid, it is incomprehensible. It must be transcribed in the best calligraphy. It should be read morning and evening to the amount of seven hundred verses, but cannot be committed to memory. He who believes it is in Paradise. The proof in the Bayan is thus stated (II, 1): "One who recites verses without thought or hesitation, who in the course of five hours writes a thousand verses without pause of pen, who produces commentaries and learned treatises of so high a degree of wisdom that the Ulema (Doctors) could not comprehend . . . there is no doubt that all this is from God."

## VI. EXTERNAL STRUCTURE

The external structure of the Bayan is peculiar. It is arranged according to the symbolism of numbers to which I shall again revert. The Bayan was designed to comprise

<sup>22</sup> *Bayan*, II, 1. Index, s.v., "Revelation," "Verses."

nineteen Books (*Ṭahids* or Unities) of nineteen chapters (*Babs* or Portes). In its present form it extends to the tenth chapter of the ninth Book. Mirza Jani,<sup>23</sup> the Haṣṣī Behaṣṣī<sup>24</sup> and Subh-i-Azal<sup>25</sup> all imply that eleven Books had been completed by the Bāb and eight were to be written by his successor, Subh-i-Azal. If so, this portion has been lost. Some of the Books (Unities) expected from Subh-i-Azal were completed.<sup>26</sup>

#### VII DOCTRINE OF THE BAYAN CONCERNING GOD AND HIS MANIFESTATIONS

God is incomprehensible, inscrutable, inaccessible. "The way is closed and seeking is forbidden." None can approach God or know his Essence. "There hath been and is no way to the Eternal Essence." "None but Himself knoweth Himself." Yet God says; "I was a hid Treasure; I desired to be known, therefore I created." First of all and eternally He created the Primal Will. This Primal Will is the *Nakṭa* or Point, the Mirror of God. By it and through it were created all things. It is the cause of all worlds. First of all were created (or emanated) as from its very being eighteen spirits or letters, which with the Primal Will form the "First Unity" or "The Letters of the Living." These are eternal, for "there never was a time when God did not have slaves to adore Him." The world is eternal, life is eternal. Eternally God gave life.

The Primal Will has been manifested in all the Great Prophets, the Lords of Dispensations. Through them alone God is known. The first Manifestation in this Cycle was Adam, 12210 years before the Bāb. There have been cycles before Adam and there will continue to be world without end. No Revelation is final. All the Manifestations as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed and the Bāb are identical. They are like the same sun, rising

<sup>23</sup> *New History*, p. 381.

<sup>24</sup> *Ṭawḥīd & Narratives*, p. 353.

<sup>25</sup> *Ḥikmah-i-Asā*, p. xix and xxxi.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxv.

on different days and from different dawning points. But each succeeding one was superior and more excellent than his predecessor, comparable to a child in his successive stages of growth, so that if Adam represents a boy of one year the Bab would be as one of 12 years. The present Manifestation includes all the preceding ones, and whosoever believes in him, believes in all the preceding ones, and potentially in all the succeeding ones. If a believer in a previous Manifestation refuses to follow the present one, his faith is null and void. Knowledge of the Manifestation is knowledge of God; refuge with the Manifestation is refuge with God. The only way is through the Prophet of the Age and belief in God without belief in him is of no avail. All actions performed for him, and only those, are done for God. The time of the coming of a new Manifestation is known only to God.

As manifested in the Bab; the Primal Will, the Nukta or Point, has two stations: one of divinity and one of servitude or humanity. In the former station the Bab says: "In truth I am God and there is no other God than me, the Master of the Universe." "As for me, I am that Point of God, whence all that exists has found existence." He is the Point of Truth, the Tree of Truth, the Name which guides all men to the Kingdom of all Power. By earlier and later Persians this Primal Will is called the Word. Browne and Nicolas both use the term in this connection, though I have not found it so used in the Bayan. As the Point all things emanate from the Bab and return to him and to none other. He has a position before all, can do as he pleases, and is the power through whom men act. He produces the Revelation in the Bayan which points to God and has its source in Him. He is identical with Jesus, with Mohammed, with Imam Husain; yet as the Point of the Bayan he is superior to all others in such a degree that if the previous revelations be represented by two letters of the alphabet, the Bayan is equal to the remaining twenty-five.

With the Manifestation there is a "Return" of the chief believers of the previous manifestation. The first Book of the Bayan, is devoted to this doctrine. Jesus, inferior to Mohammed, foretold him and returned in Mohammed. Those who believed in him returned in the following ages to believe in Mohammed and in the Bab and will return to believe in succeeding Manifestations. Specifically, "Mohammed has returned to the world with every one who believed in him truly or otherwise." In the first group of Letters of the Living are Mullah Husain Bushrawayi,<sup>27</sup> the first believer who was the "return" of Mohammed, and Kûrat-ul-Ayn who was Fatima. Others of them were the twelve Imams and the four Babs of the Minor Occultation, called also the four Lords, four Lights or the supporters of Creation, Provision, Life and Death. Attached to the first nineteen, are nineteen other groups of spirits or disciples returned to complete the perfection of all things. This doctrine is explained to mean not metempsychosis, but rather the appearance of persons similar in character, spirit and attainments to those of the previous dispensation as John the Baptist is said to be Elijah, that is, come in his spirit and power. Yet no one can feel in reading the history of early Babism that this interpretation suffices. Rather is it explained in the words of Professor Browne:<sup>28</sup> "These ultra Shiah sects do but reassert like the late Ismielis, Batinis, Carmathians, Assassins and Hurufis, the same essential doctrines of anthropomorphism. Incarnation, Reincarnation or Return and Metempsychosis, which doctrines appear to be endemic in Persia and always ready to become epidemic under a suitable stimulus. In our own day they appeared again in the Babi movement, of which especially in its earlier forms they constituted the essential kernel."

It should be noticed that this Babi doctrine reduces the Imams to the rank of the apostles of Jesus, or of the Bab's

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<sup>27</sup> *New History*, p. 334.

<sup>28</sup> *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. I, p. 311.

own preachers. This is not Shiah belief. The Bab in his first books as the Ziarat-Nama taught,<sup>29</sup>—as the Shiahs, that the Imams are effulgences of the Divine Glory, Manifestations of God's attributes and Intercessors and he himself approached their shrine with fear and contrition. But he lowered their rank. So Mr. Nicolas says,<sup>30</sup> "The Bab has an opinion of the Imams entirely different from that of the Shiahs. He considers them high personages but not as having access, behind the bars, to the divine secrets. They are commentators on the Koran and as such they can make mistakes." The exaltation of the office of the Great Prophets and of the Bab's own dignity and personality appears in his later claims. The Surat-ul-Tauhid says, "I bear witness that if any one believes in the Imams" so as to interfere with "his pure and simple adoration of God, or if any one thinks that their rank is comparable with that of the great prophets, that one has error." Mr. Nicolas rightly judges that this idea so hostile to the Imams and the belief of the Shiah, if declared, would have caused the immediate death of the Bab, before he had had opportunity of publishing his doctrine, and that even his best disciples would have turned away from such teaching as blasphemies.<sup>31</sup>

A striking characteristic of the Bayan is the emphasis put upon the coming of "Him whom God shall manifest." He is to be expected. He will certainly appear before the number of Mustagas is completed which equals 2,001 years (or possibly 1,511, Browne). The day of his advent is known only to God. In view of it none must injure another lest they injure the Manifestation unknowingly nor even beat a child; in every assembly a vacant chair is to be left for him. He will be the fulfillment of the verse, "There is none like unto him." He is the Most Great Name, eternally pure, independent of all and dependent only on

<sup>29</sup> *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, 1889, p. 900.

<sup>30</sup> *Beyan Persian*, Vol. I, Preface.

<sup>31</sup> The Bahais have restored the Shiah idea of the Imamate and conferred the dignity and office upon Abbas Abdul Baha.

God. His commands are equivalent to God's commands and none is to ask him, "Why?" He has a right to all things and the best of everything should be presented to him. It is impossible that any one should claim falsely to be he. No one should reject him as they have the Bab. He will be self-evidencing. Those who do not accept him cease to be believers. He will be the "speaking book"; one verse revealed by him will be better than a thousand Bayans; to understand one verse of his is better than to know the whole Bayan.

#### VIII. ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATIONS AND SYMBOLS

The Bab, following the Ismielis, interprets allegorically many of the fundamental teachings of Islam. These are explained in the second Unity (Book) of the Bayan. The General Resurrection is the rising or appearance of a New Manifestation and lasts till his departure. The resurrection of the dead is man's receiving spiritual life by faith on him. Man has two bodies, the "essential or material" and the "inner or astral." The former returns to dust at once and forever. The "astral" body departs with the spirit at death. The "Questioning in the Tomb," taught by Islam, means the summons by the angels or messengers of the next Manifestation to those in the tomb of ignorance to accept him and believe, and the return of the angels to God is the report of the missionaries to the Bab. The "Bridge of Sirat" is the severe testing at the call to faith. The one who accepts passes over the bridge into "Paradise" which is the condition of belief and assurance and the perfection it brings. Professor Browne affirms<sup>32</sup> that Mirza Jani teaches that "a material heaven and hell and the like are mere figments of the imagination." Yet in the Bayan a future heaven and hell are taught. Mr. Nicolas shows<sup>33</sup> that the Bab was not much concerned with eschatology but cites various passages regarding heaven. The strongest

<sup>32</sup>*New History*, p. 335.

<sup>33</sup>*Beyan*, Vol. I, pp. xxvi-ix.

settles definitely that the Bab taught the existence of a future paradise.<sup>34</sup> "As to what passes after death, no person but God knows what it is. God has created in his Paradise all that men desire of his kindness and they find the things which eye has never seen and ear has never heard, nor has been conceived in the heart of any one.<sup>35</sup> If the seas of heaven were ink, if all the things were pens, and every one a writer, no one could make known the things of Paradise after death. He who enters the Paradise of the Manifestation of God will enter the other Paradise after death." Hell is ignorance of or rejection of the Manifestations; its fire is unbelief. Yet devils take the souls of the unbelievers to the Treasury of Fire, though the worst fire is grieving or denying the Beloved. Hades is the interval between two Manifestations. The Last Judgment for the people of the Bayan will be the coming of Him whom God shall Manifest. The "Day of God," "Day of Judgment," "Day of Resurrection," is the Day of the Manifestation and is externally like any other day.

Much is made of the symbolic significance of letters and numbers. The *abjad* counting in Persian and Arabic gives a numerical value to various letters of the alphabet. A word of the same numerical value is often substituted for the name of an adherent either by concealment or with spiritual significance. Thus<sup>36</sup> a name of God is put, as *vahid* for *Yahyá*, the name of *Subh-i-Azal*, *dayyan* for *Assad* is 'Mirza Assad Ullah etc., and they are entitled the *Ismullah*, the Names of God. The mystical meaning of letters was a science to be diligently studied; 70,000 angels watched over each letter. For example, in the Moslem formula, *Bism Ullah* etc., "In the Name of God, the compassionate,

<sup>34</sup> *Beyan*, II, 16, p. 125.

<sup>35</sup> This indicates an acquaintance with the New Testament. This appears from other quotations as, "The first shall be last and the last first"; Hour coming "as a thief"; "cup of water to a believer"; Believers are "to do as they are done by"; Selling in temple, etc., *Index*, LXVIII.

<sup>36</sup> *Bahai Proofs*, p. 43.



the merciful," the first letter "b" represented the Bab. It is formed with a dot under it which represents the Point or Nukta. Each of the others letters, 18 in number, was assigned to a disciple and they were called the Letters of the Living (hayy, living, equals 18)<sup>37</sup> So Mullah Husain Bushrawayi was "sin" or "s". He and his 18 were the "First Unity."<sup>38</sup> Each "Letter" presided over a month and over a day of each month. Among them was at least one woman, Kurrat-ul-Ayn, who was in Fatima's stead or that of Mary Magdalene.<sup>39</sup>

Again the Kalima-i-Shahadat, "There is no God save God," was divided into two parts. The first had five "letters of negation," "no God," and the second part seven "letters of affirmation," "save God." From the first are derived the "Infernal Letters"; from the second the "Supreme Letters." Only these and the "First Unity" are allowed to make commentary on the Koran. In the Bayan the Bab is often spoken of as "He of the seven letters"<sup>40</sup> because of the affirmation and because his name, Ali Mohammed has seven letters. Moslems are designated "Letters of the Koran" and Christians usually "letters of the Gospel." Cities and provinces are referred to by their initial letter, as land of Fa = Fars. Nineteen is the sacred number. As early as the twelfth century this number was used as symbolic by Sheikh<sup>41</sup> Mukkuyya Din, a Sufi leader. Possibly it arose from 19 years being a complete cycle of the moon. The letters in Vahid (Unity) count 19 (v = 6, a = 1, h = 8, d = 4). So does vujud, absolute existence, 19 x 19 or 361 is the number of all things (Kuli Shey). The year was divided into 19 months of 19 days each, the Bayan was to be 19 books of 19 chapters each. Every one should write monthly 19 tables of 19 names of God. The Bab's "Book of Names" is also divided into "Unities" con-

<sup>37</sup> The chief disciples of Hakim, the Druse Incarnation, were called "Letters of the Truth."

<sup>38</sup> *Traveller's Narrative*, p. 399.

<sup>39</sup> Abdul Baha greatly praises Mary Magdalene.

<sup>40</sup> *Traveller's Narrative*, p. 425.

<sup>41</sup> *New History*, p. xiii.

taining 19 chapters each. The Koran was (by chance!) 6 x 19 Surahs, and had 19 Angels. Nineteen was to be the basis of fines and measurements. The miscal was to be divided into 19 parts, one-nineteenth or nineteen per cent of the income was to be donated to the Letters or their descendants. Sets of 19 were to take the place of dozens. Nineteen rings inscribed with the names of God with 19 papers were to be left to heirs. Every one must do 19 days service to the Point. There were to be 19 shrines, 19 doors of Paradise, 19 gates of Fire, 19 gates of light, 19 kinds of the new writing, the Khatti Badi. The dowry was 5 x 19 or 95 miscals, the rosary 95 beads, the King's Palace with 95 doors. Every one who acquired 6,005 miscals must give 95 to the Point. To the Manifestation also must be given 19 precious stones (3 diamonds, 4 topaz, 6 emeralds, 6 rubies). The teachings of the Bab were to be 19 volumes (3 Verses, 4 Prayers, 6 Commentaries, 6 Philosophy). There were 19 letters in the new Bab formula, Bism Ullah il Amna ul Akdas, as there had been in the old one. Such is wisdom! Such is divine truth!<sup>42</sup>

#### IX. RITES AND CEREMONIES

The Bab followed the rites of Islam with some changes. Prayer retains its important place, but public congregational prayer is abolished. Believers will assemble for worship, but there must be no leader, Imam or Peeshnamaz.<sup>43</sup> Only at funerals there may be public prayers, but even then no leader. The greater the assembly at a funeral, the more pleasing to God. In the mosque no one should mount a pulpit. Chairs should be used there as well as in schools and homes, even for children. Mirrors are a suitable decoration for mosques because they suggest to believers that they should reflect God. Special mosques are to be erected in honor of the Bab and the Letters of

<sup>42</sup> By a curious coincidence, Mormonism also invented a new alphabet called the "Deseret Alphabet," and divided Salt Lake City into nineteen Bishoprics; Brigham Young's fortune was willed to nineteen classes of his wives and children. Ann Eliza who sued for divorce, was his nineteenth wife."

<sup>43</sup> *Bayan*, Vol. IV, p. 165.

the Living. These are to be Houses of Refuge. Refugees are not to be impeded, and are recommended to be pardoned. The income of these shrines is to be expended exclusively for them. Land for God's house may be taken by right of eminent domain. Merchandising must not be carried on in its precincts. Old shrines are abolished. If one prays in the house of an unbeliever he must pay one misal in penance. Postures, like those of the Moslems, are continued. Ceremonial impurities do not invalidate prayer, for example, wearing clothing made of the hair of animals or touching animal excretions. Yet the worshipper must be clothed in an *Aba* (cloak); a *jubba* (coat) is not sufficient. A special form of call to prayer (*Azan*) is prescribed for each day, as is the manner of paying the Muezzin. Special forms of invocation are prescribed as for the beginning of any work, or on reading the Bayan. At the birth of a child the word Mustagas is to be used. Instead of reading the Bayan, there may be substituted the zikr, saying, "Allah izhar," or the seven names of God derived from Vahid, repeated 100 times. Each day of the month has its ejaculation which must be repeated 95 times as the first day, "Allah Abba," the second day, "Allah Azim," etc. Four prayers are specified for the lights of the throne, and one for sunrise on Friday. For example, a salutation to the sun is; "The brightness of thine aspect is only from God, O rising sun! and bears witness unto that which God hath witnessed concerning Himself, that there is no God but Him, the precious, the beloved!" On the evening of Friday,<sup>44</sup> mention of the Name of God should be made 202 times. Prayers may be in Persian as well as Arabic. They should not be long and wearisome. The Fast requires abstinence from eating, drinking and indulgence from sunrise to sunset. Smoking is at all times under the ban. Warning is specially given against anger, complaint against God and the Bab or doing anything which is not of God. The fast is to be a remembrance

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<sup>44</sup>By Meeting Day may be meant the first day of each month, every 19 days, as the week is abolished by Babism.

of God. It will last a month of 19 days; is fixed in the first of March and is enjoined on all from the age of 11 to 42 except the sick, travelers and some others.

Pilgrimage is continued. One of the first Books of the Bab contained directions for visiting the shrines of the Imams at Kerbela,<sup>45</sup> but later old shrines were abolished. The new substitutes were the house of the Bab at Shiraz, the Tomb of the Martyrs at Sheikh Tabarsi and the Mosques of the "Letters." Only the well-to-do should go on pilgrimage, and each one on arrival should give four miscals of gold to the shrine.

Begging is prohibited. Giving is enjoined for the cause of God, to the Bab, the "Letters" and their descendants. Little is said about the poor, but some fines are assigned to them. Circumcision is not enjoined, as it was not in the Koran. The custom is kept up. The only feast, as far as I have learned, is the old Persian Noruz, the vernal equinox. It is called the day of the Nukta or Point, the Day of God. On it there are to be rejoicings with playing of music. The solar year is established instead of the Moslem lunar year. Afterwards, the anniversary of the declaration of the Bab, May 23, 1844, was made a feast. The care of the body of the dead is minutely prescribed.<sup>46</sup> It is to be treated with great respect. It is to be washed three times with rosewater and camphor, saying certain words. While washing the head say, "Ya fard," the breast, say, "Ya Hayy" and so while washing the right side, left side, right foot, etc. It is to be shrouded in five garments of different stuff, first silk, last cotton. A cornelian ring is to be placed on a finger of the right hand, inscribed with a verse in recognition of God. The words inscribed are not the same for a man and a woman. Coffins are to be of solid substances as glass or stone. Transporting bodies of the dead for burial at the shrines is forbidden. Nevertheless the Bab's body was twice transported and over hundreds of miles.

<sup>45</sup> Ziyarat-nama, see *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, 1889, p. 900.

<sup>46</sup> *Beyan*, Vol. iv., pp. 100-106. (viii., ii.)

Other ceremonial laws descend to trivial details. Legal purifications are not required, yet it is directed that one wash completely every four days, go to the bath and take off the hairs of the body with depilatories every eight or fourteen days. Men are permitted to shave the beard or the head. They must write on their breasts with henna *ar-rahman*, and the women *allahoume* or *bism*. Henna should be used to stain or dye the body and hair. Bathing should be by pouring, not by plunging in a tank. A mirror may be used night and morning. Perfumes, especially rose-water and attar, are strongly recommended, whether in the toilet, or for a corpse, among one's books or in the house of God. Garments of pure white are to be preferred. After white which corresponds to the highest spiritual principle, colors in the descending scale of purity are yellow, green and red.<sup>47</sup> Silk, ivory, gold ornaments and utensils are permitted. Doors are ordered to be made high,<sup>48</sup> and the King is told how many doors to have in his palace and surely to make one mirror-room. The rate of silver to gold is fixed at 1:10; a new calendar is introduced with new names for days and months and a new script; inheritance and divorce laws are formulated. A new style of salutation is enjoined; men are to say, "Allah Akbar," and to reply "Allah Azam," women, "Allah Abha" and to reply "Allah Ajmal." Traveling is only permitted for trade; the study of the sciences is discouraged as unprofitable, and especially of foreign and dead languages and grammar. The study of philosophy, jurisprudence and logic are prohibited, and their books are to be destroyed, as well as all books of the Moslems except the Koran. On the other hand sciences bearing on the construction of talismans are recommended as they will enable the wearer to recognize the Manifestation. The six names of God are to be used as talismans.

<sup>47</sup> *Index*, LXII, *Beyan Persan*, Vol. ii, p. 41, note.

<sup>48</sup> This is a good point as many a traveler with a bruised pate can testify.

## X. MORAL LAW

Here we come to a striking feature of the Bayan,—not only the absence of a moral code but even of moral principles, and precepts. With all the multiplicity of ceremonial rules there is an amazing lack of enforcement of right conduct. I will mention all I have found. Children should honor their parents. They should not be maltreated, made to stand till weary at school or beaten, and should be encouraged to play. Animals should not be cruelly treated. Gentleness in general is enjoined, and oppression and the injuring or enchaining of another condemned. The Gospel command to love one another and the Golden Rule are stated. Carrying arms, except in the Jihad, is prohibited, as are tobacco, wine,<sup>49</sup> asafoetida, opium and all drugs except in the industries. Merchants must not read each others correspondence and must pay their debts. This is the sum total of moral instruction. I do not find that theft, adultery, murder, lying, profane swearing, false-oaths, sin and guilt are mentioned in the forty pages of Browne's *Index*. A moral system is conspicuous by its absence.

Finally regarding the family, the Bayan announces no great principles. Marriage is made obligatory on all. The wife must be content with her husband and love her children. The parents should show love for each other before the children. All should have children to continue the worshippers of God. If the first wife is childless, the husband can take another. If the man is powerless, the wife must leave him and marry another. A believer should marry only a believer. One who becomes a believer should separate from the unbelieving partner, or if one perverts, the other should separate. Divorce is limited as to its rapidity, but not as to its cause. If they quarrel or are incompatible, they may separate. They should wait 19 Babi months (one year) before remarry-

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<sup>49</sup> "The prohibition of wine appears to be less absolute than in Islam, *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, 1889, p. 501.

ing, that possibly their desire for each other may return. Within the year they may arrange a reconciliation and 19 days afterwards be reunited. If the year passes the divorce is completed and both may remarry. But a limit is put. The man may not divorce his wife and remarry more than 19 times! The dowry, which is paid as alimony in case of divorce, is 19 miscals of gold (\$300) in cities and 19 miscals of silver in villages. Woman's privileges are but slightly enlarged, notwithstanding the Bab maintained Kurrat-ul Ayn when she broke through the conventionalities of Islam.<sup>50</sup> There is no foundation for the statement of Bahais that the Bab taught the equality of the sexes. Women may not go on pilgrimage, but may go to the mosque at night. In the mosques a special place must be set aside for the women's chairs. Their manner of worship is prescribed. They are excused from the offering of gold more than once. A woman's face may be looked upon by the members of the family in which she grows up. She may even talk with a man outside of her household, if necessary, but "if they limit themselves to 28 words, it is better for the woman and the man."

Such is the system of religion which lies at the foundation of Bahatism—which our faddists in America are propagating as a new universal religion. For, with little change, Babism is Bahatism, transferred without due credit and promulgated by Baha Ullah in the *Kitab ul Akdas*. Do we not marvel that American Bahais can see in the Bab's books and system the "marvellous wisdom of the true prophet, with intuitive power, making light to gleam in a dark world," "with remarkable knowledge of science, unequaled utterances, marvellous literary power as the messenger of God"<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Professor Browne says: "The sermon preached at Badasht by Janab-i-Kuddus lends some color to the accusation that the Babis advocated communism and community of wives."

<sup>51</sup> See Writer's *Bahatism and its Claims*, Revell & Co., New York.