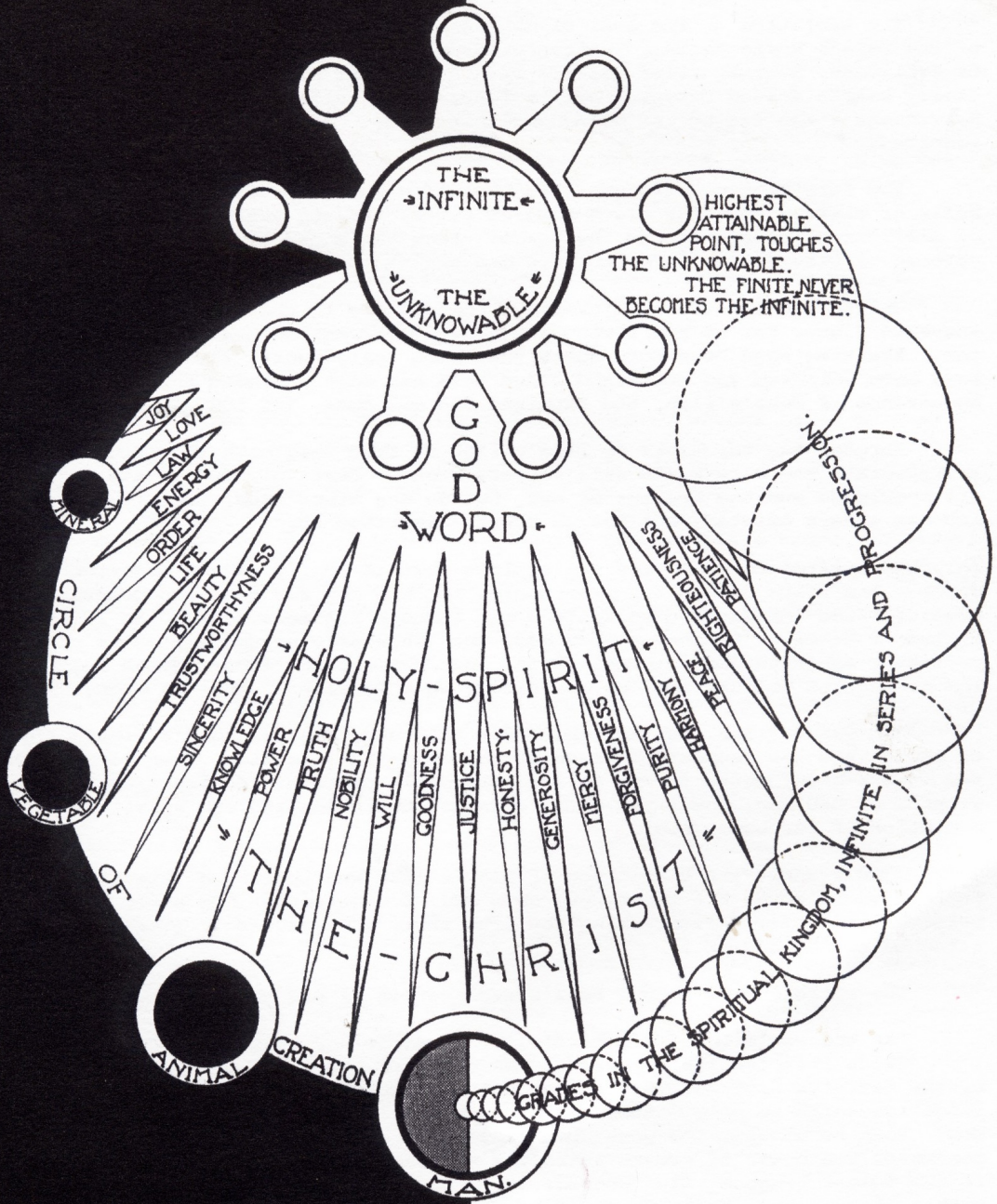


- MATTER -

OF

- WORLD



- THE UNIVERSE -

Bahá'í Teachings  
on  
The Universe

Compiled from online sources  
by Ernie Jones  
2017

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# Introduction



The cover chart, titled “The Universe” was developed from a similar chart by Lua Getsinger while on pilgrimage to Acca in 1899 with her husband Edward, they being the first two Americans to visit 'Abdul-Bahá.

The development of the chart is described in a copy of a [letter](#) to Mr. B.--- written by E. C. Getsinger dated April 1st. 1916, and read before the Washington, D. C., Baha'i Assembly on April 16, 1916. According to Dr Getsinger's letter:

“During these discussions I was present, and remember well how vehemently and persistently Abdul Baha proclaimed reincarnation as an erroneous theory, and how he quoted from the Holy Texts of Bahá'u'lláh daily, such as are perhaps not yet translated. During these times Abdul Baha would make illustrations, using his hands, drawing figures in the air, as he paced up and down before us while teaching. At last we got the true idea as to the meaning of "return" then with paper and pencil we began to draw on paper the illustrations Abdul Baha had been making in the air until we got a complete diagram and one He endorsed. This illustration was later used by Mrs. G... in her lectures to illustrate the "return" of qualities, powers, characteristics, functions and stations in men and women from time to time without necessarily reincarnating the soul.”

From a [Talk](#) given by Mrs. Lua M. Getsinger, California Club Hall, San Francisco, California, Sunday evening, December 17, 1911:

“What called for this lesson on the part of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was a question, and the question was, "What is soul?" In answer to this question, He instructed me how to draw this chart - not this one, but one from which this one was reproduced. “

“The Universe” chart and accompanying [text](#) was published by C. D. Kelsey on 4/5/58 and later.

The chart is not necessarily a complete representation of the structure of the entire universe. Therefore, ether or ethereal matter mentioned in tablets and talks given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá is not indicated on the chart. Based on 'Abdu'l-Bahá's explanation that it is neither material or spiritual, it has been placed between the material and spiritual worlds. The chart was obviously designed for a Christian audience.

References link to World Wide Web based PDF documents wherever available using [page number] for ease of reference. The text for links is included for reference on printed copies. The Contents and Headings are inter-linked for ease of navigation within this document.

## Tablet of the Universe – 'Abdu'l-Bahá



1. Praise be to God Who hath ever caused His Names and Attributes to penetrate the degrees of existence; Who hath made the effects of those Names and Attributes to shine resplendent and their signs to be firmly established in both the hidden and manifest worlds. By them He hath made the holy realities that are informed by His grace and are the recipients of His outpourings to be the sole revealers of all that pertaineth unto Him, and hath caused them to move through the firmament of perfection in arcs of descent and ascent. He hath ordained these Names and Attributes to be the first and foremost origin and cause of being in the world of creation and the source of the different grades of realities in the degrees of existence. When, through its power of attraction and propagation, the Day-Star of Names and Attributes shone upon the hidden realities in the heart of the unseen realm, they issued forth, were spread abroad, scattered about, set in order, became the recipients of the grace of God and His outpourings, and were made to be the sole manifestations of the Divine conditions and Eternal signs. Emerging from behind the veils, they appeared clothed in raiments of light, moving in the firmament of the unity of God, in orbits of sanctity and circles of glorification.
2. Thus the suns of the praise of the one true God moved resplendent in a vast, infinite space, capable neither of being defined by limits nor contained within the compass of signs and allusions. All praise be to Him Who was its Author and Creator, Who spread it out, and adorned it with countless lamps and never-fading luminaries: 'None knoweth the hosts of thy Lord save Him' (Qur'an, 74:31). He made the circuits of these luminous divine orbs to be their lofty and celestial spheres; and He made the bodies of these spiritual spheres to be subtle and soft, flowing and liquid, undulating and vibrating, in such manner that these refulgent orbs swim in the circumferences of the spheres, and move in their vast space by the aid of their Creator and Maker, their Ordainer and Fashioner.
3. Divine and all-encompassing Wisdom hath ordained that motion be an inseparable concomitant of existence, whether inherently or accidentally, spiritually or materially. This movement must be governed by some check or rein, some regulator or director, otherwise order will be disrupted and the spheres and bodies will fall from the heavens. For this reason God brought into being a universal attractive force between these bodies to hold sway over them and govern them, a force deriving from the firm ties, the mighty correspondence and affinity that exist between the realities of these limitless worlds. By the operation of this attractive force those holy and resplendent suns, with their luminous worlds, satellites and planets, circling and orbiting in their heavens, at once exerted attraction and were subject to it, induced motion and were themselves moved, began orbiting and set into orbit other bodies, shone forth and caused others to shine. In this manner they became arranged in a perfectly ordered system, each one a handiwork of consummate fashioning and manifest beauty, each one an enduring creation and a conclusive proof. Glory be to Him Who attracted them, laid firm hold on them, imbued

them with effulgence, ordered them and set them in motion; and far from His glory be that which any of his creatures can affirm of Him or attribute to Him.

4. O thou the recipient of overflowing bounties from the billowing, the surging, the Most Great Ocean, whose waves beat against the shores of the nations. Blessed art thou inasmuch as thou hast sought the shelter of the strong Pillar and taken refuge in the impregnable Stronghold, the station of complete servitude to thy Glorious and All-Praised Lord. Thou hast rid thyself of baseless suppositions and sanctified thyself from intellectual imaginings, hastening to the fountain-head of truths and mysteries, and thirsting for the well-spring of the river of knowledge where the seas meet and the rivers return.
5. Know thou that the expressions of the creative hand of God throughout His limitless worlds are themselves limitless. Limitations are a characteristic of the finite, and restriction is a quality of existent things, not of the reality of existence.
6. This being the case, how can one, without proof or testimony, conceive of creation being bound by limits? Gaze with penetrating vision into this new cycle. Hast thou seen any matter in which God is bounded by limits which He cannot overstep? Nay, by the excellence of His glory! On the contrary, His tokens have encompassed all things and are sanctified and exalted beyond computation in the world of creation.
7. These are spiritual truths relating to the spiritual world. In like manner, from these spiritual realities infer truths about the material world. For physical things are signs and imprints of spiritual things; every lower thing is an image and counterpart of a higher thing. Nay, earthly and heavenly, material and spiritual, accidental and essential, particular and universal, structure and foundation, appearance and reality and the essence of all things, both inward and outward—all of these are connected one with another and are interrelated in such a manner that you will find that drops are patterned after seas, and that atoms are structured after suns in proportion to their capacities and potentialities. For particulars in relation to what is below them are universals, and what are great universals in the sight of those whose eyes are veiled are in fact particulars in relation to the realities and beings which are superior to them. Universal and particular are in reality incidental and relative considerations. The mercy of thy Lord, verily, encompasseth all things!
8. Know then that the all-embracing framework that governs existence includes within its compass every existent being - particular or universal - whether outwardly or inwardly, secretly or openly. Just as particulars are infinite in number, so also universals, on the material plane, and the great realities of the universe are without number and beyond computation. The Dawning Places of Unity, the Daysprings of Singleness and the Suns of Holiness are also sanctified beyond the bounds of number, and the luminous spiritual worlds are exalted above limits and restrictions. In like manner the worlds of bodily existence the mind of no man can reckon nor the understanding of the learned comprehend. Consider the following well-known tradition and examine its meanings indicative of the vastness of the cosmos and its awesome limitless expanse: 'God, exalted be He, fashioned one hundred thousand, thousand lamps and suspended the Throne, the earth, the heavens and whatsoever is between them, even Heaven and Hell — all of these

in a single lamp. And only God knows what is in the rest of the lamps.' The fact that philosophers and sages have posited limits and restrictions for such matters is to be explained by the limitations of people's minds and perceptions and the blindness of the followers of allusions, whose natures and intellects have been rendered dull and inanimate by the interposition of many veils.

9. Every cycle and dispensation has its own distinctive character, its allotted measure of Grace. The realities of things are manifested in a degree proportionate to their stations, ranks, receptivity and capacity. For instance, regard the human reality, its spiritual perfections, the properties and virtues of the soul: their appearance and manifestation, their propagation and growth depend in degree upon the stage of development reached in the course of this earthly life, which ranges from the condition of the primal germ to the highest stations of mature development. The same principle is to be found in the whole of existence, seen and unseen.
10. Consider this marvelous cycle, this great matchless dispensation and say: Glorified be God, Lord of the Exalted Throne, for He hath manifested the Sun of Oneness and the Eternal Reality from this lofty and majestic, this mighty and ancient Horizon in such wise that when its ardent penetrating rays shone upon the empty worlds and desolate realms the realities of all things and the universal meanings sprang forth and were renewed through its regenerative power the hidden mysteries of the sciences, which discover the divine realities, were made known, and the guarded, preserved Secret and the Hidden Sign became manifest. For this sublime cycle, this most great Dawntide is the dispensation of truths and mysteries, of the gathering-up of the affairs of the Merciful in the centre of lights, and of the appearance of the hidden treasures in the midmost heart of the worlds of Thy Lord, the Almighty, the Unconstrained. In the reality of drops seas of divine verses surge and in the essence of atoms suns of names and attributes are manifest. In our times scientists are discovering in the strata of rocks secrets that their predecessors could not discover in perspicuous tablets of light. That is because in this most great manifestation, without investigation or deduction the gates of revelation and discovery have been thrown wide open.
11. The birds of men's thoughts have escaped from the snares of superstitions, and the veils have been rent asunder and removed from those mysteries which previously held sway over men.
12. As weakness and evanescence are inherent in the nature of the contingent world, it was not possible that it should sustain a complete manifestation of the signs and evidences of this Revelation, which hath shone forth from the Summit of Sinai, except in a gradual manner. For this reason wilt thou discern, when thou dost look about thee with joyful gaze and uplifted vision, the tokens of this great, brilliant Luminary, see the lights of wisdom shining from the horizons on all regions, gather the luminous pearls which are cast forth by this surging, restless and billowing Ocean, and drink from the clear sweet founts which spring forth from the outpourings of this bountiful showering rain-cloud. Blessed is he who hath not been prevented by the intervening veils of profitless and fanciful sciences from beholding the verities of true knowledge and from perceiving its inmost essence in the Day of God. Joy to him who hath removed the veil and gone forth amongst the peoples of the world with penetrating vision when the eyes of all are

transfixed in awe at the effulgence of the All-Powerful. Woe to him who on the Day of Judgment is raised up blind, who neglected to remember his most glorious Lord, whose ears were deaf to the call which was raised in this all-highest Paradise.

13. Say: 'O my God! Wert Thou to create in every limb of my body tongues speaking, in the most eloquent of languages, pure clear meanings, far surpassing the limitations of signs and allusions, and were these tongues to praise Thee and thank Thee throughout ages and cycles, yet would they fail to discharge the full measure of gratitude I owe Thee for Thy grace and bounty in having enabled me to believe in the Manifestation of Thy Divine mercy, the Day-spring of Thy oneness, the Dawning-place of Thy mighty signs and the Repository of the secrets of Thy transcendent sovereignty in the midmost heart of the world. "And by whichsoever ye call upon Him, most beauteous are His Names" (17:110). Likewise would they fail befittingly to fulfill the debt of thanks I owe Thee for having removed from my eyes the veil that obstructed my vision, for having caused me to hearken to the melodies of the Birds of Holiness upon the branches of the Tree of Immortality and for having given me to quaff the pure water of the camphor cup from the hand of the Cupbearer of Thy gracious providence in this most great, this most exalted, most holy, blessed and august Manifestation.'
14. O thou who wingest thy flight in the spacious realms of the love of God! Know thou that the knowledges and disciplines, the arts and sciences which appeared in previous dispensations, when compared to the divine questions, the eternal verities and the universal mysteries which have become unveiled, manifest and brilliant in their meridian glory in this resplendent Revelation, are nothing more than allusions and metaphors, nay, they are hardly better than superstitious fancies. For the all-embracing universal Reality is, in the eyes of thy Lord, analogous to the all-embracing human reality which passes in the course of its early development through infancy, childhood and youth. Even though these various stages may manifest certain of the characteristics and virtues of man, yet what are these early manifestations in comparison to the perfections of the mind, the truths of the Kingdom and the mysteries of God, with which the reality of man becomes plentifully endowed after reaching maturity—the period of its fullest expression?
15. For this reason thou must weigh all matters in the balance of this Cause and heed not the idle talk of the blind in heart and those who are captives of delusions and vain imaginations. Such talk is, to those possessed of insight, nothing more than fanciful stories and empty tales. Nay, rather thou shouldst investigate all things in a methodical and scientific way, and by clear proofs, perspicuous signs and incontrovertible evidences, seek to discover the undisclosed verities and the hidden mysteries which are concealed in the inmost heart of the realities of the universe. To those to whom God hath granted insight, whose inner natures are illumined, whose outer natures are refined, whose hearts are pure and whose minds are open and receptive, it is not acceptable, in this great and majestic cycle, to rely unquestioningly on the views of others in matters such as these. Conventional wisdoms and precepts based upon illusion and fancy, and to which no knowledgeable, experienced and intelligent person can reconcile himself, are today, in the sight of the truly learned, nothing more than 'deranged dreams'.
16. Praise be to Him Who hath illumined men's minds with the light of truth shining forth



from the Dawning-place of Revelation. Glorified be the Lord of Majesty for breaking down the barriers, tearing asunder the veils, dispelling the darkness, bursting the chains of allusion, cleaving the fetters of imagination, freeing men's minds from the tyranny of conjecture, and liberating the birds of thought in the apogee of human hearts, so that they may soar with the wings of delight in the worlds of existence and with penetrating insight rend the veils woven by the spiders of fancy in these lofty chambers and high pavilions.

17. Know then, with regard to the mathematical sciences, that it was only in this distinguished age, this great century, that their scope was widened, their unresolved difficulties solved, their rules systematized, and their diversity realized. The discoveries made by earlier philosophers and the views they held were not established upon a firm basis or a sound foundation for they wished to confine the worlds of God within the smallest compass and narrowest limit and were quite unable to conceive what lay beyond; even claiming that there was neither void nor matter, but merely nothingness. This view is at variance with and contrary to all the divine truths and heavenly secrets. Indeed, if thou dost compare the ideal world to the human world and apply spiritual principles to physical matters thou wilt discover that this view is flimsier than a spider's web, because, just as the luminous spiritual worlds are sanctified above computation or limitation, so too are the physical worlds in this vast immensity of space. This is a secret of which God hath apprised His servants through His grace and mercy in order to demonstrate the idleness of the fancies of those who disbelieve in God, and to expose the baselessness of the arguments of those who are wandering blindly in their heedlessness, that the edifice they have built out of their vain imaginings may crumble and their profitless pursuits be discredited and fall into disrepute.
18. For their eyes have been blinded from beholding the worlds of God and their minds have fallen short of comprehending the mysteries of the Kingdom in this resplendent Vision. They believed that these worlds were contained in this small circuit, which in relation to the worlds of God is of no more account than the black in the eye of an ant in an infinity of space, even as He saith, and He speaketh the truth: 'None knoweth the hosts of thy Lord, save Him.'
19. With regard to that which hath been mentioned concerning the seven spheres and the seven heavens referred to in the Books revealed by the Dawning-places of Light and Repositories of Secrets in previous ages, such references were dictated by the conventional wisdom prevailing in those times, for every cycle hath its own characteristics which are determined by the capacities of the people and their readiness to accept fresh revelations of the truth from behind the veil. All things are ordained by God according to a given measure. When the Prophets spoke of the celestial spheres what they intended was no more than the orbits of the planets falling within that greater world that embraces the sun and its attendant planetary system. For the planets circling this sun are in seven degrees in respect to mass, volume, visibility and brilliancy. The orbit of the first of these is one of the spheres of this solar world and one of the heavens of finite extent that falls within the circumference of this all-encompassing circle. The same pattern is true for all the brilliant stars shining in the face of the heavens, every one of which is a sun with its own solar world containing planets and satellites. When thou

gazeth at the planets with the naked eye, without the interposition of magnifying mirrors, they will appear to be in seven degrees. The orbit or circuit of each of these degrees is an upraised heaven and an encircling sphere in the world of existence.

20. Know then that, as hath been clearly handed down in the accounts of old, these great orbits and circuits fall within subtle, fluid, clear, liquid, undulating and vibrating bodies, and that the heavens are a restrained wave because a void is impossible and inconceivable. All that may be said is that the celestial bodies and the material bodies of the ethereal regions differ in respect of some of the substances and elements from which they are constituted, the quantities and proportions of these that go into their composition, the peculiar characteristics causing the difference in the outward effects of these bodies, and the properties that emanate from them in rich abundance. The celestial bodies that surround the material bodies also differ one from another in respect of subtlety, fluidity, and weight. It cannot be otherwise for a void is impossible.
21. The existence of a container implies the existence of something contained; what is contained can hardly be other than a body, but the bodies of the celestial spheres are in the utmost degree of subtlety, lightness and fluidity as bodies may be of diverse kinds: solid like rocks, malleable like metals and minerals, fluid like water and air. Lighter still they may be of a kind that ascends heavenwards, such as that which is used in dirigibles; and lighter than all of these are fire, electricity and lightning. All of these are bodies in reality, but some of them are weightless. In like manner thy Lord hath created in these vast heavens manifold bodies without limit or number, which the minds of men can neither compute nor encompass. Souls are bewildered when they attempt to understand them and confounded by a mere glimpse of them.
22. Consider the fancies of the philosophers and observe how they wandered distractedly in the wilderness of philosophical preconceptions and erroneous beliefs for which the Mighty, Self-Subsistent King hath sent down no proof. As for the view that the earth revolves around the sun, that it is one of the bright planets of this solar system, and that the diurnal movement that brings about sunrise and sunset is caused by the rotation of the earth about its axis—these are not modern ideas nor discoveries of recent times. On the contrary, the first person to state that the earth moved about the sun was the sage Pythagoras, one of the five pillars of wisdom, a defender of its sanctuary and unfolders of its secrets. He it was who recognized this truth 500 years before the advent of Christ and reasoned that the sun was a center in relation to the earth, because of its fieriness. He was followed in this view by the philosopher Plato in his latter days. Aristarchus composed a treatise in 280 B.C. in which he affirmed that the earth revolves about the sun and around its own axis. However, he did not found this view upon clear evidences, convincing arguments, and positive proofs derived from the laws of geometry and the principles of mathematics; rather he based it on a mere presentiment, an apprehension, an intuition. Most of the sages of old, though, because they viewed the visible world with their physical eyes and perceived it with their outward senses only, when they observed the stars and the heavenly bodies, concluded that it was the sun that was in motion and the earth that was still. Among them was the Alexandrian, Ptolemy, Roman citizen, renowned for his knowledge of astronomy and history. He was a professor at the school of Alexandria in the second century A.D. He chose the foundation of his system from a

body of ancient principles, founded upon it his observations, and drew up an almanac based on the idea that the sun is in motion and the earth is still. Because of the sway and influence of the Roman people and their dominion over all nations, his system became well-known and the fame of his almanac and astronomical observations spread far and wide throughout the earth. He wrote a book on the science of astronomy and mathematics called *Almagest*.

23. As for those who claim that the celestial spheres are massive, solid and contiguous with each other; that they are glassy, transparent and penetrable to the light of other bodies; capable of neither being cleft asunder nor welded back together; forever impermeable and imperishable—these thoughts are mere suppositions and surmises made by people who have not understood the meaning of the brilliant verse that clearly states: 'All swim in a celestial sphere' (21:34, 36:40). The import of this verse is clear inasmuch as the act of swimming cannot be conceived of except in yielding, fluid, liquid bodies, and is quite impossible in solid, resistant bodies. Look, then, with discerning vision into this clear, conclusive and manifest proof.
24. In the first centuries of Islam, Al-Farabi translated this book into Arabic, and the views it propounded became well known to Muslim scholars. These views they followed and imitated without careful scrutiny and investigation and without fully comprehending the meanings of some of the Divine verses. For He hath said, and His word is the truth: 'All swim in a celestial sphere.' In this blessed verse it was clearly established that all the brilliant stars and heavenly bodies throughout the expanse of these lofty heavens, this vast, limitless space, and this earth too, are in motion, traveling in their orbits and swimming in their spheres and circuits. More grave than their misinterpretation of the preceding verse was the inadequacy of their attempts to interpret the other blessed verse, which indicates that the sun moves about its own center and axis. He hath said: 'And the sun moves in a fixed place of its own' (36:38). Their minds were baffled, their souls perplexed, and their faculties unequal to the task of perceiving its meanings, for they wished to make it conform to the rules of Ptolemy, mentioned above, and to harmonize it with the almanac which he had drawn up. They were not, however, able to reconcile the two texts and for this reason had to have recourse to implausible explanations, such as the claim advanced by some that the words 'in a fixed place of its own' were originally 'it has no fixed place', the word for 'in' having become mistakenly confused with the word for 'no' [in the Arabic text]; or the claim made by others that by 'fixed place' is meant the Day of Judgment, at which time the sun will cease from its orbiting and motion—this despite the fact that it is plainly stated in this verse that the sun's motion is about its own axis and center.
25. Know then that those mathematical questions which have stood the test of scrutiny and about the soundness of which there is no doubt are those that are supported by incontrovertible and logically binding proofs and by the rules of geometry as applied to astronomy; that are based on observations of the stars and careful astronomical research, and are in conformity with the principles of the universal themes expounded in the divine sciences. For it is by applying the outward world to the inner, the high to the low, the small to the large, the general to the particular that, with abundant clearness, it becometh apparent that the new rules arrived at by the science of astronomy are in closer

accord with the universal divine principles than the other erroneous theories and propositions, as we have explained and illustrated.

26. The observations of Copernicus and his almanac have been more accurately compiled and more thoroughly and carefully researched than the other almanacs. Living at the turn of the fifteenth century A.D., he pursued his astronomical observations for a period of 36 years before publicly announcing the now famous system of laws that were the fruit of his studies; and were it not for our wish to be brief and concise we would have explained for thee the details of the system and summarized its repercussions. The guidance we have given on this subject, however, is sufficient for those with a seeing eye and clear insight.
27. Say: Exalted be the Self-Subsistent King, by Whose manifestation the veil of fancy hath been torn asunder; by which the sincere ones have dispensed with all else but Him through love for His manifest Beauty, a Beauty that revealeth the realities of things, seen and unseen, and exposeth the fanciful misconceptions and erroneous beliefs in the sciences; by which those that long to behold His Face have become apprised of the Hidden Secret, the Concealed and Treasured Symbol; by which they have soared on the wings of penetrating vision to the apex of reunion, the well-spring of happiness, and the station of blissful contentment, heard the sweet melodies of the birds on the boughs of the forests of revelation, bathed at the pure spring, drunk from the oceans of life in the world of light, and become intoxicated from the cup tempered at the camphor fountain in this manifest and resplendent Day, calling on their Lord in soul-entrancing accents, the like of which ear hath not heard amidst the gardens and meadows of Paradise, saying: 'I call upon Thee, O my God and my Beloved, with the tongue of my inmost spirit, with my face set towards the Day-Spring of Thy Unity and the Dawning-Place of the Sun of Thy Sublime Oneness, sweetening my breath with praise of Thee and thanks to the Center of Thy Divine mercy, for having created me, undeserving as I am, by Thy heavenly favor, in this majestic cycle and unique manifestation. For this is the Day which Thou hast singled out from amongst all ages for the dawning of the Sun of Thy Truth, whose brilliant rays illumine all the horizons, the Day in which Thou hast showered forth Thy grace, made perfect Thy proof and fulfilled Thy testimony, the Day in which Thou hast perfected Thy bestowals and bounties unto such of Thy creatures as are wholly devoted unto Thee. Verily, Thou hast honored them by attainment to that Day for which the chosen ones of God, in the remoteness of their separation, would have sacrificed their spirits, yearning to inhale a single breath of the fragrances spread abroad in such a Day, and longing to behold traces of the lights that shine forth above its heaven.
28. Thou, in truth, hast crowned me, through Thy gracious favor, in the midmost heart of creation, with this luminous diadem and seated me upon the throne of Thy love amidst all the peoples of the earth. And Thou hast aided me to remain steadfast in Thy Cause, through which the mightiest powers amongst the concourse of thy creation were made to shake and tremble, and the foundations of all beings in the realms of invention and creation to quake. I ask Thee, O King of the seen and the unseen, by Thine Ancient Beauty and the radiance of Thy Holy Countenance and Wondrous Being, to preserve us from vain imaginings and evil whisperings, and to assist us to be persevering and constant, firm and unwavering in Thy Cause. Thou, verily, art the Great Giver, the All-

# Bountiful, the Most Compassionate!'

Provisional translation by Anonymous, Tablet of the Universe, Abdu'l-Bahá  
[http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_lawh\\_aflakiyyih](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_lawh_aflakiyyih)

## 1 GOD



29. God hath, out of sheer nothingness and through the potency of His command, created the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them. He is single and peerless in His eternal unity with none to join partner with His holy Essence, nor is there any soul, except His Own Self, who can befittingly comprehend Him...

Chapter LXII.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #2 [19]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

30. The divine sovereignty is an ancient sovereignty, not an accidental sovereignty.
31. If we acknowledge that there is a beginning for this world of creation, we acknowledge that the sovereignty of God is accidental—that is, we admit a time when the reality of Divinity has been without dominion (lit. “defeated”). The names and attributes of Divinity are requirements of this world. The names the Powerful, the Living, the Provider, the Creator require and necessitate the existence of creatures. If there were no creatures, Creator would be meaningless.
32. How then is a time conceivable when this sovereignty has not been existent? This divine sovereignty is not to be measured by six thousand years. This interminable, illimitable universe is not the result of that measured period. This stupendous laboratory and workshop has not been limited in its production to six thousand revolutions of the earth about the sun. With the slightest reflection man can be assured that this calculation and announcement is childish, especially in view of the fact that it is scientifically proved the terrestrial globe has been the habitation of man long prior to such a limited estimate.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #79 [125] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

33. Reflect then carefully that the sovereignty of God is not accidental but everlasting and eternal, and that it necessitates the existence of phenomenal being. ... The sovereignty of God is eternal. There has been no beginning; there will be no end. This is as evident as the sun at midday, even to one endowed with limited reason.
34. Likewise, the divine bounties of the Sun of Reality are perpetual. Its light is forever shining. Its love is forever radiating. Its bounty never ceases. It could not be said that the

power and effulgence of God was ever subject to cessation. It could not be claimed that the divinity of the Almighty One had come to an end. For the divinity of God is eternal. Therefore, the divine bounties—whether phenomenal and accidental or spiritual and ideal—are perpetual.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, #93 [154]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

35. So, likewise, if we say there was a time when God had no creation or created beings, a time when there were no recipients of His bounties and that His names and attributes had not been manifested, this would be equivalent to a complete denial of Divinity, for it would mean that Divinity is accidental. To explain it still more clearly, if we think that fifty thousand years ago or one hundred thousand years ago there was no creation, that there were then no worlds, no human beings, no animals, this thought of ours would mean that previous to that period there was no Divinity. ... It is, therefore, evident that inasmuch as the reality of Divinity is without a beginning, creation is also without a beginning. This is as clear as the sun. When we contemplate this vast machinery of omnipresent power, perceive this illimitable space and its innumerable worlds, it will become evident to us that the lifetime of this infinite creation is more than six thousand years; nay, it is very, very ancient.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, #139 [262]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

36. God is the Creator. The word creator presupposes or connotes creation. God is the Provider. The word provider implies recipients of provision. Another name for the Creator is the Resuscitator, which demands the existence of creatures to be resuscitated. If He be not the Provider, how could we conceive of creatures to receive His bounty? If He be not the Lord, how could we conceive of subjects? If He be not the Knower, how could we conceive of those known? If we should say that there was a time in past ages when God was not possessed of His creation or that there was a beginning for the world, it would be a denial of creation and the Creator. Or if we should declare that a time may come when there will be a cessation of divine bounties, we should virtually deny the existence of Divinity. It is as though man should conceive of a king without country, army, treasury and all that constitutes sovereignty or kingdom. Is it possible to conceive of such a sovereign? A king must be possessed of a dominion, an army and all that appertains to sovereignty in order that his sovereignty may be a reality. It is even so with the reality of Divinity which enfolds all virtues. The sovereignty thereof is everlasting, and the creation thereof is without beginning and without end.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, #114 [216]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

## 1.1 Proof of the existence of God



37. It is now the time in the history of the world for us to strive and give an impetus to the advancement and development of inner forces—that is to say, we must arise to service in the world of morality, for human morals are in need of readjustment. We must also render service to the world of intellectuality in order that the minds of men may increase in power and become keener in perception, assisting the intellect of man to attain its supremacy so that the ideal virtues may appear. Before a step is taken in this direction we must be able to prove Divinity from the standpoint of reason so that no doubt or objection may remain for the rationalist. Afterward, we must be able to prove the existence of the bounty of God—that the divine bounty encompasses humanity and that it is transcendental. Furthermore, we must demonstrate that the spirit of man is immortal, that it is not subject to disintegration and that it comprises the virtues of humanity.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #105 [188]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

38. And now consider this infinite universe. Is it possible that it could have been created without a Creator? Or that the Creator and cause of this infinite congeries of worlds should be without intelligence? Is the idea tenable that the Creator has no comprehension of what is manifested in creation? Man, the creature, has volition and certain virtues. Is it possible that his Creator is deprived of these? A child could not accept this belief and statement. It is perfectly evident that man did not create himself and that he cannot do so. How could man of his own weakness create such a mighty being? Therefore, the Creator of man must be more perfect and powerful than man. If the creative cause of man be simply on the same level with man, then man himself should be able to create, whereas we know very well that we cannot create even our own likeness. Therefore, the Creator of man must be endowed with superlative intelligence and power in all points that creation involves and implies. We are weak; He is mighty, because, were He not mighty, He could not have created us. We are ignorant; He is wise. We are poor; He is rich. Otherwise, He would have been incapable of our creation.
39. Among the proofs of the existence of a divine power is this: that things are often known by their opposites. Were it not for darkness, light could not be sensed. Were it not for death, life could not be known. If ignorance did not exist, knowledge would not be a reality. It is necessary that each should exist in order that the other should have reality. Night and day must be in order that each may be distinguished. Night itself is an indication and evidence of day which follows, and day itself indicates the coming night. Unless night were a reality, there could not be day. Were it not for death, there could be no life. Things are known by their opposites.
40. Therefore, our weakness is an evidence that there is might; our ignorance proves the reality of knowledge; our need is an indication of supply and wealth. Were it not for wealth, this need would not exist; were it not for knowledge, ignorance would be

unknown; were it not for power, there would be no impotence. In other words, demand and supply is the law, and undoubtedly all virtues have a center and source. That source is God, from Whom all these bounties emanate.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #35 [49] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

41. Among the proofs and arguments for the existence of God is the fact that man has not created himself, but rather that his creator and fashioner is another than he. And it is certain and indisputable that the creator of man is not like man himself, because a powerless being cannot create another being, and an active creator must possess all perfections to produce his handiwork
42. It is certain that the entire contingent world is subject to an order and a law which it can never disobey. Even man is forced to submit to death, sleep, and other conditions — that is, in certain matters he is compelled, and this very compulsion implies the existence of One Who is All—Compelling. So long as the contingent world is characterized by dependency, and so long as this dependency is one of its essential requirements, there must be One Who in His own Essence is independent of all things.
43. It is therefore evident that there is an Eternal and Almighty One Who is the sum of all perfections, for otherwise He would be even as the creatures. Likewise, throughout the world of existence the smallest created thing attests to the existence of a creator. For instance, this piece of bread attests that it has a maker.
44. Gracious God! The change in the outward form of the smallest thing proves the existence of a creator: Then how could this vast, boundless universe have created itself and come to exist solely through the mutual interaction of the elements? How patently false is such a notion!
45. These are theoretical arguments adduced for weak souls, but if the eye of inner vision be opened, a hundred thousand clear proofs will be seen. Thus, when man feels the indwelling spirit, he is in no need of arguments for its existence; but for those who are deprived of the grace of the spirit, it is necessary to set forth external arguments.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #2 [6]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

46. As to thy question whether the physical world is subject to any limitations, know thou that the comprehension of this matter dependeth upon the observer himself. In one sense, it is limited; in another, it is exalted beyond all limitations. The one true God hath everlastingly existed, and will everlastingly continue to exist. His creation, likewise, hath had no beginning, and will have no end.
47. All that is created, however, is preceded by a cause. This fact, in itself, establisheth, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the unity of the Creator.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #82 LXXXII [50] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>



48. Know that the reality of the Divinity and the nature of the divine Essence is ineffable sanctity and absolute holiness; that is, it is exalted above and sanctified beyond every praise. All the attributes ascribed to the highest degrees of existence are, with regard to this station, mere imagination. The Invisible and Inaccessible can never be known; the absolute Essence can never be described. For the divine Essence is an all-encompassing reality, and all created things are encompassed. The all-encompassing must assuredly be greater than that which is encompassed, and thus the latter can in no wise discover the former or comprehend its reality. No matter how far human minds may advance, even attaining the highest degree of human comprehension, the uttermost limit of this comprehension is to behold the signs and attributes of God in the world of creation and not in the realm of Divinity. For the essence and the attributes of the all-glorious Lord are enshrined in the inaccessible heights of sanctity, and human minds and understandings will never find a path to that station.
49. We observe that every lower thing is incapable of comprehending the reality of that which is higher. Thus, no matter how far they may evolve, the stone, the earth, and the tree can never comprehend the reality of man or imagine the powers of sight, hearing, or the other senses, even though the former and the latter alike are created things. How then can man, a mere creature, comprehend the reality of the sanctified Essence of the Creator? No human understanding can approach this station, no utterance can unfold its truth, and no allusion can intimate its mystery.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #37 [54]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

50. Thus, if there was a time when God did not manifest His qualities, then there was no God, because the attributes of God presuppose the creation of phenomena. For example, by present consideration we say that God is the creator. Then there must always have been a creation—since the quality of creator cannot be limited to the moment when some man or men realize this attribute. The attributes that we discover one by one—these attributes themselves necessarily anticipated our discovery of them. Therefore, God has no beginning and no ending; nor is His creation limited ever as to degree.
51. As long as the sovereignty of God is immemorial, therefore the creation of our world throughout infinity is presupposed. When we look at the reality of this subject, we see that the bounties of God are infinite, without beginning and without end.  
Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [53] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#53>
52. That Essence of the Divine Entity and the Unseen of the unseen is holy above imagination and is beyond thought. Consciousness doth not reach It. Within the capacity of comprehension of a produced reality that Ancient Reality cannot be contained. It is a different world; from it there is no information; arrival thereat is impossible; attainment thereto is prohibited and inaccessible. This much is known: It exists and Its existence is certain and proven—but the condition is unknown.

53. All the philosophers and the doctors knew that It is, but they were perplexed in the comprehension of Its existence and were at last discouraged, and in great despair they left this world. For the comprehension of the condition and mysteries of that Reality of realities and Mystery of mysteries there is need for another power and another sense. That power and sense is not possessed by mankind, therefore they have not found any information. For example: If a man possess the power of hearing, the power of tasting, the power of smelling and the power of feeling, but no power of seeing, he cannot see. Hence, through the powers and senses present in man the realization of the Unseen Reality, which is pure and holy above the reach of doubts, is impossible. Other powers are needed and other senses required. If those powers and senses are obtained, then information can be had; otherwise, not.

Baha'i World Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [Chapter Eight – The Unknowable Essence - page 382]  
<http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bwf/bwf8.html#THE%20UNKNOWABLE%20ESSENCE>

54. The existence of the Divine Being hath been clearly established, on the basis of logical proofs, but the reality of the Godhead is beyond the grasp of the mind. When thou dost carefully consider this matter, thou wilt see that a lower plane can never comprehend a higher. ... And although all these beings all coexist in the contingent world, in each case the difference in their stations precludeth their grasp of the whole; for no lower degree can understand a higher, such comprehension being impossible.
55. The higher plane, however, understandeth the lower. The animal, for instance, comprehendeth the mineral and vegetable, the human understandeth the planes of the animal, vegetable and mineral. But the mineral cannot possibly understand the realms of man. And notwithstanding the fact that all these entities coexist in the phenomenal world, even so, no lower degree can ever comprehend a higher.
56. Then how could it be possible for a contingent reality, that is, man, to understand the nature of that preexistent Essence, the Divine Being? The difference in station between man and the Divine Reality is thousands upon thousands of times greater than the difference between vegetable and animal. And that which a human being would conjure up in his mind is but the fanciful image of his human condition, it doth not encompass God's reality but rather is encompassed by it.
57. It is obvious that all created things are connected one to another by a linkage complete and perfect, even, for example, as are the members of the human body.
58. Likewise, look into this endless universe: a universal power inevitably existeth, which encompasseth all, directing and regulating all the parts of this infinite creation; and were it not for this Director, this Coordinator, the universe would be flawed and deficient. It would be even as a madman; whereas ye can see that this endless creation carrieth out its functions in perfect order, every separate part of it performing its own task with complete reliability, nor is there any flaw to be found in all its workings. Thus it is clear that a Universal Power existeth, directing and regulating this infinite universe. Every rational mind can grasp this fact.
59. Furthermore, although all created things grow and develop, yet are they subjected to influences from without. ... Thus each one of these entities exerteth its influence and is

likewise influenced in its turn. Inescapably then, the process leadeth to One Who influenceth all, and yet is influenced by none, thus severing the chain. The inner reality of that Being, however, is not known, although His effects are clear and evident.

60. To sum it up, there are many such proofs, establishing the existence of that Universal Reality. And since that Reality is preexistent, It is untouched by the conditions that govern phenomena; for whatever entity is subject to circumstances and the play of events is contingent, not preexistent. Know then: that divinity which other communions and peoples have conjured up, falleth within the scope of their imagination, and not beyond it, whereas the reality of the Godhead is beyond all conceiving.

Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #21 [19] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

## 1.2 Infinite



61. The realm of Divinity is an indivisible oneness, wholly sanctified above human comprehension; for intellectual knowledge of creation is finite, whereas comprehension of Divinity is infinite. How can the finite comprehend the infinite?
62. How can man comprehend the omniscient, omnipresent Lord? Undoubtedly, he cannot, for whatever comes within the grasp of human mind is man’s limited conception, whereas the divine Kingdom is unlimited, infinite. But although the reality of Divinity is sanctified beyond the comprehension of its creatures, it has bestowed its bounties upon all kingdoms of the phenomenal world, and evidences of spiritual manifestation are witnessed throughout the realms of contingent existence.

Promulgation of Universal Peace - ‘Abdu’l--Bahá, #62 [99]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

63. When we consider the world of existence, we find that the essential reality underlying any given phenomenon is unknown. Phenomenal, or created, things are known to us only by their attributes. Man discerns only manifestations, or attributes, of objects, while the identity, or reality, of them remains hidden. ... how much more this is true concerning the reality of Divinity, that holy essential reality which transcends the plane and grasp of mind and man? That which comes within human grasp is finite, and in relation to it we are infinite because we can grasp it. Assuredly, the finite is lesser than the infinite; the infinite is ever greater. If the reality of Divinity could be contained within the grasp of human mind, it would after all be possessed of an intellectual existence only—a mere intellectual concept without extraneous existence, an image or likeness which had come within the comprehension of finite intellect. The mind of man would be transcendental thereto. How could it be possible that an image which has only intellectual existence is the reality of Divinity, which is infinite? Therefore, the reality of Divinity in its identity is beyond the range of human intellection because the human mind, the human intellect, the human thought are limited, whereas the reality of Divinity

is unlimited. How can the limited grasp the unlimited and transcend it? Impossible.

64. How, then, can the reality of man, which is accidental, ever comprehend the Reality of God, which is eternal? It is self-evidently an impossibility. Hence we can observe the traces and attributes of God, which are resplendent in all phenomena and shining as the sun at midday, and know surely that these emanate from an infinite source. We know that they come from a source which is infinite indeed.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #125 [239]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

65. Know that the degrees of existence are finite—the degrees of servitude, of prophethood, and of Divinity—but that the perfections of God and of creation are infinite. If you examine the matter with care, you will see that even in their most outward sense the perfections of existence are infinite; for it is impossible to find any created thing such that nothing superior to it can be imagined.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #62 [82]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

### 1.3 Unknowable



66. Know that there are two kinds of knowledge: the knowledge of the essence of a thing and the knowledge of its attributes. The essence of each thing is known only through its attributes; otherwise, that essence is unknown and unfathomed.
67. Knowing God, therefore, means the comprehension and knowledge of His attributes and not of His Reality. And even this knowledge of His attributes extends only so far as human power and capacity permit, and remains wholly inadequate. ... The invisible realm of the Divinity is sanctified and exalted above the comprehension of all beings, and all that can be imagined is mere human understanding. The power of human understanding does not encompass the reality of the divine Essence: All that man can hope to achieve is to comprehend the attributes of the Divinity, the light of which is manifest and resplendent in the world and within the souls of men.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #59 [79]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

68. Now concerning the Essence of Divinity: in truth it is on no account determined by anything apart from its own nature, and can in no wise be comprehended. For whatsoever can be conceived by man is a reality that hath limitations and is not unlimited; it is circumscribed, not all-embracing. It can be comprehended by man, and is controlled by him. Similarly it is certain that all human conceptions are contingent, not absolute; that they have a mental existence, not a material one. Moreover, differentiation

of stages in the contingent world is an obstacle to understanding. How then can the contingent conceive the Reality of the absolute? ... And as we consider the outpourings of Divine Grace we are assured of the existence of God. For instance, we observe that the existence of beings is conditioned upon the coming together of various elements and their non-existence upon the decomposition of their constituent elements. For decomposition causeth the dissociation of the various elements. Thus, as we observe the coming together of elements giveth rise to the existence of beings, and knowing that beings are infinite, they being the effect, how can the Cause be finite?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablet to Dr. Forel [3] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/tablet-august-forel/tablet-august-forel.pdf?a51ff028>

69. It is a self-evident fact that phenomenal existence can never grasp nor comprehend the ancient and essential Reality. Utter weakness cannot understand absolute strength. When we view the world of creation, we discover differences in degree which make it impossible for the lower to comprehend the higher. ... A lower degree cannot comprehend a higher although all are in the same world of creation—whether mineral, vegetable or animal. Degree is the barrier and limitation. ... Inasmuch as in the creational world, which is phenomenal, difference of degree is an obstacle or hindrance to comprehension, how can the human being, which is a created exigency, comprehend the ancient divine Reality, which is essential? This is impossible because the reality of Divinity is sanctified beyond the comprehension of the created being, man.
70. Furthermore, that which man can grasp is finite to man, and man to it is as infinite. Is it possible then for the reality of Divinity to be finite and the human creature infinite? On the contrary, the reverse is true; the human is finite while the essence of Divinity is infinite. Whatever comes within the sphere of human comprehension must be limited and finite.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #46 [66] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

71. O Salmán! All that the sages and mystics have said or written have never exceeded, nor can they ever hope to exceed, the limitations to which man’s finite mind hath been strictly subjected. To whatever heights the mind of the most exalted of men may soar, however great the depths which the detached and understanding heart can penetrate, such mind and heart can never transcend that which is the creature of their own conceptions and the product of their own thoughts. The meditations of the profoundest thinker, the devotions of the holiest of saints, the highest expressions of praise from either human pen or tongue, are but a reflection of that which hath been created within themselves, through the revelation of the Lord, their God. Whoever pondereth this truth in his heart will readily admit that there are certain limits which no human being can possibly transgress. Every attempt which, from the beginning that hath no beginning, hath been made to visualize and know God is limited by the exigencies of His own creation—a creation which He, through the operation of His own Will and for the

purposes of none other but His own Self, hath called into being. Immeasurably exalted is He above the strivings of human mind to grasp His Essence, or of human tongue to describe His mystery. No tie of direct intercourse can ever bind Him to the things He hath created, nor can the most abstruse and most remote allusions of His creatures do justice to His being. Through His world-pervading Will He hath brought into being all created things. He is and hath ever been veiled in the ancient eternity of His own exalted and indivisible Essence, and will everlastingly continue to remain concealed in His inaccessible majesty and glory. All that is in heaven and all that is in the earth have come to exist at His bidding, and by His Will all have stepped out of utter nothingness into the realm of being. How can, therefore, the creature which the Word of God hath fashioned comprehend the nature of Him Who is the Ancient of Days?

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #148 CXLVIII [97] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

72. If I describe Thee, O my God, as Him Who is the All-Perceiving, I find myself compelled to admit that They Who are the highest Embodiments of perception have been created by virtue of Thy behest. And if I extol Thee as Him Who is the All-Wise, I, likewise, am forced to recognize that the Wellsprings of wisdom have themselves been generated through the operation of Thy Will. And if I proclaim Thee as the Incomparable One, I soon discover that they Who are the inmost essence of oneness have been sent down by Thee and are but the evidences of Thine handiwork. And if I acclaim Thee as the Knower of all things, I must confess that they Who are the Quintessence of knowledge are but the creation and instruments of Thy Purpose.
73. Exalted, immeasurably exalted, art Thou above the strivings of mortal man to unravel Thy mystery, to describe Thy glory, or even to hint at the nature of Thine Essence. For whatever such strivings may accomplish, they never can hope to transcend the limitations imposed upon Thy creatures, inasmuch as these efforts are actuated by Thy decree, and are begotten of Thine invention. The loftiest sentiments which the holiest of saints can express in praise of Thee, and the deepest wisdom which the most learned of men can utter in their attempts to comprehend Thy nature, all revolve around that Center Which is wholly subjected to Thy sovereignty, Which adoreth Thy Beauty, and is propelled through the movement of Thy Pen.
74. No one else besides Thee hath, at any time, been able to fathom Thy mystery, or befittingly to extol Thy greatness. Unsearchable and high above the praise of men wilt Thou remain forever. There is none other God but Thee, the Inaccessible, the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, the Holy of Holies.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #1 I [1] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

75. Regard thou the one true God as One Who is apart from, and immeasurably exalted above, all created things. The whole universe reflecteth His glory, while He is Himself independent of, and transcendeth His creatures. This is the true meaning of Divine unity. He Who is the Eternal Truth is the one Power Who exerciseth undisputed sovereignty

over the world of being, Whose image is reflected in the mirror of the entire creation. All existence is dependent upon Him, and from Him is derived the source of the sustenance of all things. This is what is meant by Divine unity; this is its fundamental principle.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #84 LXXXIV [51] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

76. ... God is immeasurably exalted above all things. Every created being however revealeth His signs which are but emanations from Him and not His Own Self. All these signs are reflected and can be seen in the book of existence, and the scrolls that depict the shape and pattern of the universe are indeed a most great book. Therein every man of insight can perceive that which would lead to the Straight Path and would enable him to attain the Great Announcement. Consider the rays of the sun whose light hath encompassed the world. The rays emanate from the sun and reveal its nature, but are not the sun itself.

Tablets of Baha'u'llah #6 [18] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/tablets-bahaullah/tablets-bahaullah.pdf?d1c53d82>

77. It is evident to the possessors of knowledge and illumined minds that the unseen Divinity and Essence of Oneness hath been holy beyond emanation and appearance, ascent and descent, ingress and egress; is exalted above the praise of every praiser and the comprehension of every comprehender. He hath been and is everlastingly hidden in His own essence and will be eternally concealed from eyes and sights in His own identity.
78. No relation, connection, separation, union, nearness, remoteness, position or reference is possible between Him and the contingent things, inasmuch as all in the heavens and earth have become existent by the word of His command and have stepped forth from utter and absolute non-existence and nothingness into the court of the existent and visible, through His desire, which is the Will itself.

Baha'i Scriptures, 'Abdu'l-Baha, Part II, [28] <http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai.scriptsures/>

## 2 WORD



79. Know that, while the Manifestations of God possess infinite virtues and perfections, They occupy only three stations: The first is the material station; the second is the human station, which is that of the rational soul; and the third is that of divine manifestation and heavenly splendour.
80. As for the material station, it has an origin in time, for it is composed of the elements, and every composition must ultimately be decomposed. It is indeed impossible for composition not to be followed by disintegration.
81. The second station is that of the rational soul, which is the human reality. This also has a beginning, and the Manifestations of God share it in common with all humanity.

82. The third station is that of divine manifestation and heavenly splendour, which is the Word of God, the everlasting Grace, and the Holy Spirit. This station has neither beginning nor end; for firstness and lastness pertain to the contingent world and not to the world of God. For God the beginning and the end are one and the same. Similarly, the reckoning of days, weeks, months, and years—of yesterday and today—is made with respect to the earth; but in the sun such things are unknown: There is neither yesterday, nor today, nor tomorrow, neither months nor years—all are equal. Likewise, the Word of God is sanctified above all these conditions and exalted beyond every law, constraint, or limitation that may exist in the contingent world.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #38 [56]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

83. In like manner, the holy Manifestations of God are the focal Centres of the light of truth, the Wellsprings of the hidden mysteries, and the Source of the effusions of divine love. They cast Their effulgence upon the realm of hearts and minds and bestow grace everlasting upon the world of the spirits. They confer spiritual life and shine with the splendour of inner truths and meanings. The enlightenment of the realm of thought proceeds from those Centres of light and Exponents of mysteries. Were it not for the grace of the revelation and instruction of those sanctified Beings, the world of souls and the realm of thought would become darkness upon darkness. Were it not for the sound and true teachings of those Exponents of mysteries, the human world would become the arena of animal characteristics and qualities, all existence would become a vanishing illusion, and true life would be lost.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #42 [59] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

84. The highest station, the supreme sphere, the noblest, most sublime position in creation, whether visible or invisible, whether alpha or omega, is that of the Prophets of God, notwithstanding the fact that for the most part they have to outward seeming been possessed of nothing but their own poverty.

Secret of divine civilization, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [page 20]

[http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_secret\\_divine\\_civilization#20](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_secret_divine_civilization#20)

85. The greatest bounties of God in this phenomenal world are His Manifestations. This is the greatest postulate. These Manifestations are the Suns of Reality. For it is through the Manifestation that the reality becomes known and established for man. History proves to us that apart from the influence of the Manifestations, man sinks back into his animal condition, using even his intellectual power to subserve an animal purpose. Therefore there is no cessation whatsoever in the future for the appearance of the Manifestation of God, because God is infinite and His purpose cannot be limited in any way. If we ever dare to limit and circumscribe God's purpose within any bounds, then of necessity we have dared to set limitations to the omnipotence of God. The created has dared to define his Creator!



86. Consequently, the perfect man ever beholds the rays of the Sun of Truth. The perfect man ever awaits and expects the coming of the effulgence of God, he ever ponders over the methods and purposes of God, knowing that of certainty the realities of the Divine are not finite, the Divine names and attributes are not finite. God's graces and bounties are without limit, and the coming of the Manifestations of God are not circumscribed by time.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [53] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#53>

87. Among the bounties of God is revelation. Hence revelation is progressive and continuous. It never ceases. It is necessary that the reality of Divinity with all its perfections and attributes should become resplendent in the human world. The reality of Divinity is like an endless ocean. Revelation may be likened to the rain. Can you imagine the cessation of rain? Ever on the face of the earth somewhere rain is pouring down. Briefly, the world of existence is progressive. It is subject to development and growth. Consider how great has been the progress in this radiant century. Civilization has unfolded. Nations have developed. Industrialism and jurisprudence have expanded. Sciences, inventions and discoveries have increased. All of these show that the world of existence is continuously progressing and developing; and therefore, assuredly, the virtues characterizing the maturity of man must, likewise, expand and grow.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #114 [216] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

88. Thus there have been many holy Manifestations of God. One thousand years ago, two hundred thousand years ago, one million years ago the bounty of God was flowing, the radiance of God was shining, the dominion of God was existing.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdul-Bahá [108] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#108>

89. God hath raised up Prophets and revealed Books as numerous as the creatures of the world, and will continue to do so to everlasting.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #4 [40]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

90. If thou be of the inmates of this city within the ocean of divine unity, thou wilt view all the Prophets and Messengers of God as one soul and one body, as one light and one spirit, in such wise that the first among them would be last and the last would be first. For they have all arisen to proclaim His Cause and have established the laws of divine wisdom. They are, one and all, the Manifestations of His Self, the Repositories of His might, the Treasuries of His Revelation, the Dawning-Places of His splendour, and the Daysprings of His light. Through them are manifested the signs of sanctity in the realities of all things and the tokens of oneness in the essences of all beings. Through them are revealed the elements of glorification in the heavenly realities and the exponents of

praise in the eternal essences. From them hath all creation proceeded and unto them shall return all that hath been mentioned.

Gems of Divine Mysteries, Bahá'u'lláh (GDM) [9]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gems-divine-mysteries/gems-divine-mysteries.pdf?51a7527c>

91. These sanctified Mirrors, these Daysprings of ancient glory, are, one and all, the Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe, its Essence and ultimate Purpose. From Him proceed their knowledge and power; from Him is derived their sovereignty. The beauty of their countenance is but a reflection of His image, and their revelation a sign of His deathless glory. They are the Treasuries of Divine knowledge, and the Repositories of celestial wisdom. Through them is transmitted a grace that is infinite, and by them is revealed the Light that can never fade. ... 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. By the revelation of these Gems of Divine virtue all the names and attributes of God, such as knowledge and power, sovereignty and dominion, mercy and wisdom, glory, bounty, and grace, are made manifest.
92. These attributes of God are not, and have never been, vouchsafed specially unto certain Prophets, and withheld from others. Nay, all the Prophets of God, His well-favored, His holy and chosen Messengers are, without exception, the bearers of His names, and the embodiments of His attributes. They only differ in the intensity of their revelation, and the comparative potency of their light. Even as He hath revealed: "Some of the Apostles We have caused to excel the others."
93. It hath, therefore, become manifest and evident that within the tabernacles of these Prophets and chosen Ones of God the light of His infinite names and exalted attributes hath been reflected, even though the light of some of these attributes may or may not be outwardly revealed from these luminous Temples to the eyes of men. That a certain attribute of God hath not been outwardly manifested by these Essences of Detachment doth in no wise imply that they who are the Daysprings of God's attributes and the Treasuries of His holy names did not actually possess it. Therefore, these illuminated Souls, these beauteous Countenances have, each and every one of them, been endowed with all the attributes of God, such as sovereignty, dominion, and the like, even though to outward seeming they be shorn of all earthly majesty....

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #19 XIX [14] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

94. Know thou of a certainty that the Unseen can in no wise incarnate His Essence and reveal it unto men. He is, and hath ever been, immensely exalted beyond all that can either be recounted or perceived. From His retreat of glory His voice is ever proclaiming: "Verily, I am God; there is none other God besides Me, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. I have manifested Myself unto men, and have sent down Him Who is the Dayspring of the signs of My Revelation. Through Him I have caused all creation to testify that there is none other God except Him, the Incomparable, the All-Informed, the All-Wise." He Who

is everlastingly hidden from the eyes of men can never be known except through His Manifestation, and His Manifestation can adduce no greater proof of the truth of His Mission than the proof of His own Person.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #20 XX [15] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

95. O Salmán! The door of the knowledge of the Ancient Being hath ever been, and will continue forever to be, closed in the face of men. No man's understanding shall ever gain access unto His holy court. As a token of His mercy, however, and as a proof of His loving-kindness, He hath manifested unto men the Daystars of His divine guidance, the Symbols of His divine unity, and hath ordained the knowledge of these sanctified Beings to be identical with the knowledge of His own Self. Whoso recognizeth them hath recognized God. Whoso hearkeneth to their call, hath hearkened to the Voice of God, and whoso testifieth to the truth of their Revelation, hath testified to the truth of God Himself. Whoso turneth away from them, hath turned away from God, and whoso disbelieveth in them, hath disbelieved in God. Every one of them is the Way of God that connecteth this world with the realms above, and the Standard of His Truth unto every one in the kingdoms of earth and heaven. They are the Manifestations of God amidst men, the evidences of His Truth, and the signs of His glory.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #21 XXI [15] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

96. In every age and cycle He hath, through the splendorous light shed by the Manifestations of His wondrous Essence, recreated all things, so that whatsoever reflecteth in the heavens and on the earth the signs of His glory may not be deprived of the outpourings of His mercy, nor despair of the showers of His favors. How all-encompassing are the wonders of His boundless grace! Behold how they have pervaded the whole of creation. Such is their virtue that not a single atom in the entire universe can be found which doth not declare the evidences of His might, which doth not glorify His holy Name, or is not expressive of the effulgent light of His unity. So perfect and comprehensive is His creation that no mind nor heart, however keen or pure, can ever grasp the nature of the most insignificant of His creatures; much less fathom the mystery of Him Who is the Daystar of Truth, Who is the invisible and unknowable Essence. The conceptions of the devoutest of mystics, the attainments of the most accomplished amongst men, the highest praise which human tongue or pen can render are all the product of man's finite mind and are conditioned by its limitations. Ten thousand Prophets, each a Moses, are thunderstruck upon the Sinai of their search at His forbidding voice, "Thou shalt never behold Me!"; whilst a myriad Messengers, each as great as Jesus, stand dismayed upon their heavenly thrones by the interdiction, "Mine Essence thou shalt never apprehend!" From time immemorial He hath been veiled in the ineffable sanctity of His exalted Self, and will everlastingly continue to be wrapt in the impenetrable mystery of His unknowable Essence. Every attempt to attain to an understanding of His inaccessible Reality hath ended in complete bewilderment, and every effort to approach His exalted Self and envisage His Essence hath resulted in

hopelessness and failure.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #26 XXVI [18] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

97. God hath, at all times and under all conditions, been wholly independent of His creatures. He hath cherished and will ever cherish the desire that all men may attain His gardens of Paradise with utmost love, that no one should sadden another, not even for a moment, and that all should dwell within His cradle of protection and security until the Day of Resurrection which marketh the dayspring of the Revelation of Him Whom God will make manifest.
98. The Lord of the universe hath never raised up a prophet nor hath He sent down a Book unless He hath established His covenant with all men, calling for their acceptance of the next Revelation and of the next Book; inasmuch as the outpourings of His bounty are ceaseless and without limit. VI, 16.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #3 [27]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

99. O Inmost Heart of this Temple! We have made thee the dawning-place of Our knowledge and the dayspring of Our wisdom unto all who are in heaven and on earth. From thee have We caused all sciences to appear, and unto thee shall We cause them to return. And from thee shall We bring them forth a second time. Such, indeed, is Our promise, and potent are We to effect Our purpose. Erelong shall We bring into being through thee exponents of new and wondrous sciences, of potent and effective crafts, and shall make manifest through them that which the heart of none of Our servants hath yet conceived. Thus do We bestow upon whom We will whatsoever We desire, and thus do We withdraw from whom We will what We had once bestowed. Even so do We ordain whatsoever We please through Our behest.

The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, Bahá'u'lláh [13]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/summons-lord-hosts/summons-lord-hosts.pdf?276d654f>

100. As the essence of Divinity transcends the comprehension of man, therefore God brings forth certain Manifestations of the divine Reality upon Whom He bestows heavenly effulgences in order that They may be intermediaries between humanity and Himself. These holy Manifestations or Prophets of God are as mirrors which have acquired illumination from the Sun of Truth, but the Sun does not descend from its high zenith and does not effect entrance within the mirror. In truth, this mirror has attained complete polish and purity until the utmost capacity of reflection has been developed in it; therefore, the Sun of Reality with its fullest effulgence and splendor is revealed therein. These mirrors are earthly, whereas the reality of Divinity is in its highest apogee. Although its lights are shining and its heat is manifest in them, although these mirrors are telling their story of its effulgence, the Sun, nevertheless, remains in its own lofty station; it does not descend; it does not effect entrance, because it is holy and sanctified.

101. A Divine Manifestation is as a mirror reflecting the light of the Sun. The light is the same and yet the mirror is not the Sun. All the Manifestations of God bring the same Light; they only differ in degree, not in reality. The Truth is one. The light is the same though the lamps may be different; we must look at the Light not at the Lamp. If we accept the Light in one, we must accept the Light in all; all agree, because all are the same. The teaching is ever the same, it is only the outward forms that change.
102. The Manifestations of God are as the heavenly bodies. All have their appointed place and time of ascension, but the Light they give is the same. If one wishes to look for the sun rising, one does not look always at the same point because that point changes with the seasons. When one sees the sun rise further in the north one recognizes it, though it has risen at a different point.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London [66] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_abdulbaha\\_london](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_abdulbaha_london)

103. Lastly the perfect man, the Prophet, is one who is transfigured, one who has the purity and clearness of a perfect mirror — one who reflects the Sun of Truth. Of such a one — of such a Prophet and Messenger — we can say that the Light of Divinity with the heavenly Perfections dwells in him.
104. If we claim that the sun is seen in the mirror, we do not mean that the sun itself has descended from the holy heights of his heaven and entered into the mirror! This is impossible. The Divine Nature is seen in the Manifestations and its Light and Splendor are visible in extreme glory.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London [23] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_abdulbaha\\_london](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_abdulbaha_london)

105. The Person of the Manifestation hath ever been the representative and mouthpiece of God. He, in truth, is the Day Spring of God's most excellent Titles, and the Dawning-Place of His exalted Attributes. If any be set up by His side as peers, if they be regarded as identical with His Person, how can it, then, be maintained that the Divine Being is One and Incomparable, that His Essence is indivisible and peerless? Meditate on that which We have, through the power of truth, revealed unto thee, and be thou of them that comprehend its meaning.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #28 XXVIII [21] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

106. The significance and essential purpose underlying these words is to reveal and demonstrate unto the pure in heart and the sanctified in spirit that they Who are the Luminaries of truth and the Mirrors reflecting the light of divine Unity, in whatever age and cycle they are sent down from their invisible habitations of ancient glory unto this world, to educate the souls of men and endue with grace all created things, are invariably endowed with an all-compelling power, and invested with invincible sovereignty. For

these hidden Gems, these concealed and invisible Treasures, in themselves manifest and vindicate the reality of these holy words: “Verily God doeth whatsoever He willeth, and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.”

Kitab-i-Iqan, Part Two, Bahá'u'lláh page 22 <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/kitab-i-iqan/kitab-i-iqan.pdf?35d50a3f>

## 2.1 Holy Spirit



107. The Divine Reality is Unthinkable, Limitless, Eternal, Immortal and Invisible.
108. The world of creation is bound by natural law, finite and mortal.
109. The Infinite Reality cannot be said to ascend or descend. It is beyond the understanding of man, and cannot be described in terms which apply to the phenomenal sphere of the created world.
110. Man, then, is in extreme need of the only Power by which he is able to receive help from the Divine Reality, that Power alone bringing him into contact with the Source of all life.
111. An intermediary is needed to bring two extremes into relation with each other. Riches and poverty, plenty and need: without an intermediary power there could be no relation between these pairs of opposites.
112. So we can say there must be a Mediator between God and Man, and this is none other than the Holy Spirit, which brings the created earth into relation with the ‘Unthinkable One’, the Divine Reality.
113. The Divine Reality may be likened to the sun and the Holy Spirit to the rays of the sun. As the rays of the sun bring the light and warmth of the sun to the earth, giving life to all created beings, so do the ‘Manifestations’<sup>1</sup> bring the power of the Holy Spirit from the Divine Sun of Reality to give light and life to the souls of men.
114. Behold, there is an intermediary necessary between the sun and the earth; the sun does not descend to the earth, neither does the earth ascend to the sun. This contact is made by the rays of the sun which bring light and warmth and heat.
115. The Holy Spirit is the Light from the Sun of Truth bringing, by its infinite power, life and illumination to all mankind, flooding all souls with Divine Radiance, conveying the blessings of God’s Mercy to the whole world. The earth, without the medium of the warmth and light of the rays of the sun, could receive no benefits from the sun.
116. Likewise the Holy Spirit is the very cause of the life of man; without the Holy Spirit he would have no intellect, he would be unable to acquire his scientific knowledge by which his great influence over the rest of creation is gained. The illumination of the Holy Spirit gives to man the power of thought, and enables him to make discoveries by which he bends the laws of nature to his will.
117. The Holy Spirit it is which, through the mediation of the Prophets of God, teaches spiritual virtues to man and enables him to attain Eternal Life.

118. All these blessings are brought to man by the Holy Spirit; therefore we can understand that the Holy Spirit is the Intermediary between the Creator and the created. The light and heat of the sun cause the earth to be fruitful, and create life in all things that grow; and the Holy Spirit quickens the souls of men.
119. The two great apostles, St. Peter and St. John the Evangelist, were once simple, humble workmen, toiling for their daily bread. By the Power of the Holy Spirit their souls were illumined, and they received the eternal blessings of the Lord Christ.

1. Manifestations of God

Paris Talks, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #17 [18] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/paris-talks/paris-talks.pdf?1209cacc>

120. It is the same with the manifestation of the Holy Spirit: Whensoever it appears, it invests the world of humanity with a new life and endows human realities with a new spirit. It clothes all existence with a glorious attire, disperses the darkness of ignorance, and causes the light of human perfections to shine resplendent. It is with such a power that Christ renewed this cycle—whereupon the divine springtide pitched its tent, with utmost vitality and grace, in the realm of humanity and perfumed the senses of the enlightened souls with its life-giving breezes.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #36 [53]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

121. As to the fourth degree of spirit, it is the heavenly spirit, which is the spirit of faith and the outpouring grace of the All-Merciful. This spirit proceeds from the breath of the Holy Spirit, and through a power born of God it becomes the cause of everlasting life. It is that power which makes the earthly soul heavenly and the imperfect man perfect. It cleanses the impure, unlooses the tongue of the silent, sanctifies the bondslaves of passion and desire, and confers knowledge upon the ignorant.
122. The fifth degree of spirit is the Holy Spirit, which is the mediator between God and His creation. It is like a mirror facing the sun: Just as a spotless mirror receives the rays of the sun and reflects its bounty to others, so too is the Holy Spirit the mediator of the light of holiness, which it conveys from the Sun of Truth to sanctified souls. This Spirit is adorned with all the divine perfections. Whensoever it appears, the world is revived, a new cycle is ushered in, and the body of humanity is clothed in a fresh attire. It is like the spring: When it arrives, it transports the world from one condition to another. For at the advent of springtide the black earth, the fields, and the meadows become green and verdant; flowers and sweet-scented herbs of every kind spring forth; trees are endowed with a new life; wondrous fruits are produced; and a new cycle is inaugurated.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #36 [53]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

## 2.2 The Christ



123. Now, the reality of prophethood, which is the Word of God and the state of perfect divine manifestation, has neither beginning nor end, but its radiance varies like that of the sun. For example, it dawned above the sign of Christ with the utmost splendour and radiance, and this is eternal and everlasting. See how many world-conquering kings, how many wise ministers and rulers have come and gone, each and all fading into oblivion—whereas even now the breezes of Christ still waft, His light still shines, His call is still upraised, His banner is still unfurled, His armies still do battle, His voice still rings sweetly, His clouds still rain down life-giving showers, His lightning still streaks forth, His glory is still clear and indisputable, His splendour is still radiant and luminous; and the same holds true of every soul that abides beneath His shade and partakes of His light.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #38 [56]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

124. In the inner world, the world of the Kingdom, the Sun of Reality is the Trainer and Educator of minds, souls and spirits. Were it not for the effulgent rays of the Sun of Reality, they would be deprived of growth and development; nay, rather, they would be nonexistent. For just as the physical sun is the trainer of all outer and phenomenal forms of being through the radiation of its light and heat, so the radiation of the light and heat of the Sun of Reality gives growth, education and evolution to minds, souls and spirits toward the station of perfection

125. Christ was the Sun of Reality which shone from the heavenly horizon of Christianity, training, protecting, confirming minds, souls and spirits until they came into harmony with the divine Kingdom and attained capacity for descent of the infinite bounties of God. Were it not for the appearance of His splendor, they would have remained in the darkness of imperfection and remoteness from God. But because that Sun of Reality shone forth and flooded its light into the world of minds, souls and spirits, they became radiant. He conferred a new and eternal life upon them.

126. The Sun of Reality, likewise, has its rising and setting. There is a day and a night in the world of spirituality. After each departure there is a return and the dawning light of a new day.

Promulgation of Universal Peace , 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #93 [154]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

127. There is, however, another Spirit, which may be termed the Divine, to which Jesus Christ refers when He declares that man must be born of its quickening and baptized with its living fire.

128. This quickening spirit emanates spontaneously from the Sun of Truth, from the reality of Divinity, and is not a revelation or a manifestation. It is like the rays of the sun. The rays are emanations from the sun.

Promulgation of Universal Peace , 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #24 [36]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>



129. In the Word of God there is still another unity, the oneness of the Manifestations of God, His Holiness Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh. This is a unity divine, heavenly, radiant, merciful; the one reality appearing in its successive manifestations. For instance, the sun is one and the same but its points of dawning are various.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [67] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#67>

130. The splendors of the perfections, bounties, and attributes of God shine forth and radiate from the reality of the Perfect Man, that is to say, the Unique One, the universal Manifestation of God. Other beings receive only one ray, but the universal Manifestation is the mirror for this Sun, which appears and becomes manifest in it, with all its perfections, attributes, signs, and wonders.

131. The knowledge of the Reality of the Divinity is impossible and unattainable, but the knowledge of the Manifestations of God is the knowledge of God, for the bounties, splendors, and divine attributes are apparent in them. Therefore if man attains to the knowledge of the Manifestations of God, he will attain to the knowledge of God; and if he be neglectful of the knowledge of the Holy Manifestation, he will be bereft of the knowledge of God. It is then ascertained and proved that the Holy Manifestations are the center of the bounty, signs, and perfections of God. Blessed are those who receive the light of the divine bounties from the enlightened Dawning-points!

Baha'i World Faith, 'Abdu'l-Baha Ch 7 page 323 [Man's Knowledge of God]  
<http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bwf/bwf7.html#MAN%27S%20KNOWLEDGE%20OF%20GOD>

132. Briefly, we say a universal cycle in the world of existence signifies a long duration of time, and innumerable and incalculable periods and epochs. In such a cycle the Manifestations appear with splendor in the realm of the visible, until a great and universal Manifestation makes the world the center of his radiance. His appearance causes the world to attain to maturity, and the extension of his cycle is very great. Afterwards other Manifestations will arise under his shadow, who according to the needs of the time will renew certain commandments relating to material questions and affairs, while remaining under his shadow.

133. We are in the cycle which began with Adam, and its universal Manifestation is Bahá'u'lláh.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [54] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#54>

### 3 CIRCLE OF CREATION



134. "As the world follows a circle, so human beings travel in cycles." "This illustration

[referring to "The Universe" chart] represents the cycle of man. All existence is created by the Infinite Essence. Man starts with God and first attains the mineral condition which is only matter, but this condition contains a latent power from God. Then he attains the vegetable kingdom which is also matter but which possesses the power of growth which the mineral kingdom lacked. Next he arrives in the animal kingdom which possesses the united powers of those preceding, but with a third power, that of sensation (the five senses)."

135. "At birth he enters the human kingdom. This progression is simply through the power of God. Souls are not created independently of bodies. The germ of the child grows by the power of God in the human body, just as the seed of the tree grows to be a tree through the power of the sun. The human being has the power of all the other conditions and has attained the furthest point and the most distant from God. He has passed through all the conditions of the material side of the circle by the hidden power of God. The first or descending circle is the natural or material circle, the second or ascending circle is the spiritual. The first half is the night, the second half is the day. The human world is the point furthest away from God, but the rays of God shine directly on man. The world is in darkness and obscurity reigns always before the dawn, and on the side of the ascending circle light appears. Thus the world is the worst condition for the soul if that soul lives in that condition, because it is the point furthest from God. It is a worse condition than the kingdoms of the mineral, the vegetable or animal because it is the furthest point from God. But if a man desires the light, he may receive the Rays powerfully and directly, while the other kingdoms receive only the indirect rays of the Holy Spirit. If he does not desire the Light, man's condition is worse than all the others. Thus, the Manifestation of God appears always in human form, because the Sun of Truth shines directly on that Manifestation and he thus receives the entire power of God."

Explanatory text accompanying the chart #3 [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_chart\\_spiritual\\_evolution](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_chart_spiritual_evolution)

136. In surveying the vast range of creation thou shalt perceive that the higher a kingdom of created things is on the arc of ascent, the more conspicuous are the signs and evidences of the truth that co-operation and reciprocity at the level of a higher order are greater than those that exist at the level of a lower order. For example the evident signs of this fundamental reality are more discernible in the vegetable kingdom than in the mineral, and still more manifest in the animal world than in the vegetable.

Compilation of Compilations, Huqúqu'lláh, Extracts from the writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá #2 II [13] <http://bahai-library.com/pdf/compilations/huququallah.pdf>

137. Praise be to God Who hath ever caused His Names and Attributes to penetrate the degrees of existence; Who hath made the effects of those Names and Attributes to shine resplendent and their signs to be firmly established in both the hidden and manifest worlds. By them He hath made the holy realities that are informed by His grace and are the recipients of His outpourings to be the sole revealers of all that pertaineth unto Him, and hath caused them to move through the firmament of perfection in arcs of descent and ascent.

138. The spiritual world is like unto the phenomenal world. They are the exact counterpart of each other. Whatever objects appear in this world of existence are the outer pictures of the world of heaven.

Promulgation Of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #4 [8] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

139. The worlds of God are in perfect harmony and correspondence one with another. Each world in this limitless universe is, as it were, a mirror reflecting the history and nature of all the rest. The physical universe is, likewise, in perfect correspondence with the spiritual or divine realm. The world of matter is an outer expression or facsimile of the inner kingdom of spirit. The world of minds corresponds with the world of hearts.

140. If we look reflectively upon the material world, we realize that all outer phenomena are dependent upon the sun. Without the sun the phenomenal world would be in a state of utter darkness and devoid of life. All earthly creation—whether mineral, vegetable, animal or human—is dependent upon the heat, light and splendor of the great central solar body for training and development. Were it not for the solar heat and sunlight, no minerals would have been formed, no vegetable, animal and human organisms would or could have become existent. It is clearly evident, therefore, that the sun is the source of life to all earthly and outer phenomena.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #93 [154]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

141. The greatest power in the realm and range of human existence is spirit—the divine breath which animates and pervades all things. It is manifested throughout creation in different degrees or kingdoms. In the vegetable kingdom it is the augmentative spirit or power of growth, the animus of life and development in plants, trees and organisms of the floral world. ... The distinctive virtue or plus of the animal is sense perception; it sees, hears, smells, tastes and feels but is incapable, in turn, of conscious ideation or reflection which characterizes and differentiates the human kingdom.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #24 [35]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

142. Reflect upon the inner realities of the universe, the secret wisdoms involved, the enigmas, the inter-relationships, the rules that govern all. For every part of the universe is connected with every other part by ties that are very powerful and admit of no imbalance, nor any slackening whatever.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá #137) [63] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

143. A drop of the billowing ocean of His endless mercy hath adorned all creation with the ornament of existence, and a breath wafted from His peerless Paradise hath invested all beings with the robe of His sanctity and glory. A sprinkling from the unfathomed deep of His sovereign and all-pervasive Will hath, out of utter nothingness, called into being a creation which is infinite in its range and deathless in its duration. The wonders of His bounty can never cease, and the stream of His merciful grace can never be arrested. The process of His creation hath had no beginning, and can have no end.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #26 XXVI [18] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

144. Creation is the expression of motion. Motion is life. A moving object is a living object whereas that which is motionless and inert is as dead. All created forms are progressive in their planes or kingdoms of existence under the stimulus of the power or spirit of life. The universal energy is dynamic. Nothing is stationary in the material world of outer phenomena or in the inner world of intellect and consciousness.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [83] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/sec-23.html>

145. The connection between God and His creation is that of the originator and the originated, of the sun and the dark bodies of the universe, of the craftsman and his handiwork. Not only is the sun sanctified in its very essence above all the bodies that receive its illumination, but its light is also, in its essence, sanctified from and independent of the earth. So, though the earth is nurtured by the sun and is the recipient of its light, the sun and its rays are nonetheless sanctified above it. But were it not for the sun, the earth and all terrestrial life could not exist.

146. The procession of creation from God is a procession through emanation. That is, creation emanates from God; it does not manifest Him. The connection is that of emanation and not of manifestation. The light of the sun emanates from the sun; it does not manifest it.

147. It follows that all things have emanated from God; that is, it is through God that all things have been realized, and through Him that the contingent world has come to exist. The first thing to emanate from God is that universal reality which the ancient philosophers termed the "First Intellect" and which the people of Bahá call the "Primal Will". This emanation, with respect to its action in the world of God, is not limited by either time or place and has neither beginning nor end, for in relation to God the beginning and the end are one and the same. The pre-existence of God is both essential and temporal, while the origination of the contingent world is essential but not temporal ...

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #53 [73]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

148. All praise to the unity of God, and all honor to Him, the sovereign Lord, the

incomparable and all-glorious Ruler of the universe, Who, out of utter nothingness, hath created the reality of all things, Who, from naught, hath brought into being the most refined and subtle elements of His creation, and Who, rescuing His creatures from the abasement of remoteness and the perils of ultimate extinction, hath received them into His kingdom of incorruptible glory. Nothing short of His all-encompassing grace, His all-pervading mercy, could have possibly achieved it. How could it, otherwise, have been possible for sheer nothingness to have acquired by itself the worthiness and capacity to emerge from its state of nonexistence into the realm of being?

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #27 XXVII [19] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

149. As to thy question concerning the origin of creation. Know assuredly that God's creation hath existed from eternity, and will continue to exist forever. Its beginning hath had no beginning, and its end knoweth no end. His name, the Creator, presupposeth a creation, even as His title, the Lord of Men, must involve the existence of a servant.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh #78 LXXVIII [46] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

150. That which hath been in existence had existed before, but not in the form thou seest today.

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Lawḥ-i-Hikmat #9 [44]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah.pdf?d1c53d82>

151. *“That which hath been in existence had existed before, but not in the form thou seest today.”* From this blessed verse it is clear and evident that the universe (kawn) is evolving (tarrāqí). In the opinion of the philosophers and the wise this fact of the development and evolution of the world of existence is also established. That is to say, it is progressively transferred from one state to another.

Three Verses in the Lawh-i-Hikmat, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_three\\_verses\\_hikmat](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_three_verses_hikmat)

152. If we were to imagine a time when created things did not exist, it would be tantamount to denying the divinity of God.

153. Apart from this, absolute non-existence lacks the capacity to attain existence. If the universe were pure nothingness, existence could not have been realized. Thus, as that Essence of Oneness, or divine Being, is eternal and everlasting—that is, as it has neither beginning nor end—it follows that the world of existence, this endless universe, likewise has no beginning. To be sure, it is possible for some part of creation—one of the celestial globes—to be newly formed or to disintegrate, but the other countless globes would continue to exist and the world of existence itself would not be disrupted or destroyed. On the contrary, its existence is perpetual and unchanging. Now, as each globe has a beginning, it must inevitably have an end as well, since every composition, whether

universal or particular, must of necessity be decomposed. At most, some disintegrate quickly and others slowly, but it is impossible for something that is composed not to ultimately decompose.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #47 [66]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

### 3.1 World of matter



154. But while God does not create, the first principle of God, Love, is the creative principle. Love is an outpour from God, and is pure spirit. It is one aspect of the Logos, the Holy Spirit. It is the immediate cause of the laws which govern nature, the endless verities of nature which science has uncovered. In brief, it is Divine Law and a Manifestation of God. This Manifestation of God is active, creative, spiritual. It reflects the positive aspect of God.

There is another Manifestation of God which is characterized by passivity, quiescence, inactivity. In itself it is without creative power. It reflects the negative aspect of God. This Manifestation is matter.

155. Matter, reflecting the negative aspect of God, is self-existent, eternal, and fills all space. Spirit, flowing out from God, permeates all matter. This spirit, Love, reflecting the positive and active aspect of God, impresses its nature upon the atoms and elements. By its power, they are attracted to each other under certain ordered relations, and thus, uniting and continuing to unite, give birth to worlds and systems of worlds. The same laws working under developed conditions bring into existence living beings. Spirit is the life of the form, and the form is shaped by the spirit. The evolution of life and form proceeds hand in hand. The powers of spirit are evolved by the experiences of the form, and the plasticity of the matter of the form is developed by the activity of the spirit. Working up through the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, sense-perception is reached in the animal, and the perfection of form is attained in man.

156. The forms or bodies of component parts, infinite in variety, which in the course of evolution spirit builds as the vehicles of its expression, are, because of the instability of matter, subject to dissolution. As they disappear, others are built following the same patterns, carrying on the characteristics of each.

Bahai Scriptures, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [609] - <http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai.scriptsures/7.html#no609>

157. We declare that love is the cause of the existence of all phenomena and that the absence of love is the cause of disintegration or nonexistence. Love is the conscious bestowal of God, the bond of affiliation in all phenomena. We will first consider the proof of this through sense-perception. As we look upon the universe we observe that all composite beings or existing phenomena are made up primarily of single elements bound together by a power of attraction. Through this power of attraction, cohesion has become manifest between atoms of these composing elements. The resultant being is a phenomenon of the

lower contingent type. The power of cohesion expressed in the mineral kingdom is in reality love or affinity manifested in a low degree according to the exigencies of the mineral world. We take a step higher into the vegetable kingdom where we find an increased power of attraction has become manifest among the composing elements which form phenomena. Through this degree of attraction a cellular admixture is produced among these elements which make up the body of a plant. Therefore in the degree of the vegetable kingdom there is love. We enter the animal kingdom and find the attractive power binding together single elements as in the mineral, plus the cellular admixture as in the vegetable, plus the phenomena of feelings or susceptibilities. We observe that the animals are susceptible to certain affiliation and fellowship, and that they exercise natural selection. This elemental attraction, this admixture and selective affinity is love manifest in the degree of the animal kingdom.

158. Finally we come to the kingdom of man. As this is the superior kingdom, the light of love is more resplendent. In man we find the power of attraction among the elements which compose his material body, plus the attraction which produces cellular admixture or power augmentative, plus the attraction which characterizes the sensibilities of the animal kingdom, but still beyond and above all these lower powers we discover in the being of man the attraction of heart, the susceptibilities and affinities which bind men together, enabling them to live and associate in friendship and solidarity. It is therefore evident that in the world of humanity the greatest king and sovereign is love. If love were extinguished, the power of attraction dispelled, the affinity of human hearts destroyed, the phenomena of human life would disappear.
159. This is a proof perceptible to the senses, acceptable to reason, in accord with traditions and teachings of the holy books and verified by the promptings of human hearts themselves. It is a proof upon which we can absolutely rely and declare to be complete. But these are only degrees of love which exist in the natural or physical world. Their manifestation is ever according to the requirement of natural conditions and standards.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #89 [145]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-l-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

160. Love is the most great law that ruleth this mighty and heavenly cycle, the unique power that bindeth together the divers elements of this material world, the supreme magnetic force that directeth the movements of the spheres in the celestial realms. Love revealeth with unfailing and limitless power the mysteries latent in the universe.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá #12 [12] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-l-baha/selections-writings-abdu-l-baha/selections-writings-abdu-l-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

161. Every single manifestation of the myriad forms of creation is a reflection of the divine emanations, therefore the divine emanations are infinite, unlimited and illimitable. Gaze upward through immeasurable space to the majestic order of the colossal suns. These luminous bodies are numberless. Behind our solar system there are unfathomable stellar systems and above those stellar systems are the remote aggregations of the milky way.

Extend your vision beyond the fixed stars and again you shall behold many spheres of light. In brief, the creation of the Almighty is beyond the grasp of the human intellect. When this objective creation is unlimited and not subject to suspension, is not the subjective creation of His Majesty the Almighty limitless? When the reflection or physical creation is infinite, how is it possible to circumscribe the reality which is the basis of divine creation? The spiritual world is so much greater than the physical that in comparison with it the physical world is nonexistent.

Divine Philosophy, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [CH 7 VII - p. 168]  
[http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_divine\\_philosophy&chapter=7](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_divine_philosophy&chapter=7)

162. Know thou that every fixed star hath its own planets, and every planet its own creatures, whose number no man can compute.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh, #82 LXXXII [50] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

163. Verily I say, the creation of God embraceth worlds besides this world, and creatures apart from these creatures.

Gleanings, Bahá'u'lláh, #79 LXXIX [47] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

164. The earth has its inhabitants, the water and the air contain many living beings and all the elements have their nature spirits, then how is it possible to conceive that these stupendous stellar bodies are not inhabited? Verily, they are peopled, but let it be known that the dwellers accord with the elements of their respective spheres. These living beings do not have states of consciousness like unto those who live on the surface of this globe: the power of adaptation and environment moulds their bodies and states of consciousness, just as our bodies and minds are suited to our planet.

165. For example, we have birds that live in the air, those that live on the earth and those that live in the sea. The sea birds are adapted to their elements, likewise the birds which soar in the air, and those which hover about the earth's surface. Many animals living on the land have their counterparts in the sea. The domestic horse has his counterpart in the seahorse which is half horse and half fish.

166. The components of the sun differ from those of this earth, for there are certain light and life giving elements radiating from the sun. Exactly the same elements may exist in two bodies, but in varying quantities. For instance, there is fire and air in water, but the allotted measure is small in proportion.

167. They have discovered that there is a great quantity of radium in the sun; the same element is found on the earth, but in a much smaller degree. Beings who inhabit those distant luminous bodies are attuned to the elements that have gone into the composition of their respective spheres.

Divine Philosophy, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [CH 2 II p. 114]  
[http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_divine\\_philosophy&chapter=2](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_divine_philosophy&chapter=2)



168. Consider the creation of the infinite universe. This globe of ours is one of the smallest planets. Those stupendous bodies revolving in yonder immeasurable space, the infinite blue canopy of God, are many times greater than our small earth. To our eyes this globe appears spacious; yet when we look upon it with divine eyes, it is reduced to the tiniest atom. This small planet is not worthy of division.

Divine Philosophy, ‘Abdu’l--Bahá [CH 8 VIII p. 178]  
[http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_divine\\_philosophy&chapter=8](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_divine_philosophy&chapter=8)

169. Consider the endless phenomena of His creation. They are infinite; the universe is infinite. Who shall declare its height, its depth and length? It is absolutely infinite.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #93 [156]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c>

170. As to your question regarding the stars: Know that these brilliant stars are numberless and their existence is not devoid of wisdom both useful and important.

171. Rather they are worlds, as is this world of ours. But they differ in their bodies, by the difference of elements, from this earthly body. They differ in formation. The beings existent upon these bodies are according to their formation.

Bahá’i Scriptures, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá [445] <http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai scriptures/>

172. The phenomenal world is entirely subject to the rule and control of natural law. These myriad suns, satellites and heavenly bodies throughout endless space are all captives of nature. They cannot transgress in a single point or particular the fixed laws which govern the physical universe. The sun in its immensity, the ocean in its vastness are incapable of violating these universal laws. All phenomenal beings—the plants in their kingdom, even the animals with their intelligence—are nature’s subjects and captives. All live within the bounds of natural law, and nature is the ruler of all except man.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá - #7 [12]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

173. Each of the luminous bodies of this limitless firmament has its cycle of revolution, that period wherein it completes the full circuit of its orbit before beginning a new one. The earth, for example, completes a revolution every 365 days, five hours, forty-eight minutes and a fraction, and then begins anew along the same orbit. In the same way, the entire universe, whether with respect to the realm of nature or the realm of man, proceeds through cycles of major events and occurrences.

174. When a cycle comes to a close, a new one is inaugurated, and the previous cycle, on account of the momentous events which transpire, vanishes so entirely from memory as to leave behind no record or trace. Thus, as you are aware, we have no record of twenty

thousand years ago, even though we established before through rational arguments that life on this earth is very ancient—not one or two hundred thousand, or even one or two million years old: It is ancient indeed, and the records and traces of ancient times have been entirely obliterated.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #41 [59]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

175. Certain celestial bodies exert a physical influence upon the earth and its creatures which is clear and apparent and which requires no explanation. Consider the sun, which, through the help of divine grace, nurtures the earth and all its creatures. Indeed, were it not for the light and heat of the sun, all earthly things would entirely cease to exist.
176. As to spiritual influences, although it might seem strange that these stars should exert a spiritual influence upon the human world, yet were you to reflect deeply upon this matter you would not be greatly surprised by it. My meaning, however, is not that the deductions that the astrologers of old made from the motions of the stars and planets were true, for these were mere figments of the imagination which had their origin with the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Chaldean priests, or rather stemmed from the idle conjectures of the Hindus and the superstitions of the Greeks, the Romans, and the other star worshippers. My meaning, instead, is that this endless universe is like the human body, and that all its parts are connected one with another and are linked together in the utmost perfection. That is, in the same way that the parts, members, and organs of the human body are interconnected, and that they mutually assist, reinforce, and influence each other, so too are the parts and members of this endless universe connected with, and spiritually and materially influenced by, one another. For example, the eye sees and the entire body is affected; the ear hears and every limb and member is stirred. Of this there is no doubt, for the world of existence is also like a living person. Thus, the interconnection that exists between the various parts of the universe requires mutual influences and effects, whether material or spiritual.
177. In sum, all beings, whether universal or particular, are mutually connected in accordance with God's consummate wisdom and mutually influence one another. Were it not so, the all-embracing organization and universal arrangement of existence would become disordered and disrupted. And as all created things are most soundly connected one with another, they are well ordered, arranged, and perfected.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #69 [88]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

178. To the eye the earth appears fixed while the sun and stars revolve about it. As a matter of fact the heavenly orbs are stationary and the earth turning upon its axis. The colossal suns, planets and constellations which shine in the heavens appear small, nay, infinitesimal to human vision whereas in reality they are vastly greater than the earth in dimension and volume.

179. In our solar system the center of illumination is the sun itself. Through the will of God this central luminary is the one source of the existence and development of all phenomenal things. When we observe the organisms of the material kingdoms, we find that their growth and training are dependent upon the heat and light of the sun. Without this quickening impulse there would be no growth of tree or vegetation; neither would the existence of animal or human being be possible; in fact, no forms of created life would be manifest upon the earth. But if we reflect deeply, we will perceive that the great bestower and giver of life is God; the sun is the intermediary of His will and plan. Without the bounty of the sun, therefore, the world would be in darkness. All illumination of our planetary system proceeds or emanates from the solar center.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #40 [55]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

180. One of the functions of the sun is to quicken and reveal the hidden realities of the kingdoms of existence. Through the light and heat of the great central luminary, all that is potential in the earth is awakened and comes forth into the realm of the visible. The fruit hidden in the tree appears upon its branches in response to the power of the sun; man and all other organisms live, move and have their being under its developing rays; nature is resplendent with countless evolutionary forms through its pervading impulse—so that we can say a function of the sun is the revelation of the mysteries and creative purposes hidden within the phenomenal world.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #32 [44]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

181. When we carefully investigate the kingdoms of existence and observe the phenomena of the universe about us, we discover the absolute order and perfection of creation. The dull minerals in their affinities, plants and vegetables with power of growth, animals in their instinct, man with conscious intellect and the heavenly orbs moving obediently through limitless space are all found subject to universal law, most complete, most perfect. That is why a wise philosopher has said, "There is no greater or more perfect system of creation than that which already exists."

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #35 [47]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

182. Nature is that condition or reality which outwardly is the source of the life and death, or, in other words, of the composition and decomposition, of all things.

183. This nature is subject to a sound organization, to inviolable laws, to a perfect order, and to a consummate design, from which it never departs. To such an extent is this true that

were you to gaze with the eye of insight and discernment, you would observe that all things—from the smallest invisible atom to the largest globes in the world of existence, such as the sun or the other great stars and luminous bodies—are most perfectly organized, be it with regard to their order, their composition, their outward form, or their motion, and that all are subject to one universal law from which they never depart.

184. When you consider nature itself, however, you see that it has neither awareness nor will. For instance, the nature of fire is to burn; it burns without consciousness or will. The nature of water is to flow; it flows without consciousness or will. The nature of the sun is to shed light; it shines without consciousness or will. The nature of vapour is to rise; it rises without consciousness or will. It is therefore evident that the natural movements of all created things are compelled, and that nothing moves of its own will save animals and, in particular, man.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #1 [6]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

185. In the differentiation of life in the world of existence, there are four degrees or kingdoms,—the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human. The mineral kingdom is possessed of a certain virtue which we term cohesion. The vegetable kingdom possesses cohesive properties plus the power of growth or power augmentative. The animal kingdom is possessed of the virtues of the mineral and vegetable plus the powers of the senses. But the animal although gifted with sensibilities is utterly bereft of consciousness, absolutely out of touch with the world of consciousness and spirit. The animal possesses no powers by which it can make discoveries which lie beyond the realm of the senses. It has no power of intellectual origination. For example, an animal located in Europe is not capable of discovering the continent of America. It understands only phenomena which come within the range of its senses and instinct. It cannot abstractly reason out anything. The animal cannot conceive of the earth being spherical or revolving upon its axis. It cannot apprehend that the little stars in the heavens are tremendous worlds vastly greater than the earth. The animal cannot abstractly conceive of intellect. Of these powers it is bereft. Therefore these powers are peculiar to man and it is made evident that in the human kingdom there is a reality of which the animal is minus. What is that reality? It is the spirit of man. By it man is distinguished above all the other phenomenal kingdoms. Although he possesses all the virtues of the lower kingdoms he is further endowed with the spiritual faculty, the heavenly gift of consciousness.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [90] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#90>

### 3.1.1 Mineral



186. All the atoms of the earth bear witness, O my Lord, to the greatness of Thy power and of Thy sovereignty; and all the signs of the universe attest the glory of Thy majesty and of

Thy might.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #138 CXXXVIII) [91]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

187. O Son of Bounty!

Out of the wastes of nothingness, with the clay of My command I made thee to appear, and have ordained for thy training every atom in existence and the essence of all created things.

Hidden Words, Baha'u'llah #29 [12] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/hidden-words/hidden-words.pdf?60f21077>

188. How resplendent the luminaries of knowledge that shine in an atom, and how vast the oceans of wisdom that surge within a drop!

Kitáb-i-Íqán, Bahá'u'lláh [23] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/kitab-i-iqan/kitab-i-iqan.pdf?35d50a3f>

189. When we ponder over the conditions of phenomena, we observe that all phenomena are composed of single elements. This singular cell-element travels and has its coursings through all the grades of existence.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [51] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#51>

190. Consider the doubts which they who have joined partners with God have instilled into the hearts of the people of this land. "Is it ever possible," they ask, "for gold to be transmuted into copper?" Say, Yes, by my Lord, it is possible. Its secret, however, lieth hidden in Our Knowledge. We will reveal it unto whom We will. Whoso doubteth Our power, let him ask the Lord his God, that He may disclose unto him the secret, and assure him of its truth. That copper can be turned into gold is in itself sufficient proof that gold can, in like manner, be transmuted into copper, if they be of them that can apprehend this truth. Every mineral can be made to acquire the density, form, and substance of each and every other mineral. The knowledge thereof is with Us in the Hidden Book.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #97 XCVII [60] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

191. If the atoms which compose the kingdom of the minerals were without affinity for each other, the earth would never have been formed, the universe could not have been created. Because they have affinity for each other, the power of life is able to manifest itself, and the organisms of the phenomenal world become possible. When this attraction or atomic affinity is destroyed, the power of life ceases to manifest; death and nonexistence result.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #2 [5] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul->

192. The elemental atoms which constitute all phenomenal existence and being in this illimitable universe are in perpetual motion, undergoing continuous degrees of progression.
193. In its ceaseless progression and journeyings the atom becomes imbued with the virtues and powers of each degree or kingdom it traverses.
194. Furthermore, the forms and organisms of phenomenal being and existence in each of the kingdoms of the universe are myriad and numberless. ... Therefore each atom of the innumerable elemental atoms, during its ceaseless motion through the kingdoms of existence as a constituent of organic composition, not only becomes imbued with the powers and virtues of the kingdoms it traverses but also reflects the attributes and qualities of the forms and organisms of those kingdoms. As each of these forms has its individual and particular virtue, therefore each elemental atom of the universe has the opportunity of expressing an infinite variety of those individual virtues. No atom is bereft or deprived of this opportunity or right of expression. ... For example, in the world of the mineral, the atom does not express the vegetable form and organism, and when through the process of transmutation it assumes the virtues of the vegetable degree, it does not reflect the attributes of animal organisms, and so on.
195. It is evident then that each elemental atom of the universe is possessed of a capacity to express all the virtues of the universe.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #96 [162] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

196. When we observe the phenomena of the universe, we realize that the axis around which life revolves is love, while the axis around which death and destruction revolve is animosity and hatred. Let us view the mineral kingdom. Here we see that if attraction did not exist between the atoms, the composite substance of matter would not be possible. Every existent phenomenon is composed of elements and cellular particles. This is scientifically true and correct. If attraction did not exist between the elements and among the cellular particles, the composition of that phenomenon would never have been possible. For instance, the stone is an existent phenomenon, a composition of elements. A bond of attraction has brought them together, and through this cohesion of ingredients this petrous object has been formed. This stone is the lowest degree of phenomena, but nevertheless within it a power of attraction is manifest without which the stone could not exist. This power of attraction in the mineral world is love, the only expression of love the stone can manifest.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #92 [152] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

197. For example, the mineral life occupieth its own plane, but a mineral entity is without any awareness at all of the vegetable kingdom, and indeed, with its inner tongue denieth that there is any such kingdom. In the same way, a vegetable entity knoweth nothing of the

animal world, remaining completely heedless and ignorant thereof, for the stage of the animal is higher than that of the vegetable, and the vegetable is veiled from the animal world and inwardly denieth the existence of that world—all this while animal, vegetable and mineral dwell together in the one world.

Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #163 [78] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

198. As to the existence of spirit in the mineral: it is indubitable that minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage. This unknown secret, too, hath become known unto the materialists who now maintain that all beings are endowed with life, even as He saith in the Qur’án, ‘All things are living’.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablet to Dr. Forel [2] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/tablet-august-forel/tablet-august-forel.pdf?a51ff028>

199. All divine philosophers and men of wisdom and understanding, when observing these endless beings, have considered that in this great and infinite universe all things end in the mineral kingdom, that the outcome of the mineral kingdom is the vegetable kingdom, the outcome of the vegetable kingdom is the animal kingdom and the outcome of the animal kingdom the world of man.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablet to Dr. Forel [3] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/tablet-august-forel/tablet-august-forel.pdf?a51ff028>

### 3.1.2 Vegetable



200. The vegetable kingdom possesses cohesive properties plus the power of growth or power augmentative.

Foundations of World Unity, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá [90] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#90>

201. If we look with a perceiving eye upon the world of creation, we find that all existing things may be classified as follows: First—Mineral—that is to say matter or substance appearing in various forms of composition. Second—Vegetable—possessing the virtues of the mineral plus the power of augmentation or growth, indicating a degree higher and more specialized than the mineral.

Foundations of World Unity, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá [48] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#48>

202. Look now upon the next highest stage of life, the vegetable kingdom. Here we see that the plant is the result of cohesion among various elements, just as the mineral is in its kingdom; but, furthermore, the plant has the power of absorption from the earth. This is a higher degree of attraction which differentiates the plant from the mineral. In the kingdom of the vegetable this is an expression of love, the highest capacity of expression the vegetable possesses. By this power of attraction, or augmentation, the plant grows day by day. Therefore, in this kingdom, also, love is the cause of life. If repulsion existed

among the elements instead of attraction, the result would be disintegration, destruction and nonexistence. Because cohesion exists among the elements and cellular attraction is manifest, the plant appears. When this attraction is dispelled and the ingredients separate, the plant ceases to exist.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #92 [153] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

203. This cellular element has at some time been in the mineral kingdom. While staying in the mineral kingdom it has had its coursings and transformations through myriads of images and forms. Having perfected its journey in the mineral kingdom, it has ascended to the vegetable kingdom; and in the vegetable kingdom it has again had journeys and transformations through myriads of conditions. Having accomplished its functions in the vegetable kingdom, the cellular element ascends to the animal kingdom.

Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [51] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#51>

204. For instance, let us conceive of an atom in the mineral kingdom progressing upward to the kingdom of the vegetable by entering into the composition and fibre of a tree or plant. ... This motion or transference is progressive and perpetual, for after disintegration ... it returns to the mineral kingdom whence it came, and will continue to traverse the kingdoms of phenomena as before.

205. The vegetable plane or kingdom for instance has its infinite variety of types and material structures of plant life, each distinct and different within itself, no two exactly alike in composition and detail, for there are no repetitions in nature, and the virtue augmentative cannot be confined to any given image or shape. Each leaf has its own particular identity, so to speak, its own individuality as a leaf.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #96 [162] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

206. All beings, whether universal or particular, were created perfect and complete from the beginning. The most one can say is that their perfections only become apparent gradually. The law of God is one; the evolution of existence is one; the divine order is one. All beings great and small are subject to one law and one order. Every seed has, from the beginning, all the perfections of the plant. For example, all the vegetable perfections existed in this seed at the outset but were invisible and appeared only gradually. So it is the shoot which first appears from the seed, then the branches, leaves, and blossoms, and finally the fruit. But from the beginning of its formation, all of these existed potentially, albeit invisibly, in the seed.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #51 [72]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

207. Know that, speaking generally, there are five divisions of the spirit. First the vegetable



spirit: this is a power which results from the combination of elements and the mingling of substances by the decree of the Supreme God, and from the influence, the effect and connection of other existences. When these substances and elements are separated from each other, the power of growth also ceases to exist. So, to use another figure, electricity results from the combination of elements, and when these elements are separated, the electric force is dispersed and lost. Such is the vegetable spirit.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #36 [52]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

### 3.1.3 Animal



208. The world of nature is the kingdom of the animal. In its natural condition and plane of limitation the animal is perfect. The ferocious beasts of prey have been completely subject to the laws of nature in their development. They are without education or training; they have no power of abstract reasoning and intellectual ideals; they have no touch with the spiritual world and are without conception of God or the Holy Spirit. The animal can neither recognize nor apprehend the spiritual power of man and makes no distinction between man and itself, for the reason that its susceptibilities are limited to the plane of the senses. It lives under the bondage of nature and nature's laws. All the animals are materialists. They are deniers of God and without realization of a transcendent power in the universe. They have no knowledge of the divine Prophets and Holy Books—mere captives of nature and the sense world. In reality they are like the great philosophers of this day who are not in touch with God and the Holy Spirit—deniers of the Prophets, ignorant of spiritual susceptibilities, deprived of the heavenly bounties and without belief in the supernatural power. The animal lives this kind of life blissfully and untroubled, whereas the material philosophers labor and study for ten or twenty years in schools and colleges, denying God, the Holy Spirit and divine inspirations. The animal is even a greater philosopher, for it attains the ability to do this without labor and study. For instance, the cow denies God and the Holy Spirit, knows nothing of divine inspirations, heavenly bounties or spiritual emotions and is a stranger to the world of hearts. Like the philosophers, the cow is a captive of nature and knows nothing beyond the range of the senses. The philosophers, however, glory in this, saying, "We are not captives of superstitions; we have implicit faith in the impressions of the senses and know nothing beyond the realm of nature, which contains and covers everything." But the cow, without study or proficiency in the sciences, modestly and quietly views life from the same standpoint, living in harmony with nature's laws in the utmost dignity and nobility.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #101 [177] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

209. The animal spirit is that all-embracing sensory power which is realized through the composition and combination of the elements. When this composition disintegrates, that

spirit likewise perishes and becomes non-existent. It may be likened to this lamp: When oil, wick, and flame are brought together and combined, it is lit; and when this combination disintegrates—that is, when the constituent parts are separated from one another—the lamp also is extinguished.

Some Answered Questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #55 [75] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

210. We enter the animal kingdom and find the attractive power binding together single elements as in the mineral, plus the cellular admixture as in the vegetable, plus the phenomena of feelings or susceptibilities. We observe that the animals are susceptible to certain affiliation and fellowship, and that they exercise natural selection. This elemental attraction, this admixture and selective affinity is love manifest in the degree of the animal kingdom.

Foundations of World Unity, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá [88] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/fwu.html#88>

211. In the world of existence the animal is a captive of nature. Its actions are according to the exigencies and requirements of nature. It has no consideration or consciousness of good and evil. It simply follows its natural instinct and inclination.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Abdu’l-Bahá #16 [25] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

212. After this is the animal spirit, which also results from the combination of elements that are brought together in a single composition. But this composition is more complete, and when by the decree of the almighty Lord it reaches a fuller degree of combination, the animal spirit, which consists in the power of the senses, comes to exist. This power perceives sensible realities—that which can be seen, heard, tasted, smelled, or touched. After the separation and dissolution of these composed elements, this spirit will also naturally cease to exist. It is like this lamp before you: When oil, wick, and flame are brought together, light is produced; but when the oil is exhausted, the wick consumed, and the constituent parts separated, the light will also be extinguished and lost.

Some Answered Questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #36 [52] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

213. Although the mineral, vegetable, animal and man all have actual being, yet the mineral has no knowledge of the vegetable. It cannot apprehend it. It cannot imagine nor understand it.

214. It is the same with the vegetable. Any progress it may make, however highly it may become developed, it will never apprehend the animal, nor understand it.

215. It is the same with the animal. However much it may progress in its own kingdom, however refined its feelings may become, it will have no real notion of the world of man or of his special intellectual faculties.

216. The animal cannot understand the roundness of the earth, nor its motion in space, nor the central position of the sun, nor can it imagine such a thing as the all-pervading ether.
217. Although the mineral, vegetable, animal and man himself are actual beings, the difference between their kingdoms prevents members of the lower degree from comprehending the essence and nature of those of the superior degree.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, page 23 [22] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_abdulbaha\\_london#22](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_abdulbaha_london#22)

218. Moreover, the animal perceives sensible things but cannot perceive conceptual realities. For example, the animal sees that which is within the range of its vision but cannot comprehend or conceive that which lies beyond it.
219. The animal is a prisoner of the senses and is circumscribed by them: It cannot comprehend anything that lies beyond the reach or control of the senses, even though it excels man in the outward powers and senses.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #48 [68]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

220. As to the question concerning the soul, know thou, verily, that "soul" is a term applied to numerous realities, according to the exigencies of the following relations with respect to development in the world of existence:
221. In the animal kingdom it is called "sense perception" or instinct. This term soul, as applied to the animal kingdom, is also a natural quality resulting from the mixture of the elements, and it appears from their mingling and combination, for it is a quality which results from the composition of bodies (organisms), and is dispersed at their decomposition. From this we are to understand that the animal soul is not endowed with the capacity of attaining immortality, as the life force is dispersed at the decomposition of the animal tissues.

Bahá'í Scriptures, 'Abdu'l-Bahá -#742 [404]  
<http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai.scriptsures/7.html#no740>

222. Know that comprehension varies. Its lowest degree consists in the senses of the animal realm, that is, the natural sensations which arise from the powers of the outward senses. This comprehension is common to man and animals, and indeed certain animals surpass man in this regard.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #58 [78]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

223. In the physical realm of creation, all things are eaters and eaten: the plant drinketh in the mineral, the animal doth crop and swallow down the plant, man doth feed upon the animal, and the mineral devoureth the body of man.

224. Whensoever thou dost examine, through a microscope, the water man drinketh, the air he doth breathe, thou wilt see that with every breath of air, man taketh in an abundance of animal life, and with every draught of water, he also swalloweth down a great variety of animals.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá #137 [63] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

225. Briefly, it is not only their fellow human beings that the beloved of God must treat with mercy and compassion, rather must they show forth the utmost loving-kindness to every living creature. For in all physical respects, and where the animal spirit is concerned, the selfsame feelings are shared by animal and man. Man hath not grasped this truth, however, and he believeth that physical sensations are confined to human beings, wherefore is he unjust to the animals, and cruel.

226. And yet in truth, what difference is there when it cometh to physical sensations? The feelings are one and the same, whether ye inflict pain on man or on beast. There is no difference here whatever. And indeed ye do worse to harm an animal, for man hath a language, he can lodge a complaint, he can cry out and moan; if injured he can have recourse to the authorities and these will protect him from his aggressor. But the hapless beast is mute, able neither to express its hurt nor take its case to the authorities. If a man inflict a thousand ills upon a beast, it can neither ward him off with speech nor hale him into court. Therefore is it essential that ye show forth the utmost consideration to the animal, and that ye be even kinder to him than to your fellow man.

227. Train your children from their earliest days to be infinitely tender and loving to animals. If an animal be sick, let the children try to heal it, if it be hungry, let them feed it, if thirsty, let them quench its thirst, if weary, let them see that it rests.

Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá #138) [64] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

### 3.1.4 Man



228. O Son of Man!  
Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty.

Hidden Words, Part 1, Bahá'u'lláh #3 [1] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/hidden-words/hidden-words.pdf?60f21077>

229. O Son of Man!  
I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life.

Hidden Words, Part 1, Bahá'u'lláh #4 [1] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/hidden-words/hidden-words.pdf?60f21077>

230. O Son of Man!

My eternity is My creation, I have created it for thee. Make it the garment of thy temple. My unity is My handiwork; I have wrought it for thee; clothe thyself therewith, that thou mayest be to all eternity the revelation of My everlasting being.

Hidden Words, Part 1, Bahá'u'lláh #64 [7] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/hidden-words/hidden-words.pdf?6of21077>

231. Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess. Through a word proceeding out of the mouth of God he was called into being; by one word more he was guided to recognize the Source of his education; by yet another word his station and destiny were safeguarded. The Great Being saith: Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.

Tablets of Baha'u'llah #11 [51] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/tablets-bahaullah/tablets-bahaullah.pdf?d1c53d82>

232. Now, the world of existence, indeed every created thing, proclaims but one of the names of God, but the reality of man is an all-encompassing and universal reality which is the seat of the revelation of all the divine perfections. That is, a sign of each one of the names, attributes, and perfections that we ascribe to God exists in man.

233. Thus, the divinity of God, which is the totality of all perfections, reveals itself in the reality of man—that is, the divine Essence is the sum total of all perfections, and from this station it casts a ray of its splendour upon the human reality. ... Thus man is a perfect mirror facing the Sun of Truth and is the seat of its reflection. The splendour of all the divine perfections is manifest in the reality of man, and it is for this reason that he is the vicegerent and apostle of God. If man did not exist, the universe would be without result, for the purpose of existence is the revelation of the divine perfections. We cannot say, then, that there was a time when man was not. At most we can say that there was a time when this earth did not exist, and that at the beginning man was not present upon it.

Some Answered Questions, "Abdu'l-Bahá #50 [71] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

234. Existence is of two kinds: one is the existence of God which is beyond the comprehension of man. He, the invisible, the lofty and the incomprehensible, is preceded by no cause but rather is the Originator of the cause of causes. He, the Ancient, hath had no beginning and is the all-independent. The second kind of existence is the human existence. It is a common existence, comprehensible to the human mind, is not ancient, is dependent and hath a cause to it. The mortal substance does not become eternal and

vice versa; the human kind does not become a Creator and vice versa. The transformation of the innate substance is impossible.

Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #30 [25] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

235. Man is distinguished above the animals through his reason. The perceptions of man are of two kinds: tangible, or sensible, and reasonable, whereas the animal perceptions are limited to the senses, the tangible only. ... Science itself is an ideal verity. It is evident, therefore, that the perceptions of man are twofold: the reasonable and the tangible, or sensible.
236. As to the animal: It is endowed only with sense perception. It is lacking the reasonable perception. It cannot apprehend ideal realities. ... That is to say, the animal in its creation is a captive of the senses. Beyond the tangibilities and impressions of the senses it cannot accept anything. It denies everything. It is incapable of ideal perception and, therefore, a captive of the senses.
237. Virtue, or perfection, belongs to man, who possesses both the capacity of the senses and ideal perception. ... All his scientific attainments have come through the faculty of reason. Briefly, the evidences of intellect or reason are manifest in man. By them he is differentiated from the animal.
238. It is evident that virtues are inherent in man which are not present in the world of nature. This is provable from every standpoint.
239. If it be claimed that the intellectual reality of man belongs to the world of nature—that it is a part of the whole—we ask is it possible for the part to contain virtues which the whole does not possess?

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #111 [205]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

### **3.1.4.1 Purpose of Creation**



240. Having created the world and all that liveth and moveth therein, He, through the direct operation of His unconstrained and sovereign Will, chose to confer upon man the unique distinction and capacity to know Him and to love Him—a capacity that must needs be regarded as the generating impulse and the primary purpose underlying the whole of creation. ... Upon the inmost reality of each and every created thing He hath shed the light of one of His names, and made it a recipient of the glory of one of His attributes. Upon the reality of man, however, He hath focused the radiance of all of His names and attributes, and made it a mirror of His own Self. Alone of all created things man hath been singled out for so great a favor, so enduring a bounty.
241. These energies with which the Daystar of Divine bounty and Source of heavenly guidance hath endowed the reality of man lie, however, latent within him, even as the flame is hidden within the candle and the rays of light are potentially present in the

lamp. The radiance of these energies may be obscured by worldly desires even as the light of the sun can be concealed beneath the dust and dross which cover the mirror. Neither the candle nor the lamp can be lighted through their own unaided efforts, nor can it ever be possible for the mirror to free itself from its dross. It is clear and evident that until a fire is kindled the lamp will never be ignited, and unless the dross is blotted out from the face of the mirror it can never represent the image of the sun nor reflect its light and glory.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #27 XXVII [19] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

242. Nay, whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth is a direct evidence of the revelation within it of the attributes and names of God, inasmuch as within every atom are enshrined the signs that bear eloquent testimony to the revelation of that most great Light. Methinks, but for the potency of that revelation, no being could ever exist. How resplendent the luminaries of knowledge that shine in an atom, and how vast the oceans of wisdom that surge within a drop! To a supreme degree is this true of man, who, among all created things, hath been invested with the robe of such gifts, and hath been singled out for the glory of such distinction. For in him are potentially revealed all the attributes and names of God to a degree that no other created being hath excelled or surpassed. All these names and attributes are applicable to him.

The Kitáb-i-Íqán, Bahá'u'lláh [23] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/kitab-i-iqan/kitab-i-iqan.pdf?35d50a3f>

243. It is clear and evident that when the veils that conceal the realities of the manifestations of the Names and Attributes of God, nay of all created things visible or invisible, have been rent asunder, nothing except the Sign of God will remain—a sign which He, Himself hath placed within these realities. This sign will endure as long as is the wish of the Lord thy god, the Lord of the heavens and of the earth. If such be the blessings conferred on all created things, how superior must be the destiny of the true believer, whose existence and life are to be regarded as the originating purpose of all creation.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #73 LXXIII [43] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

244. The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and to attain His Presence. To this most excellent aim, this supreme objective, all the heavenly Books and the divinely revealed and weighty Scriptures unequivocally bear witness. Whoso hath recognized the Dayspring of Divine guidance and entered His holy court hath drawn nigh unto God and attained His Presence, a Presence which is the real Paradise, and of which the loftiest mansions of heaven are but a symbol. Such a man hath attained the knowledge of the station of Him Who is “at the distance of two bows,” Who standeth beyond the Sadratu'l-Muntahá. Whoso hath failed to recognize Him will have condemned himself to the misery of remoteness, a remoteness which is naught but utter nothingness and the essence of the nethermost fire.

Such will be his fate, though to outward seeming he may occupy the earth's loftiest seats and be established upon its most exalted throne.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #29 XXIX [21] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

### 3.1.4.2 Intellect - Greatest Gift



245. God's greatest gift to man is that of intellect, or understanding.
246. The understanding is the power by which man acquires his knowledge of the several kingdoms of creation, and of various stages of existence, as well as of much which is invisible.
247. Possessing this gift, he is, in himself, the sum of earlier creations—he is able to get into touch with those kingdoms; and by this gift, he can frequently, through his scientific knowledge, reach out with prophetic vision.
248. Intellect is, in truth, the most precious gift bestowed upon man by the Divine Bounty. Man alone, among created beings, has this wonderful power.
249. All creation, preceding Man, is bound by the stern law of nature. The great sun, the multitudes of stars, the oceans and seas, the mountains, the rivers, the trees, and all animals, great or small—none is able to evade obedience to nature's law.
250. Man alone has freedom, and, by his understanding or intellect, has been able to gain control of and adapt some of those natural laws to his own needs.

Paris Talks, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #11 [12] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/paris-talks/paris-talks.pdf?1209cacc>

251. Praise and thanksgiving be unto Providence that out of all the realities in existence He has chosen the reality of man and has honored it with intellect and wisdom, the two most luminous lights in either world. Through the agency of this great endowment, He has in every epoch cast on the mirror of creation new and wonderful configurations. If we look objectively upon the world of being, it will become apparent that from age to age, the temple of existence has continually been embellished with a fresh grace, and distinguished with an ever-varying splendor, deriving from wisdom and the power of thought.
252. This supreme emblem of God stands first in the order of creation and first in rank, taking precedence over all created things.
253. Consider carefully: all these highly varied phenomena, these concepts, this knowledge, these technical procedures and philosophical systems, these sciences, arts, industries and inventions—all are emanations of the human mind.

Secret of Divine Civilization, 'Abdu'l-bahá [1] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_secret\\_divine\\_civilization#1](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_secret_divine_civilization#1)

254. ... God has deposited within the human creature an illimitable power by which he can



rule the world of nature.

255. Consider how all other phenomenal existence and beings are captives of nature. The sun, that colossal center of our solar system, the giant stars and planets, the towering mountains, the earth itself and its kingdoms of life lower than the human,—all are captives of nature except man. No other created thing can deviate in the slightest degree from obedience to natural law. The sun in its glory and greatness millions of miles away is held prisoner in its orbit of universal revolution, captive of universal natural control. Man is the ruler of nature.
256. Nature is inert, man is progressive. Nature has no consciousness, man is endowed with it. Nature is without volition and acts perforce whereas man possesses a mighty will. Nature is incapable of discovering mysteries or realities whereas man is especially fitted to do so.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Abdu'l-Bahá #63 [101]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

257. If we look with a perceiving eye upon the world of creation, we find that all existing things may be classified as follows: first, mineral—that is to say, matter or substance appearing in various forms of composition; second, vegetable—possessing the virtues of the mineral plus the power of augmentation or growth, indicating a degree higher and more specialized than the mineral; third, animal—possessing the attributes of the mineral and vegetable plus the power of sense perception; fourth, human—the highest specialized organism of visible creation, embodying the qualities of the mineral, vegetable and animal plus an ideal endowment absolutely absent in the lower kingdoms—the power of intellectual investigation into the mysteries of outer phenomena. The outcome of this intellectual endowment is science, which is especially characteristic of man. This scientific power investigates and apprehends created objects and the laws surrounding them. It is the discoverer of the hidden and mysterious secrets of the material universe and is peculiar to man alone. The most noble and praiseworthy accomplishment of man, therefore, is scientific knowledge and attainment.
258. Science is the governor of nature and its mysteries, the one agency by which man explores the institutions of material creation. All created things are captives of nature and subject to its laws. They cannot transgress the control of these laws in one detail or particular. The infinite starry worlds and heavenly bodies are nature's obedient subjects. The earth and its myriad organisms, all minerals, plants and animals are thralls of its dominion. But man through the exercise of his scientific, intellectual power can rise out of this condition, can modify, change and control nature according to his own wishes and uses. Science, so to speak, is the breaker of the laws of nature.
259. Therefore, it is manifest and evident that man, although in body a part of nature, nevertheless in spirit possesses a power transcending nature; for if he were simply a part of nature and limited to material laws, he could possess only the things which nature embodies. God has conferred upon and added to man a distinctive power—the faculty of intellectual investigation into the secrets of creation, the acquisition of higher knowledge

—the greatest virtue of which is scientific enlightenment.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #12 [19]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

260. The virtues of humanity are many, but science is the most noble of them all. The distinction which man enjoys above and beyond the station of the animal is due to this paramount virtue. It is a bestowal of God; it is not material; it is divine. Science is an effulgence of the Sun of Reality, the power of investigating and discovering the verities of the universe, the means by which man finds a pathway to God. All the powers and attributes of man are human and hereditary in origin—outcomes of nature’s processes—except the intellect, which is supernatural. Through intellectual and intelligent inquiry science is the discoverer of all things. ... By intellectual processes and logical deductions of reason this superpower in man can penetrate the mysteries of the future and anticipate its happenings.
261. Science is the first emanation from God toward man. All created beings embody the potentiality of material perfection, but the power of intellectual investigation and scientific acquisition is a higher virtue specialized to man alone.
262. All blessings are divine in origin, but none can be compared with this power of intellectual investigation and research, which is an eternal gift producing fruits of unending delight.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #20 [30]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

263. Consider the rational faculty with which God hath endowed the essence of man. Examine thine own self, and behold how thy motion and stillness, thy will and purpose, thy sight and hearing, thy sense of smell and power of speech, and whatever else is related to, or transcendeth, thy physical senses or spiritual perceptions, all proceed from, and owe their existence to, this same faculty. So closely are they related unto it, that if in less than the twinkling of an eye its relationship to the human body be severed, each and every one of these senses will cease immediately to exercise its function, and will be deprived of the power to manifest the evidences of its activity. It is indubitably clear and evident that each of these aforementioned instruments has depended, and will ever continue to depend, for its proper functioning on this rational faculty, which should be regarded as a sign of the revelation of Him Who is the sovereign Lord of all.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #83 LXXXIII [50] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

264. Man has volition; nature has none. Man has memory; nature is without it. Man has the reasoning faculty; nature is deprived. Man has the perceptive faculty; nature cannot perceive. It is therefore proved and evident that man is nobler than nature.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #7 [12]

265. The human kingdom is replete with the perfections of all the kingdoms below it with the addition of powers peculiar to man alone. Man is, therefore, superior to all the creatures below him, the loftiest and most glorious being of creation. Man is the microcosm; and the infinite universe, the macrocosm. The mysteries of the greater world, or macrocosm, are expressed or revealed in the lesser world, the microcosm. The tree, so to speak, is the greater world, and the seed in its relation to the tree is the lesser world. But the whole of the great tree is potentially latent and hidden in the little seed. When this seed is planted and cultivated, the tree is revealed. Likewise, the greater world, the macrocosm, is latent and miniaturized in the lesser world, or microcosm, of man. This constitutes the universality or perfection of virtues potential in mankind. Therefore, it is said that man has been created in the image and likeness of God.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #22 [41]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

266. Although man shares the same outward powers and senses in common with the animal, there exists in him an extraordinary power of which the animal is deprived. All sciences, arts, inventions, crafts, and discoveries of realities proceed from this singular power. This is a power that encompasses all created things, comprehends their realities, unravels their hidden mysteries, and brings them under its control. It even understands things that have no outward existence, that is, intelligible, imperceptible, and unseen realities such as the mind, the spirit, human attributes and qualities, love and sorrow—all of which are intelligible realities. Moreover, all the existing sciences and crafts, all the great undertakings and myriad discoveries of man were at one time hidden and concealed mysteries, and it is that all-encompassing human power that has discovered them and brought them forth from the invisible into the visible realm.

Some Answered Questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #48 [68]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

### 3.1.4.3 Two Natures



267. In man there are two natures; his spiritual or higher nature and his material or lower nature. In one he approaches God, in the other he lives for the world alone. Signs of both these natures are to be found in men. In his material aspect he expresses untruth, cruelty and injustice; all these are the outcome of his lower nature. The attributes of his Divine nature are shown forth in love, mercy, kindness, truth and justice, one and all being expressions of his higher nature. Every good habit, every noble quality belongs to man’s spiritual nature, whereas all his imperfections and sinful actions are born of his material nature. If a man’s Divine nature dominates his human nature, we have a saint.

268. Nature is the material world.
269. If man himself is left in his natural state, he will become lower than the animal and continue to grow more ignorant and imperfect.
270. All scientific discoveries and attainments are the outcomes of knowledge and education.
271. If a child is left in its natural state and deprived of education, there is no doubt that it will grow up in ignorance and illiteracy, its mental faculties dulled and dimmed; in fact, it will become like an animal.
272. The world of nature is the kingdom of the animal. In its natural condition and plane of limitation the animal is perfect.
273. The animal can neither recognize nor apprehend the spiritual power of man and makes no distinction between man and itself, for the reason that its susceptibilities are limited to the plane of the senses. It lives under the bondage of nature and nature's laws.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #101 [175]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

274. It is evident that human personality appears in two aspects: the image or likeness of God, and the aspect of Satan. The human reality stands between these two: the divine and the satanic. It is manifest that beyond this material body, man is endowed with another reality, which is the world of exemplars constituting the heavenly body of man. ... It is clear that when man is thinking, it is as though he were consulting with some other person. With whom is he consulting? It is evident that it is another reality, or one aside from this body, with whom he enters into consultation when he thinks, ... Therefore, that reality in man is clearly and obviously other than his body—an ego with which man enters into consultation and whose opinion man seeks.
275. There is no doubt that a reality exists other than the outward, physical reality.
276. ... this human reality stands between the higher and the lower in man, between the world of the animal and the world of Divinity.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #139 [263]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

277. All the imperfections found in the animal are found in man. In him there is antagonism, hatred and selfish struggle for existence; in his nature lurk jealousy, revenge, ferocity, cunning, hypocrisy, greed, injustice and tyranny.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #139 [264] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

278. The body is the physical or animal degree of man. From the bodily point of view man is a sharer of the animal kingdom. The bodies alike of men and animals are composed of elements held together by the law of attraction.

279. Like the animal, man possesses the faculties of the senses, is subject to heat, cold, hunger, thirst, etc.; unlike the animal, man has a rational soul, the human intelligence.

Paris Talks, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #31 [33] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/paris-talks/paris-talks.pdf?1209cacc>

280. This human body is purely animal in type and, like the animal, it is subject only to the grosser sensibilities. It is utterly bereft of ideation or intellection, utterly incapable of the processes of reason. The animal perceives what its eye sees and judges what the ear hears. It perceives according to its animal senses, the scent of the nostril, the taste of the tongue. It comprehends not beyond its sense perceptions. The animal is confined to its feelings and sensibilities, a prisoner of the senses. Beyond these, in the finer higher processes of reasoning, the animal cannot go.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Abdu'l-Bahá #123 [237]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

281. The human spirit, which distinguishes man from the animal, is the rational soul, and these two terms—the human spirit and the rational soul—designate one and the same thing. This spirit, which in the terminology of the philosophers is called the rational soul, encompasses all things and as far as human capacity permits, discovers their realities and becomes aware of the properties and effects, the characteristics and conditions of earthly things. But the human spirit, unless it be assisted by the spirit of faith, cannot become acquainted with the divine mysteries and the heavenly realities. It is like a mirror which, although clear, bright, and polished, is still in need of light. Not until a sunbeam falls upon it can it discover the divine mysteries.

282. As for the mind, it is the power of the human spirit. The spirit is as the lamp, and the mind as the light that shines from it. The spirit is as the tree, and the mind as the fruit. The mind is the perfection of the spirit and a necessary attribute thereof, even as the rays of the sun are an essential requirement of the sun itself.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #55 [76]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

283. Man is in the ultimate degree of materiality and the beginning of spirituality; that is, he is at the end of imperfection and the beginning of perfection. He is at the furthestmost degree of darkness and the beginning of the light. That is why the station of man is said to be the end of night and the beginning of day, meaning that he encompasses all the degrees of imperfection and that he potentially possesses all the degrees of perfection. He has both an animal side and an angelic side, and the role of the educator is to so train human souls that the angelic side may overcome the animal. Thus, should the divine powers, which are identical with perfection, overcome in man the satanic powers, which

are absolute imperfection, he becomes the noblest of all creatures, but should the converse take place, he becomes the vilest of all beings. That is why he is the end of imperfection and the beginning of perfection.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #64 [84]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

284. Say, verily God hath caused all created things to enter beneath the shade of the tree of affirmation, except those who are endowed with the faculty of understanding. Theirs is the choice either to believe in God their Lord, and put their whole trust in Him, or to shut themselves out from Him and refuse to believe with certitude in His signs. These two groups sail upon two seas: the sea of affirmation and the sea of negation.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #5 [48]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

### 3.1.4.4 Evolution of Man



285. The beginning of the formation of man on the terrestrial globe is like the formation of the human embryo in the womb of the mother. The embryo gradually grows and develops until it is born, and thereafter it continues to grow and develop until it reaches the stage of maturity. Although in infancy the signs of the mind and the spirit are already present in man, they do not appear in a state of perfection, and remain incomplete. But when man attains maturity, the mind and the spirit manifest themselves in the utmost perfection.

286. Likewise, at the beginning of his formation in the matrix of the world, man was like an embryo. He then gradually progressed by degrees, and grew and developed until he reached the stage of maturity, when the mind and the spirit manifested themselves in the utmost perfection. From the beginning of his formation, the mind and the spirit existed, but they were hidden and appeared only later. In the world of the womb, too, the mind and the spirit exist in the embryo but are concealed and appear only afterwards.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #51 [72]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

287. But at all times, even when the embryo resembled a worm, it was human in potentiality and character, not animal. The forms assumed by the human embryo in its successive changes do not prove that it is animal in its essential character. Throughout this progression there has been a transference of type, a conservation of species or kind. Realizing this we may acknowledge the fact that at one time man was an inmate of the sea, at another period an invertebrate, then a vertebrate and finally a human being standing erect. Though we admit these changes, we cannot say man is an animal. In each one of these stages are signs and evidences of his human existence and destination. Proof

of this lies in the fact that in the embryo man still resembles a worm. This embryo still progresses from one state to another, assuming different forms until that which was potential in it—namely, the human image—appears. Therefore, in the protoplasm, man is man. Conservation of species demands it.

288. Strange indeed that after twenty years training in colleges and universities man should reach such a station wherein he will deny the existence of the ideal or that which is not perceptible to the senses. Have you ever stopped to think that the animal already has graduated from such a university? Have you ever realized that the cow is already a professor emeritus of that university? For the cow without hard labor and study is already a philosopher of the superlative degree in the school of nature. The cow denies everything that is not tangible, saying, “I can see! I can eat! Therefore, I believe only in that which is tangible!”

289. Then why should we go to the colleges? Let us go to the cow.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #111 [206]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

290. For example, the human embryo grows and develops gradually in the womb of its mother and assumes different forms and conditions until it reaches maturity with the utmost beauty and appears in a consummate form with the utmost grace. In like manner, the seed of this flower which you see before you was, in the beginning, a small and insignificant thing, but it grew and developed in the womb of the earth and assumed different forms until it appeared with such perfect vitality and grace in this degree. It is likewise clear and evident that this terrestrial globe came to exist, grow, and develop in the matrix of the universe and assumed different forms and conditions until it gradually attained its present completeness, became adorned with countless beings, and appeared in such a consummate form.

Some Answered Questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #47 [66]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

291. Briefly, this question comes down to the originality or non-originality of the species, that is, whether the essence of the human species was fixed from the very origin or whether it subsequently came from the animals.

292. The first answer to this argument is that the antecedence of animals to man is not a proof that the essence of the human species was altered or transformed or that man came from the animal kingdom. For so long as it is acknowledged that these different beings have appeared in time, it is possible that man simply came into existence after the animal.

293. Secondly, these minor traces and vestigial limbs might have some great underlying wisdom which the human mind has so far been unable to fathom. How many things are found in this world whose underlying wisdom to this day has not been grasped! ... Now, so long as the wisdom underlying the things that we have mentioned is unknown, one

may well imagine that the reason and wisdom of the vestigial limbs, whether in the animal or in man, is also unknown. Such an underlying wisdom of course exists, even though it may not be known.

294. Thirdly, even if we were to suppose that certain animals, or even man, once possessed limbs which have now disappeared, this would not be a sufficient proof of the transformation of the species. For man, from the conception of the embryo until the attainment of maturity, assumes different forms and appearances.
295. To summarize: Just as man progresses, evolves, and is transformed from one form and appearance to another in the womb of the mother, while remaining from the beginning a human embryo, so too has man remained a distinct essence—that is, the human species—from the beginning of his formation in the matrix of the world, and has passed gradually from form to form. It follows that this change of appearance, this evolution of organs, and this growth and development do not preclude the originality of the species. Now, even accepting the reality of evolution and progress, nevertheless, from the moment of his appearance man has possessed perfect composition, and has had the capacity and potential to acquire both material and spiritual perfections and to become the embodiment of the verse, “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.”<sup>[131]</sup>

131. Gen. 1:26.

Some Answered Questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #49 [70]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

296. In the world of existence man has traversed successive degrees until he has attained the human kingdom. In each degree of his progression he has developed capacity for advancement to the next station and condition. While in the kingdom of the mineral he was attaining the capacity for promotion into the degree of the vegetable. In the kingdom of the vegetable he underwent preparation for the world of the animal, and from thence he has come onward to the human degree, or kingdom. Throughout this journey of progression he has ever and always been potentially man.
297. In the beginning of his human life man was embryonic in the world of the matrix. There he received capacity and endowment for the reality of human existence. The forces and powers necessary for this world were bestowed upon him in that limited condition. In this world he needed eyes; he received them potentially in the other. He needed ears; he obtained them there in readiness and preparation for his new existence. The powers requisite in this world were conferred upon him in the world of the matrix so that when he entered this realm of real existence he not only possessed all necessary functions and powers but found provision for his material sustenance awaiting him.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #81 [129]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

298. The wisdom of the appearance of the spirit in the body is this: The human spirit is a divine trust which must traverse every degree, for traversing and passing through the degrees of existence is the means of its acquiring perfections..



299. Moreover, it is necessary that the signs of the perfections of the spirit appear in this world, that the realm of creation may bring forth endless fruits, and that this body of the contingent world may receive life and manifest the divine bounties. ... It is through the appearance of the spirit in the material body that this world is illumined. Just as the spirit of man is the cause of the life of his body, so is the whole world even as a body and man as its spirit. If man did not exist, if the perfections of the spirit were not manifested and the light of the mind were not shining in this world, it would be like a body with out a spirit.
300. Beyond this, the members, constituent parts, and composition that are found within man attract and act as a magnet for the spirit: The spirit is bound to appear in it.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #52 [73]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

### 3.1.4.5 Immortality



301. In the world of existence there is nothing so important as spirit, nothing so essential as the spirit of man. The spirit of man is the most noble of phenomena. The spirit of man is the meeting between man and God. The spirit of man is the animus of human life and the collective center of all human virtues. The spirit of man is the cause of the illumination of this world. The world may be likened to the body; man is the spirit of the body, because the light of the world is the human spirit. Man is the life of the world, and the life of man is the spirit
302. Man is possessed of the emanations of consciousness; he has perception, ideality and is capable of discovering the mysteries of the universe.
303. All the organisms of material creation are limited to an image or form. That is to say, each created material being is possessed of a form; it cannot possess two forms at the same time. ... Therefore, it is evident in the reality of material organisms that different forms cannot be simultaneously possessed. In the spiritual reality of man, however, all geometrical figures can be simultaneously conceived, while in physical realities one image must be forsaken in order that another may be possible. This is the law of change and transformation, and change and transformation are precursors of mortality. Were it not for this change in form, phenomena would be immortal; but because the phenomenal existence is subject to transformation, it is mortal. The reality of man, however, is possessed of all virtues; it is not necessary for him to give up one image for another as mere physical bodies do. Therefore, in that reality there is no change or transformation; it is immortal and everlasting.
304. The spirit is ever the same; no change or transformation can you perceive, and because there is no change or transformation, it is everlasting and permanent.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #85 [137]

305. ...the human body has one form. In its composition it has been transferred from one form to another but never possesses two forms at the same time.
306. The spirit of man, however, can manifest itself in all forms at the same time. ... There is no annihilation, no destruction; therefore, the human spirit is immortal because it is not transferred from one body into another body.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #100 [174]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

307. Some hold that the body is the substance and that it subsists by itself, and that the spirit is an accident which subsists through the substance of the body. The truth, however, is that the rational soul is the substance through which the body subsists. If the accident—the body—is destroyed, the substance—the spirit—remains.
308. Secondly, the rational soul, or the human spirit, does not subsist through this body by inherence—that is to say, it does not enter it; for inherence and entrance are characteristics of bodies, and the rational soul is sanctified above this. It never entered this body to begin with, that it should require, upon leaving it, some other abode.
309. The rational soul—the human spirit—did not descend into this body or subsist through it to begin with, that it should require some substance to depend upon after the constituent parts of the body have decomposed. On the contrary, the rational soul is the substance upon which the body depends. The rational soul is endowed from the beginning with individuality; it does not acquire it through the intermediary of the body. At most, what can be said is that the individuality and identity of the rational soul may be strengthened in this world, and that the soul may either progress and attain to the degrees of perfection or remain in the lowest abyss of ignorance and be veiled from and deprived of beholding the signs of God.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #66 [86]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

310. A rational proof for the immortality of the spirit is this, that no effect can be produced by a non-existent thing; that is, it is impossible that any effect should appear from absolute nothingness. For the effect of a thing is secondary to its existence, and that which is secondary is conditioned upon the existence of that which is primary.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #60 [81]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

311. Every composition is necessarily subject to destruction or disintegration. ... Existence in the various planes, or kingdoms, implies composition; and nonexistence, or death, is

decomposition.

312. But the inner and essential reality of man is not composed of elements and, therefore, cannot be decomposed. It is not an elemental composition subject to disintegration or death. A true and fundamental scientific principle is that an element itself never dies and cannot be destroyed for the reason that it is single and not composed. Therefore, it is not subject to decomposition.
313. Furthermore, this immortal human soul is endowed with two means of perception: One is effected through instrumentality; the other, independently. For instance, the soul sees through the instrumentality of the eye, hears with the ear, smells through the nostrils and grasps objects with the hands. These are the actions or operations of the soul through instruments. But in the world of dreams the soul sees when the eyes are closed. The man is seemingly dead, lies there as dead; the ears do not hear, yet he hears. The body lies there, but he—that is, the soul—travels, sees, observes. All the instruments of the body are inactive, all the functions seemingly useless. Notwithstanding this, there is an immediate and vivid perception by the soul.
314. The spirit, or human soul, is the rider; and the body is only the steed.
315. It is an evident fact that the body does not conduct the process of intellection or thought radiation. It is only the medium of the grossest sensations. This human body is purely animal in type and, like the animal, it is subject only to the grosser sensibilities. It is utterly bereft of ideation or intellection, utterly incapable of the processes of reason.
316. Hence, we know that in the human organism there is a center of intellection, a power of intellectual operation which is the discoverer of the realities of things. This power can unravel the mysteries of phenomena. It can comprehend that which is knowable, not alone the sensible. All the inventions are its products. ... The animal is bereft of these.
317. Such evidences prove conclusively that man is possessed of two realities, as it were: a reality connected with the senses which is shared in common with the animal, and another reality which is conscious and ideal in character. This latter is the collective reality and the discoverer of mysteries.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #123 [236]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

318. Life is the expression of composition; and death, the expression of decomposition. In the world or kingdom of the minerals certain materials or elemental substances exist. When through the law of creation they enter into composition, a being or organism comes into existence. For example, certain material atoms are brought together, and man is the result. When this composition is destroyed and disintegrated, decomposition takes place; this is mortality, or death. When certain elements are composed, an animal comes into being. When these elements are scattered or decomposed, this is called the death of the animal. Again, certain atoms are bound together by chemical affinity; a composition called a flower appears. When these atoms are dispersed and the composition they have

formed is disintegrated, the flower has come to its end; it is dead. Therefore, it is evident that life is the expression of composition, and mortality, or death, is equivalent to decomposition. As the spirit of man is not composed of material elements, it is not subject to decomposition and, therefore, has no death. It is self-evident that the human spirit is simple, single and not composed in order that it may come to immortality, and it is a philosophical axiom that the individual or indivisible atom is indestructible. At most, it passes through a process of construction and reconstruction. For example, these individual atoms are brought together in a composition, and through this composition a given organism—such as a man, an animal or a plant—is created. When this composition is decomposed, that created organism is brought to an end, but the component atoms are not annihilated; they continue to exist because they are single, individual and not composed. Therefore, it may be said that these individual atoms are eternal. Likewise, the human spirit, inasmuch as it is not composed of individual elements or atoms—as it is sanctified above these elements—is eternal. This is a self-evident proof of its immortality.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #100 [174]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

319. Know, verily, that the soul is a sign of God, a heavenly gem whose reality the most learned of men hath failed to grasp, and whose mystery no mind, however acute, can ever hope to unravel. It is the first among all created things to declare the excellence of its Creator, the first to recognize His glory, to cleave to His truth, and to bow down in adoration before Him. If it be faithful to God, it will reflect His light, and will, eventually, return unto Him. If it fail, however, in its allegiance to its Creator, it will become a victim to self and passion, and will, in the end, sink in their depths.
320. Verily I say, the human soul is, in its essence, one of the signs of God, a mystery among His mysteries. It is one of the mighty signs of the Almighty, the harbinger that proclaimeth the reality of all the worlds of God.
- Gleanings, Bahá’u’lláh, #82 LXXXII [49] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>
321. All creation, whether of the mineral, vegetable or animal kingdom, is compelled to obey the law of motion; it must either ascend or descend. But with the human soul, there is no decline. Its only movement is towards perfection; growth and progress alone constitute the motion of the soul.
322. Divine perfection is infinite, therefore the progress of the soul is also infinite. From the very birth of a human being the soul progresses, the intellect grows and knowledge increases. When the body dies the soul lives on. All the differing degrees of created physical beings are limited, but the soul is limitless!
323. In the world of spirit there is no retrogression. The world of mortality is a world of contradictions, of opposites; motion being compulsory everything must either go forward or retreat. In the realm of spirit there is no retreat possible, all movement is bound to be

towards a perfect state. 'Progress' is the expression of spirit in the world of matter. The intelligence of man, his reasoning powers, his knowledge, his scientific achievements, all these being manifestations of the spirit, partake of the inevitable law of spiritual progress and are, therefore, of necessity, immortal.

324. With the soul it is different. The soul is not a combination of elements, it is not composed of many atoms, it is of one indivisible substance and therefore eternal. It is entirely out of the order of the physical creation; it is immortal!
325. Consider the aim of creation: is it possible that all is created to evolve and develop through countless ages with this small goal in view—a few years of a man's life on earth? Is it not unthinkable that this should be the final aim of existence?
326. Does a man cease to exist when he leaves the body? If his life comes to an end, then all the previous evolution is useless, all has been for nothing! Can one imagine that Creation has no greater aim than this?
327. The soul is eternal, immortal.

Paris Talks, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #29 [30] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/paris-talks/paris-talks.pdf?1209cacc>

328. O Son of Man!

Thou art My dominion and My dominion perisheth not; wherefore fearest thou thy perishing? Thou art My light and My light shall never be extinguished; why dost thou dread extinction? Thou art My glory and My glory fadeth not; thou art My robe and My robe shall never be outworn. Abide then in thy love for Me, that thou mayest find Me in the realm of glory.

Hidden Words, Part 1, Bahá'u'lláh #14 [2] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/hidden-words/hidden-words.pdf?6of21077>

## 3.2 Whatever Lieth Between

329. In the Name of God, the Lord of overpowering majesty, the All-Compelling. Hallowed be the Lord in Whose hand is the source of dominion. He createth whatsoever He willeth by His Word of command "Be," and it is. His hath been the power of authority heretofore and it shall remain His hereafter. He maketh victorious whomsoever He pleaseth, through the potency of His behest. He is in truth the Powerful, the Almighty. Unto Him pertaineth all glory and majesty in the kingdoms of Revelation and Creation and whatever lieth between them. Verily He is the Potent, the All-Glorious. From everlasting He hath been the Source of indomitable strength and shall remain so unto everlasting. He is indeed the Lord of might and power. All the kingdoms of heaven and earth and whatever is between them are God's, and His power is supreme over all things. All the treasures of earth and heaven and everything between them are His, and His protection extendeth over all things. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them and He truly is a witness over all things. He is the Lord of Reckoning

for all that dwell in the heavens and on earth and whatever lieth between them, and truly God is swift to reckon. He setteth the measure assigned to all who are in the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. Verily He is the Supreme Protector. He holdeth in His grasp the keys of heaven and earth and of everything between them. At His Own pleasure doth He bestow gifts, through the power of His command. Indeed His grace encompasseth all and He is the All-Knowing.

330. Say: God sufficeth unto me; He is the One Who holdeth in His grasp the kingdom of all things. Through the power of His hosts of heaven and earth and whatever lieth between them, He protecteth whomsoever among His servants He willeth. God, in truth, keepeth watch over all things.

331. Immeasurably exalted art Thou, O Lord! Protect us from what lieth in front of us and behind us, above our heads, on our right, on our left, below our feet and every other side to which we are exposed. Verily Thy protection over all things is unfailing.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #7 [55]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

332. Our grace assuredly pervadeth all that dwell in the kingdoms of earth and heaven and in whatever lieth between them, and beyond them all mankind. However, souls that have shut themselves out as by a veil can never partake of the outpourings of the grace of God.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #1 [12]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

333. Say: God sufficeth all things above all things, and nothing in the heavens or in the earth or in whatever lieth between them but God, thy Lord, sufficeth. Verily, He is in Himself the Knower, the Sustainer, the Omnipotent.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #4 [39]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

334. Say, verily any one follower of this Faith can, by the leave of God, prevail over all who dwell in heaven and earth and in whatever lieth between them; for indeed this is, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the one true Faith. Therefore fear ye not, neither be ye grieved.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #5 [49]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

335. God testifieth that there is none other God but Him. His are the kingdoms in the heavens and on the earth and all that is between them.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #6 [49]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

336. Indeed every light is generated by God through the power of His behest. He of a truth is the Light in the kingdom of heaven and earth and whatever is between them.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #7 [50]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

337. Say, God hath undisputed triumph over every victorious one. There is no one in heaven or earth or in whatever lieth between them who can frustrate the transcendent supremacy of His triumph. He calleth into being whatsoever He willeth through the potency of His behest. Verily God is the mightiest Sustainer, the Helper and the Defender.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #6 [53]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

338. He is the peerless Creator Who hath created the heavens and the earth and whatsoever lieth between them, and all do His bidding. He is the One Whose grace hath encompassed all that are in the heavens, on earth or elsewhere, and everyone abideth by His behest.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #6 [54]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

339. Say: God is indeed the Maker of all things. He giveth sustenance in plenty to whomsoever He willeth. He is the Creator, the Source of all beings, the Fashioner, the Almighty, the Maker, the All-Wise. He is the Bearer of the most excellent titles throughout the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them. All do His bidding, and all the dwellers of earth and heaven celebrate His praise, and unto Him shall all return.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb #7 [70]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

340. O ye people! Do ye flee from the mercy of God after it has encompassed the existent things created between the heavens and earths?

Tablet of the Branch, Baha'u'llah [1] [http://bahai-library.com/bahaullah\\_surih\\_ghusn](http://bahai-library.com/bahaullah_surih_ghusn)

341. “Have they not considered within themselves that God hath not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them but for a serious end, and for a fixed term? But truly most men believe not that they shall attain the Presence of their Lord.”

Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Baha'u'llah [33] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/epistle-son-wolf/epistle-son-wolf.pdf?791coec5>

### 3.2.1.1 Primal Matter



342. The world of existence came into being through the heat generated from the interaction between the active force and that which is its recipient. These two are the same, yet they are different. Thus doth the Great Announcement inform thee about this glorious structure. Such as communicate the generating influence and such as receive its impact are indeed created through the irresistible Word of God, which is the Cause of the entire creation, while all else besides His Word are but the creatures and effects thereof.

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Lawh-i-Hikmat #9 [44]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah.pdf?d1c53d82>

343. *“The world of existence came into being through the heat generated [from the interaction between the active force and that which is its recipient. These two are the same, yet they are different].”* That is to say, the primary matter of contingent beings is the ethereal power, which is invisible and can only [be] established through its effects, such as electricity, heat, and light, which are vibrations of that power. This is established and proven in natural philosophy, and it is called ethereal matter. This ethereal matter is itself both the active force and the recipient; in other words, in the world of corporeal existents it is the sign of the Primal Will. “God created man by the Will, and He created the Will by means of itself.” Therefore, this ethereal matter is, in a certain respect, the active force, since light, heat, and electricity appear from it. It is also the recipient, for as vibrations take place in it, it becomes visible. For instance, light is a vibration occurring in that ethereal matter. From these vibrations the power of sight is affected, and the result is seeing. Likewise, vibrations take place in the air and from them the eardrum is affected. That effect is sound, and the result is hearing.

Three Verses in the Lawh-i-Hikmat, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_three\\_verses\\_hikmat](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_three_verses_hikmat)

344. We must know, then, what each one of the great existent things was in the beginning. There is no doubt that initially there was a single origin: There cannot have been two origins. For the origin of all numbers is one and not two; the number two is itself in need of an origin. It is therefore evident that originally matter was one, and that one matter appeared in a different form in each element. Thus various forms appeared, and as they appeared, they each assumed an independent form and became a specific element. But this distinction attained its full completion and realization only after a very long time. Then these elements were composed, arranged, and combined in infinite forms; in other words, from the composition and combination of these elements countless beings appeared.

345. This composition and arrangement arose, through the wisdom of God and His ancient might, from one natural order. Thus, as this composition and combination has been produced according to a natural order, with perfect soundness, following a consummate wisdom, and subject to a universal law, it is clear that it is a divine creation and not an accidental composition and arrangement.



346. It is therefore evident that the original matter, which is like unto the embryo, initially took the form of composed and combined elements, and that composition gradually grew and developed over a myriad ages and centuries, passing from one shape and form to another until, through the consummate wisdom of God, it appeared with such completeness, order, arrangement, and soundness.

Some Answered Questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #47 [66]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

347. They have said that the potentialities (qábiliyyát) and the recipients of the potentialities (maqbúlát) came into being and were created simultaneously. For example, it has been stated that all things are composed of two elements: the ‘Fashioner’ (qábil) and the ‘Fashioned’ (maqbúl). By ‘Fashioned’ is meant substance (mádda) and primary matter (huyúlá), and by ‘Fashioner’ is meant form and shape, which confines and limits the primary matter from its state of indefiniteness and freedom to the courtyard of limitation and definite form.

Provisional Translation by Moojan Momen in Bahá’í Studies Bulletin 3.4.26-27, (Makátib2:35), ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [13] [http://bahai-library.com/pdf/b/brown\\_perspective\\_origin\\_matter.pdf](http://bahai-library.com/pdf/b/brown_perspective_origin_matter.pdf)

348. The substance and primary matter of contingent beings is the ethereal power, which is invisible and only known through its effects, such as electricity, heat, and light—these are vibrations of that power, and this is established and proven in natural philosophy and is known as the ethereal substance (máddiy-i-athíriyyih). This ethereal substance is itself both the active force and the recipient; in other words, it is the sign of the Primal Will in the phenomenal world.... The ethereal substance is, therefore, the cause since light, heat, and electricity appear from it. It is also the effect, for as vibrations take place in it, they become visible. For instance, light is a vibration occurring in that ethereal substance.

Provisional translation by Keven Brown (Má’idiy-i-Ásmání 2:69), ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [15] [http://bahai-library.com/pdf/b/brown\\_perspective\\_origin\\_matter.pdf](http://bahai-library.com/pdf/b/brown_perspective_origin_matter.pdf)

### 3.2.1.2 Ethereal Matter



349. When we observe the world of created phenomena, we discover that each atom of the atoms of substance is moving through the various degrees and kingdoms of organic life. For instance, consider the ethereal element which is penetrating and traveling through all the contingent realities. When there is vibration or movement in the ethereal element, the eye is affected by that vibration and beholds what is known as light.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá #58 [91] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78cf>

350. Even the ether, the forces of which are said in natural philosophy to be heat, light, electricity, and magnetism, is an intelligible and not a sensible reality. Likewise, nature itself is an intelligible and not a sensible reality; the human spirit is an intelligible and not a sensible reality.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #16 [34]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

351. Consider that light consists in the vibrations of the ether, whereby the nerves of the eye are stimulated and vision is produced. Now, though the vibrations of the ether exist both in the lamp and in the sun, yet what a difference there is between the light of the sun and that of the stars or of the lamp!

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #37 [55]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

352. If we were to deny all that is not accessible to the senses, then we would be forced to deny realities which undoubtedly exist. For example, the ether is not sensible, although its reality can be proven. The power of gravity is not sensible, although its existence is likewise undeniable. Whence do we affirm their existence? From their signs. For instance, this light consists in the vibrations of the ether, and from these vibrations we infer its existence.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #48 [69]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

353. The Divine Essence as it is in itself is however beyond all description. For instance, the nature of ether is unknown, but that it existeth is certain by the effects it produceth, heat, light and electricity being the waves thereof. By these waves the existence of ether is thus proven. And as we consider the outpourings of Divine Grace we are assured of the existence of God. For instance, we observe that the existence of beings is conditioned upon the coming together of various elements and their non-existence upon the decomposition of their constituent elements. For decomposition causeth the dissociation of the various elements. Thus, as we observe the coming together of elements giveth rise to the existence of beings, and knowing that beings are infinite, they being the effect, how can the Cause be finite?

'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to Dr. Forel [3] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/tablet-august-forel/tablet-august-forel.pdf?a51ff028>

354. Similarly in the world of being there exist forces unseen of the eye, such as the force of ether previously mentioned, that cannot be sensed, that cannot be seen. However, from the effects it produceth, that is from its waves and vibrations, light, heat, electricity appear and are made evident.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to Dr. Forel [4] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/tablet-august-forel/tablet-august-forel.pdf?a51ff028>

355. It is evident that the discoveries and inventions transcend the animal intelligence. The animal cannot penetrate the secrets of genesis and creation. Its mind is incapable of conceiving the verity of ether. It cannot know the mysteries of magnetism because the bestowals of abstract reason and intellect are absent in its endowment.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #111 [205]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal-peace/promulgation-universal-peace.pdf?91be78c7>

356. The animal cannot understand the roundness of the earth, nor its motion in space, nor the central position of the sun, nor can it imagine such a thing as the all-pervading ether.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London [23] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_abdulbaha\\_london#23](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_abdulbaha_london#23)

357. "At stated periods souls are sent to earth by the Mighty God with what we call "the Power of the Great Ether." And they who possess this power can do anything; they have all Power....'

358. "Jesus Christ had this Power.

359. "The people thought of Him as a poor young man, Whom they had crucified; but He possessed the Power of the Great Ether, therefore He could not remain underground. This ethereal Power arose and quickened the world. And now look to the Master, for this Power is His." (Baha'u'llah)

The Chosen Highway [Part III, Chapter 1] [http://bahai-library.com/blomfield\\_chosen\\_highway&chapter=3](http://bahai-library.com/blomfield_chosen_highway&chapter=3)

### 3.2.1.3 Elixir



360. The Book of God is wide open, and His Word is summoning mankind unto Him. No more than a mere handful, however, hath been found willing to cleave to His Cause, or to become the instruments for its promotion. These few have been endued with the Divine Elixir that can, alone, transmute into purest gold the dross of the world, and have been empowered to administer the infallible remedy for all the ills that afflict the children of men. No man can obtain everlasting life, unless he embraceth the truth of this inestimable, this wondrous, and sublime Revelation.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #92 XCII [56] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

361. It is evident that nothing short of this mystic transformation could cause such spirit and

behaviour, so utterly unlike their previous habits and manners, to be made manifest in the world of being. For their agitation was turned into peace, their doubt into certitude, their timidity into courage. Such is the potency of the Divine Elixir, which, swift as the twinkling of an eye, transmuteth the souls of men!

362. For instance, consider the substance of copper. Were it to be protected in its own mine from becoming solidified, it would, within the space of seventy years, attain to the state of gold. There are some, however, who maintain that copper itself is gold, which by becoming solidified is in a diseased condition, and hath not therefore reached its own state.
363. Be that as it may, the real elixir will, in one instant, cause the substance of copper to attain the state of gold, and will traverse the seventy-year stages in a single moment. Could this gold be called copper? Could it be claimed that it hath not attained the state of gold, whilst the touchstone is at hand to assay it and distinguish it from copper?
364. Likewise, these souls, through the potency of the Divine Elixir, traverse, in the twinkling of an eye, the world of dust and advance into the realm of holiness; and with one step cover the earth of limitations and reach the domain of the Placeless. It behooveth thee to exert thine utmost to attain unto this Elixir which, in one fleeting breath, causeth the west of ignorance to reach the east of knowledge, illuminates the darkness of night with the resplendence of the morn, guideth the wanderer in the wilderness of doubt to the wellspring of the Divine Presence and Fount of certitude, and conferreth upon mortal souls the honor of acceptance into the Riḍván of immortality. Now, could this gold be thought to be copper, these people could likewise be thought to be the same as before they were endowed with faith.

Kitáb-i-Íqán, Bahá'u'lláh [36] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/kitab-i-iqan/kitab-i-iqan.pdf?35d50a3f>

365. We have appointed two signs for the coming of age of the human race: the first, which is the most firm foundation, We have set down in other of Our Tablets, [the above passage] while the second hath been revealed in this wondrous Book.

The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Bahá'u'lláh ( ¶ 189.) [30] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/kitab-i-aqdas/kitab-i-aqdas.pdf?ebd1ea76>

366. The fact is clear that it is impossible for such deeds and actions which have no similitude to former deeds and actions, to appear and be witnessed in the realm of existence, without a divine change and transformation; for their agitation was changed to composure, their doubt turned to assurance, and their fear transformed into courage. This is the virtue of the divine Elixir which transforms the servants in an instant.
367. For instance, consider the substance copper, which if it is protected in its own mine from super-abundance of dryness, will in seventy years\*\* attain to the state of gold—although some consider copper itself to be gold, which through super-abundance of dryness, hath become disordered and hath not reached its own state.
368. To be brief: a perfect elixir, however, will cause the substance copper to attain the state

of gold in an instant, and to traverse the seventy-year stages in a moment. Could it be said that this gold is copper or that it hath not attained the condition of gold, while the test is at hand to differentiate and distinguish the qualities of gold from those of copper?

369. Likewise, these would have traversed the earth-world in an instant through the divine Elixir, entered the worlds of sanctity, and in one step reached the divine placeless from the limited world of place. An effort is needed that thou mayest attain this Elixir which in an instant causes the west of ignorance to reach the east of knowledge, makes the gloominess of the dark night attain to the brilliant morning, guides the remote one in the wilderness of doubts to the fountain of nearness and assurance, and directs the mortal temples to the Ridván of immortality. Now if it be true to declare this gold copper, it will also be true and justifiable to declare these servants to be the same as before they had attained to the Faith.

\*\* Kitáb-i-Íqán, Bahá'u'lláh #36

Baha'i Scriptures, 'Abdu'l-Bahá Ch 1, page 43 [43]

<http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai.scriptsures/1.html#43>

370. Indeed God hath created everywhere around his Gate oceans of divine elixir, tinged crimson with the essence of existence and vitalized through the animating power of the desired fruit; and for them God hath provided Arks of ruby, tender, crimson-colored, wherein none sail but the people of Baha, by the leave of God, the Most Exalted; and verily He is the All-wise. Chapter LVII.

Selections from the writings of the Bab, Qayyum al-Asma, [18]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

371. I beg of Thee, O my God, by Thy most exalted Word which Thou hast ordained as the Divine Elixir unto all who are in Thy realm, the Elixir through whose potency the crude metal of human life hath been transmuted into purest gold, O Thou in Whose hands are both the visible and invisible kingdoms, to ordain that my choice be conformed to Thy choice and my wish to Thy wish, that I may be entirely content with that which Thou didst desire, and be wholly satisfied with what Thou didst destine for me by Thy bounteousness and favor. Potent art Thou to do as Thou willest. Thou, in very truth, art the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.

Prayers and Meditations, Bahá'u'lláh #38 XXXVIII [16]

<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/prayers-meditations/prayers-meditations.pdf?559735d0>

372. The vitality of men's belief in God is dying out in every land; nothing short of His wholesome medicine can ever restore it. The corrosion of ungodliness is eating into the vitals of human society; what else but the Elixir of His potent Revelation can cleanse and revive it? Is it within human power, O Hakím, to effect in the constituent elements of any of the minute and indivisible particles of matter so complete a transformation as to transmute it into purest gold? Perplexing and difficult as this may appear, the still

greater task of converting satanic strength into heavenly power is one that We have been empowered to accomplish. The Force capable of such a transformation transcendeth the potency of the Elixir itself. The Word of God, alone, can claim the distinction of being endowed with the capacity required for so great and far-reaching a change.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #94 XCIX) [61] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

373. Every divine Manifestation is the very life of the world, and the skilled physician of each ailing soul. The world of man is sick, and that competent Physician knoweth the cure, arising as He doth with teachings, counsels and admonishments that are the remedy for every pain, the healing balm to every wound. It is certain that the wise physician can diagnose his patient's needs at any season, and apply the cure. Wherefore, relate thou the Teachings of the Abhá Beauty to the urgent needs of this present day, and thou wilt see that they provide an instant remedy for the ailing body of the world. Indeed, they are the elixir that bringeth eternal health.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá #29 [24] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

374. The sanctified souls should ponder and meditate in their hearts regarding the methods of teaching. From the texts of the wondrous, heavenly Scriptures they should memorize phrases and passages bearing on various instances, so that in the course of their speech they may recite divine verses whenever the occasion demandeth it, inasmuch as these holy verses are the most potent elixir, the greatest and mightiest talisman. So potent is their influence that the hearer will have no cause for vacillation.

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh #13 [62] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/tablets-bahaullah/tablets-bahaullah.pdf?d1c53d82>

### **3.2.1.4 Common Faculty**



375. There are five outward material powers in man which are the means of perception—that is, five powers whereby man perceives material things. They are sight, which perceives sensible forms; hearing, which perceives audible sounds; smell, which perceives odours; taste, which perceives edible things; and touch, which is distributed throughout the body and which perceives tactile realities. These five powers perceive external objects.

376. Man has likewise a number of spiritual powers: the power of imagination, which forms a mental image of things; thought, which reflects upon the realities of things; comprehension, which understands these realities; and memory, which retains whatever man has imagined, thought, and understood. The intermediary between these five outward powers and the inward powers is a common faculty, a sense which mediates between them and which conveys to the inward powers whatever the outward powers

have perceived. It is termed the common faculty as it is shared in common between the outward and inward powers.

377. The outward powers are five: the power of sight, of hearing, of taste, of smell, and of touch. The inward powers are also five: the common faculty and the powers of imagination, thought, comprehension, and memory.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #56 [76]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

378. There are in the world of humanity three degrees; those of the body, the soul, and spirit.
379. The body is the physical or animal degree of man. From the bodily point of view man is a sharer of the animal kingdom. The bodies alike of men and animals are composed of elements held together by the law of attraction.
380. Like the animal, man possesses the faculties of the senses, is subject to heat, cold, hunger, thirst, etc.; unlike the animal, man has a rational soul, the human intelligence.
381. This intelligence of man is the intermediary between his body and his spirit.
382. When man allows the spirit, through his soul, to enlighten his understanding, then does he contain all Creation; because man, being the culmination of all that went before and thus superior to all previous evolutions, contains all the lower world within himself. Illumined by the spirit through the instrumentality of the soul, man's radiant intelligence makes him the crowning-point of Creation.

Paris Talks, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #31 [33] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/paris-talks/paris-talks.pdf?1209cacc>

383. Thus it is certain that in man there is a reality which is not the physical body.
384. This other and inner reality is called the heavenly body, the ethereal form which corresponds to this body. This is the conscious reality which discovers the inner meaning of things, for the outer body of man does not discover anything. The inner ethereal reality grasps the mysteries of existence, discovers scientific truths and indicates their technical application.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #139 [263]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/promulgation-universal>

### 3.3 Spiritual Kingdom



385. As to thy question concerning the worlds of God. Know thou of a truth that the worlds of God are countless in their number, and infinite in their range. None can reckon or comprehend them except God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Consider thy state when asleep. Verily, I say, this phenomenon is the most mysterious of the signs of God amongst men, were they to ponder it in their hearts. Behold how the thing which thou

hast seen in thy dream is, after a considerable lapse of time, fully realized. Had the world in which thou didst find thyself in thy dream been identical with the world in which thou livest, it would have been necessary for the event occurring in that dream to have transpired in this world at the very moment of its occurrence. Were it so, you yourself would have borne witness unto it. This being not the case, however, it must necessarily follow that the world in which thou livest is different and apart from that which thou hast experienced in thy dream. This latter world hath neither beginning nor end. It would be true if thou wert to contend that this same world is, as decreed by the All-Glorious and Almighty God, within thy proper self and is wrapped up within thee. It would equally be true to maintain that thy spirit, having transcended the limitations of sleep and having stripped itself of all earthly attachment, hath, by the act of God, been made to traverse a realm which lieth hidden in the innermost reality of this world. Verily I say, the creation of God embraceth worlds besides this world, and creatures apart from these creatures. In each of these worlds He hath ordained things which none can search except Himself, the All-Searching, the All-Wise. Do thou meditate on that which We have revealed unto thee, that thou mayest discover the purpose of God, thy Lord, and the Lord of all worlds. In these words the mysteries of Divine Wisdom have been treasured.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #79 LXXIX [46] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?950566>

386. ... the souls of the children of the Kingdom, after their separation from the body, ascend unto the realm of everlasting life. But if ye ask as to the place, know ye that the world of existence is a single world, although its stations are various and distinct.
387. In the same way, the denizens of this earth are completely unaware of the world of the Kingdom and deny the existence thereof. They ask, for example: 'Where is the Kingdom? Where is the Lord of the Kingdom?' These people are even as the mineral and the vegetable, who know nothing whatever of the animal and the human realm; they see it not; they find it not. Yet the mineral and vegetable, the animal and man, are all living here together in this world of existence.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá #163 [78] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha.pdf?91a0669b>

388. To man, the Essence of God is incomprehensible, so also are the worlds beyond this, and their condition. It is given to man to obtain knowledge, to attain to great spiritual perfection, to discover hidden truths and to manifest even the attributes of God; but still man cannot comprehend the Essence of God. Where the ever-widening circle of man's knowledge meets the spiritual world a Manifestation of God is sent to mirror forth His splendour.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London [66] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_abdulbaha\\_london#66](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_abdulbaha_london#66)

389. Therefore, know thou that the True One possesseth invisible worlds which human meditation is unable to comprehend and the intellect of man hath no power to imagine. When thou wilt purify and clarify thy spiritual nostrils from every worldly moisture, then



thou wilt inhale the holy fragrances diffusing from the merciful gardens of these worlds.

Bahá'í World Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Ch 8, p. 393 [Reincarnation]  
<http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bwf/bwf8.html>

390. Rain down, then, upon us, O my God, that which beseemeth Thy grace and befitteth Thy bounty. Enable us, then, O my God, to live in remembrance of Thee and to die in love of Thee, and supply us with the gift of Thy presence in Thy worlds hereafter—worlds which are inscrutable to all except Thee.

Prayers and Meditations, Baha'u'llah #85 LXXXV [43]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/prayers-meditations/prayers-meditations.pdf?559735do>

391. Verily I say, the human soul is exalted above all egress and regress. It is still, and yet it soareth; it moveth, and yet it is still. It is, in itself, a testimony that beareth witness to the existence of a world that is contingent, as well as to the reality of a world that hath neither beginning nor end.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #82 LXXXII [49] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

392. The nature of the soul after death can never be described, nor is it meet and permissible to reveal its whole character to the eyes of men. The Prophets and Messengers of God have been sent down for the sole purpose of guiding mankind to the straight Path of Truth. The purpose underlying Their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High. The light which these souls radiate is responsible for the progress of the world and the advancement of its peoples. They are like unto leaven which leaveneth the world of being, and constitute the animating force through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest. Through them the clouds rain their bounty upon men, and the earth bringeth forth its fruits. All things must needs have a cause, a motive power, an animating principle. These souls and symbols of detachment have provided, and will continue to provide, the supreme moving impulse in the world of being. The world beyond is as different from this world as this world is different from that of the child while still in the womb of its mother. When the soul attaineth the Presence of God, it will assume the form that best befitteth its immortality and is worthy of its celestial habitation. Such an existence is a contingent and not an absolute existence, inasmuch as the former is preceded by a cause, whilst the latter is independent thereof.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #81 LXXXI [48] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

393. O Companion of My Throne!

Live then the days of thy life, that are less than a fleeting moment, with thy mind stainless,

thy heart unsullied, thy thoughts pure, and thy nature sanctified, so that, free and content, thou mayest put away this mortal frame, and repair unto the mystic paradise and abide in the eternal kingdom forevermore.

Hidden Words of Baha'u'llah #44 [13] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/hidden-words/hidden-words.pdf?6of21077>

394. How does one look forward to the goal of any journey? With hope and with expectation. It is even so with the end of this earthly journey. In the next world, man will find himself freed from many of the disabilities under which he now suffers. Those who have passed on through death, have a sphere of their own. It is not removed from ours; their work, the work of the Kingdom, is ours; but it is sanctified from what we call 'time and place.' Time with us is measured by the sun. When there is no more sunrise, and no more sunset, that kind of time does not exist for man. Those who have ascended have different attributes from those who are still on earth, yet there is no real separation.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London [96] [http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha\\_abdulbaha\\_london#96](http://bahai-library.com/abdulbaha_abdulbaha_london#96)

395. This phenomenal world will not remain in an unchanging condition even for a short while. Second after second it undergoes change and transformation. Every foundation will finally become collapsed; every glory and splendor will at last vanish and disappear, but the Kingdom of God is eternal and the heavenly sovereignty and majesty will stand firm, everlasting. Hence in the estimation of a wise man the mat in the Kingdom of God is preferable to the throne of the government of the world.

Tablets of the Divine Plan, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #11 [19]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/tablets-divine-plan/tablets-divine-plan.pdf?c1e421ab>

396. As to the question whether the souls will recognize each other in the spiritual world: This (fact) is certain; for the Kingdom is the world of vision (i.e., things are visible in it), where all the concealed realities will become disclosed. How much more the well-known souls will become manifest. The mysteries of which man is heedless in this earthly world, those will he discover in the heavenly world, and there will he be informed of the secret of truth; how much more will he recognize or discover persons with whom he hath been associated. Undoubtedly, the holy souls who find a pure eye and are favored with insight will, in the kingdom of lights, be acquainted with all mysteries, and will seek the bounty of witnessing the reality of every great soul. Even they will manifestly behold the Beauty of God in that world. Likewise will they find all the friends of God, both those of the former and recent times, present in the heavenly assemblage.

Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá [205] <http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/tab/1.html#205>

### 3.3.1.1 Grades in the Spiritual Kingdom



397. Therefore, know thou that the True One possesseth invisible worlds which human meditation is unable to comprehend and the intellect of man hath no power to imagine. When thou wilt purify and clarify thy spiritual nostrils from every worldly moisture, then thou wilt inhale the holy fragrances diffusing from the merciful gardens of these worlds.

Bahá'í World Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [Chapter 8 p.393] <http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bwf/bwf8.html>

398. God hath, at all times and under all conditions, been wholly independent of His creatures. He hath cherished and will ever cherish the desire that all men may attain His gardens of Paradise with utmost love...

Selections from the writings of the Bab #3 [27]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-bab/selections-writings-bab/selections-writings-bab.pdf?40a466b1>

399. As to those that have tasted of the fruit of man's earthly existence, which is the recognition of the one true God, exalted be His glory, their life hereafter is such as We are unable to describe. The knowledge thereof is with God, alone, the Lord of all worlds.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #165 CLXV [105] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

400. Thou shalt, after thy departure, discover what We have revealed unto thee, and shalt find all thy doings recorded in the Book wherein the works of all them that dwell on earth, be they greater or less than the weight of an atom, are noted down.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #113 CXIII [69] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

401. These are they who are glorified by the Concourse on high and the denizens of the Cities of eternity.

Prayers and Meditations, Baha'u'llah #179 CLXXIX [90]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/prayers-meditations/prayers-meditations.pdf?559735d0>

402. As to Paradise: It is a reality and there can be no doubt about it, and now in this world it is realized through love of Me and My good-pleasure. Whosoever attaineth unto it God will aid him in this world below, and after death He will enable him to gain admittance into Paradise whose vastness is as that of heaven and earth.

Tablets of Baha'u'llah #12 [60] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah.pdf?d1c53d82>

403. And now concerning thy question whether human souls continue to be conscious one of another after their separation from the body. Know thou that the souls of the people of Bahá, who have entered and been established within the Crimson Ark, shall associate and commune intimately one with another, and shall be so closely associated in their lives, their aspirations, their aims and strivings as to be even as one soul.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #86 LXXXVI [52] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

404. As to the worlds whereunto Christ (unto whom be Glory) referred: They are spiritual, divine, heavenly, single, unlocated—souls know them. But, verily, the sight of the people of the Kingdom of El-Abhá perceives them, and the intellect of the people of the Supreme Concourse apprehends them.

Bahá'í Scriptures, 'Abdu'l-Bahá [445] <http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai.scriptsures/>

### 3.3.1.2 Highest attainable point



405. O My servants! Sorrow not if, in these days and on this earthly plane, things contrary to your wishes have been ordained and manifested by God, for days of blissful joy, of heavenly delight, are assuredly in store for you. Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious, will be unveiled to your eyes. You are destined by Him, in this world and hereafter, to partake of their benefits, to share in their joys, and to obtain a portion of their sustaining grace. To each and every one of them you will, no doubt, attain.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #153 CLIII [100] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah/gleanings-writings-bahauallah.pdf?95055661>

406. Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! Thou hast, in Thine all highest Paradise, assigned unto Thy servants such stations that if any one of them were to be unveiled to men's eyes all who are in heaven and all who are on earth would be dumbfounded.

Prayers and Meditations, Baha'u'llah #123 CXXIII [61]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/prayers-meditations/prayers-meditations.pdf?559735d0>

407. Just as the conception of faith hath existed from the beginning that hath no beginning, and will endure till the end that hath no end, in like manner will the true believer eternally live and endure. His spirit will everlastingly circle round the Will of God. He will last as long as God, Himself, will last. He is revealed through the Revelation of God, and is hidden at His bidding. It is evident that the loftiest mansions in the Realm of Immortality have been ordained as the habitation of them that have truly believed in God and in His signs. Death can never invade that holy seat. Thus have We entrusted thee with the signs of Thy Lord, that thou mayest persevere in thy love for Him, and be of

them that comprehend this truth.

Gleanings, Baha'u'llah #73 LXXIII [43] <http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah/gleanings-writings-bahaullah.pdf?95055661>

408. As the grace of God is limitless, so too are the perfections of man. If it were possible for the reality of anything to reach the very summit of perfection, then it would become independent of God and the contingent reality would attain to the station of the necessary reality. But every created thing has been assigned a degree which it can in no wise overpass. So he who occupies the degree of servitude, no matter how far he may progress and acquire endless perfections, can never reach the degree of divine Lordship. The same holds true of all other created things.

409. As the spirit of man lives forever after casting off this elemental frame, it is, like all existing things, undoubtedly capable of progress, and thus one may pray for a departed soul to advance, to be forgiven, or to be made the recipient of divine favours, bounties, and grace.

Some Answered Questions, 'Abdu'l-Bahá #62 [83]  
<http://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/some-answered-questions/some-answered-questions.pdf?c234c232>

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### Revision History

2017-03-10 Completed.

Pending: In future, as reference materials are relocated from bahai-library.com to bahai.org/library, updating of links will be required.

2022-12-12 Duplicated texts removed and all links updated.