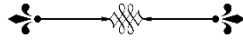


Feast of Asmá' (Names)

1



Praise be Thou, O Lord my God! I implore Thee, by Thy Most Great Name through Which Thou didst stir up Thy servants and build up Thy cities, and by Thy most excellent titles, and Thy most august attributes, to assist Thy people to turn in the direction of Thy manifold bounties, and set their faces towards the Tabernacle of Thy wisdom.

Heal Thou the sicknesses that have assailed the souls on every side, and have deterred them from directing their gaze towards the Paradise that lieth in the shelter of Thy shadowing Name, which Thou didst ordain to be the King of all names unto all who are in heaven and all who are on earth. Potent art Thou to do as pleaseth Thee. In Thy hands is the empire of all names. There is none other God but Thee, the Mighty, the Wise.

I am but a poor creature, O my Lord; I have clung to the hem of Thy riches. I am sore sick; I have held fast the cord of Thy healing. Deliver me from the ills that have encircled me, and wash me thoroughly with the waters of Thy graciousness and mercy, and attire me with the raiment of wholesomeness, through Thy forgiveness and bounty. Fix, then, mine eyes upon Thee, and rid me of all attachment to aught else except Thyself. Aid me to do what Thou desirest, and to fulfil what Thou pleasest. Thou art truly the Lord of this life and of the next. Thou art, in truth, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations, §19)



Feast of Asmá' (Names)

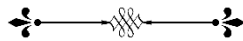
2



O Son of Spirit!

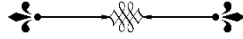
My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart, that thine may be a sovereignty ancient, imperishable and everlasting.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, Arabic no. 1)



Feast of Asmá' (Names)

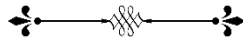
3



O Son of Man!

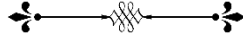
I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, Arabic no. 4)



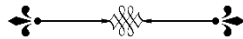
Feast of Asmá' (Names)

4



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 favour, so enduring a bounty.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, §27)



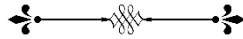
Feast of Asmá' (Names)

5



If Thou art sailing upon the sea of God's Names, which are reflected in all things, know thou that He is exalted and sanctified from being known through His creatures, or being described by His servants. Everything thou beholdest hath been called into being through the operation of His Will. How can such a created thing, therefore, be indicative of His essential oneness? God's existence in itself testifieth to His Own oneness, while every created thing, by its very nature, beareth evidence that it hath been fashioned by God. Such is the proof of consummate wisdom in the estimation of those who sail the ocean of divine Truth.

(The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, Excerpts from the Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih
[The Seven Proofs] §4.10.3)



Feast of Asmá' (Names)

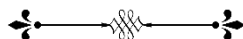
6



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. If there were none to provide for, we could not think of the Provider. If there were no life, the Living would be beyond the power of conception. Therefore, all the names and attributes of God require the existence of objects or creatures upon which they have been bestowed and in which they have become manifest. If there was a time when no creation existed, when there was none to provide for, it would imply a time when there was no existent One, no Trainer, and the attributes and qualities of God would have been meaningless and without significance.

Therefore, the requirements of the attributes of God do not admit of cessation or interruption, for the names of God are actually and forever existing and not potential. Because they convey life, they are called Life-giving; because they provide, they are called Bountiful, the Provider; because they create, they are called Creator; because they educate and govern, the name Lord God is applied. That is to say, the divine names emanate from the eternal attributes of Divinity. Therefore, it is proved that the divine names presuppose the existence of objects or beings.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a talk given at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York, 5 July 1912, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, §79.4)



Feast of Asmá' (Names)

7



But the question may be asked: How shall we know God? We know Him by His attributes. We know Him by His signs. We know Him by His names. We know not what the reality of the sun is, but we know the sun by the ray, by the heat, by its efficacy and penetration. We recognize the sun by its bounty and effulgence, but as to what constitutes the reality of the solar energy, that is unknowable to us. The attributes characterizing the sun, however, are knowable. If we wish to come in touch with the reality of Divinity, we do so by recognizing its phenomena, its attributes and traces, which are widespread in the universe.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from a talk given at 1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C, on 10 November 1912, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, §125.3)



Feast of Asmá' (Names)

8



Furthermore, the reality of Divinity is characterized by certain names and attributes. Among these names are Creator, Resuscitator, Provider, the All-Present, Almighty, Omniscient and Giver. These names and attributes of Divinity are eternal and not accidental. This is a very subtle point which demands close attention.

Their existence is proved and necessitated by the appearance of phenomena. For example, Creator presupposes creation, Resuscitator implies resuscitation, Provider necessitates provision; otherwise, these would be empty and impossible names. Merciful evidences an object upon which mercy is bestowed. If mercy were not manifest, this attribute of God would not be realized. The name Lord proves the existence of subjects over whom sovereignty is exercised. The name Omniscient demands the objects of all-knowing. Unless these objects existed, omniscience would be meaningless and without function.

The name the Wise necessitates objects for the exercise of wisdom; and unless wisdom comprehended them, this name would be inconceivable. Therefore, the divine names and attributes presuppose the existence of phenomena implied by those names and attributes. And vice versa - the sovereignty of God is proved and established through their verity and being.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from a talk given at Green Acre, D.C, on 17 August 1912, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, §93.7)



Feast of Asmá' (Names)

9



I swear by Thy glory, O my God! Every time I muse on Thy glory and Thy sovereignty I find myself as the most guilty among them that have transgressed against Thee in Thy realm, and every time I contemplate the heights in which none except Thee can abide, I discover that I am the most sinful of all the creatures that dwell in Thy land. Had it not been for Thy name, the Concealer, and for Thy name, the Ever-Forgiving, and for the sweet savours of Thy name, the Most Merciful, all Thy chosen ones had been reckoned amongst the perverse and the wicked.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations, §44.6)



Friends are welcome to say or chant a prayer of their choice

