



The Seven Valleys **of** **Bahá'u'lláh**

Reformation of Mysticism
&
Outline of Bahá'í Theology

Sohrab Kourosch



Introduction

The Nature of Bahá'í Faith

Shoghi Effendi stated that:

The Bahá'í Faith, like all other Divine religions, is thus **fundamentally mystic*** in character. Its chief goal is the development of the individual and society through the acquisition of spiritual virtues and powers.

The Seven Valleys

Shoghi Effendi characterized *The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh* as:

“[A] treatise that may well be regarded as His [Bahá'u'lláh's] greatest mystical* composition.”

Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, 140

*Mysticism?

- A religious practice based on the belief that knowledge of spiritual truth can be gained by praying or thinking deeply
- The experience of mystical union or direct communion with ultimate reality reported by mystics.
- The belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (as intuition or insight).
- A theory postulating the possibility of direct and intuitive acquisition of ineffable knowledge or power.

(See <http://www.merriam-webster.com>.)

*Mystical?

- ❖ immediate consciousness of the transcendent or ultimate reality or God
- ❖ belief in the existence of realities beyond perceptual or intellectual apprehension that is central to being and directly accessible by subjective experience
- ❖ pursuit of communion with ultimate reality through direct experience, intuition, or insight
- ❖ engagement in practices that nurture direct experience
- ❖ pursuit of inner awakening and enlightenment, an inward journey from separation to unity with beloved

*Mystical?

Evelyn Underhill, claimed by some to be the foremost authority on mysticism in the English-speaking world, in her 500-page book on mysticism, defined mysticism as the methodology and practice for “transition from the life of sense to the life of spirit.”

She states:

*Mystical?

“Mysticism is seen to be a highly specialized form of that search for reality, for heightened and completed life, which we have found to be a constant characteristic of the human consciousness. It is largely prosecuted by that “spiritual spark,” that transcendental faculty which, though the life of our life, remains below the threshold in ordinary man. Emerging from its hiddenness in the mystic, it gradually becomes the dominant factor in his life.”

(Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness* pp. 82–93)

Station of *The Seven Valleys*

Regarding the station of *The Seven Valleys* among the Writings of Bahá' u' lláh, Shoghi Effendi states:

“To these two outstanding contributions to the world’s religious literature,... was added, during that same period, a treatise that may well be regarded as His greatest mystical composition, designated as the “Seven Valleys,” .., in which He describes the seven stages which the soul of the seeker must needs traverse ere it can attain the object of its existence.”

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, 140)

Station of *The Seven Valleys*

The Seven Valleys is among the early writings of Bahá'u'lláh. There are indications that it might possibly be the first of the major writings of Bahá'u'lláh during the Baghdad period together with the Hidden Words and the Kitáb-i-Íqán. It is the best known of the mystical writings of Bahá'u'lláh, followed by the “Four Valleys” and “Gems of Divine Mysteries”.



Style of *The Seven Valleys*

Bahá'u'lláh's writings are characterized by different forms and styles, each suitable for the content and purpose of its revelation. If a Tablet or treatise was addressed to a particular person or a special cultural group, cultural particularities and language of that person or group were taken in consideration.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

In this respect Bahá'u'lláh' states:

At one time We spoke in the language of the lawgiver; at another in that of the truth-seeker and the mystic, and yet Our supreme purpose and highest wish hath always been to disclose the glory and sublimity of this station.

(Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, 15)

Revelation of *The Seven Valleys*

The Seven Valleys (Haft Vadi, هفت وادی) was revealed after Bahá'u'lláh's return from Sulaymáníyyih to Baghdád in March 1856 (the exact date is not known) in response to questions of Shaykh Muhyi'd-Dín the *Qáđí* (Judge) of Kháníqayn, who was the spiritual leader of the Qadíriyyih Order of Şúfís (Islamic mystics) in Kurdistán.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

It is in Persian language (except for the five paragraphs of the preamble, which are in Arabic) and in mystical style, using the contemporary mystical and allegorical terminology and quoting Qur'án verses, Islamic traditions (Aḥádith) and poems from the Persian and Arab mystical poets.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

The Seven Valleys was originally called “Risáliy-i-Sulúk”, which means “The Treatise on Treading the Path.” But sometime after its revelation, possibly because of the subject matter and Bahá’u’lláh’s statement in the book:

“The stages that mark the wayfarer’s journey from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland are said to be seven. Some have called these Seven Valleys, and others, Seven Cities.”

it became known as the Seven Valleys.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

The names of the seven valleys that are mentioned in this book originally come from an epic poem of Farídu'd-Dín 'Aṭṭár, called "*Mantiqul Ṭayr*". The name of 'Aṭṭár's book has been rendered into English as *Speech of the Birds*, *Conference of the Birds*, *Language of the Birds*, or *Dialogue of the Birds*.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

In mystic symbolism, birds represented souls who were able to rise above the material realm, or the abode of dust, and fly in the heaven of mystic knowledge, speaking a language that ordinary people did not understand. This mystical and often poetic language was symbolically referred to as the language or speech of birds.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

In his poem book *Mantiqu'l Tayr*, 'Attār presents the story of the journey of a group of birds that decided to go in search of the Phoenix, which in Persian is called *símurgh*. The leader of these birds was *Hudhud*, the Lapwing, the messenger of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (see *The Qur'án* 27:18).

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

Originally a great number of birds started on this journey and passed through seven valleys. In passing through each valley, a number of birds perished or left the group and dropped out of the search. At the end, after they crossed the last valley and reached to the abode of the *símurgh* (Phoenix), only thirty birds remained.

Style of *The Seven Valleys*

In Persian, *sí* means thirty and *murgh* means bird; hence, *sí murgh* is a pun in Persian, as it means both “thirty birds” and “Phoenix.” At this point, the thirty birds realized that the Phoenix they were seeking was, in reality, the reflection or manifestation of the object of their quest in their united, collective soul.

The Names of The Seven Valleys

1. The Valley of Search (وادی طلب)
2. The Valley of Love (وادی عشق)
3. The Valley of Knowledge (فتمعر وادی)
4. The Valley of Unity (وادی توحید)
5. The Valley of Contentment (وادی استغنا)
6. The Valley of Wonderment (وادی حیرت)
7. The Valley of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness (وادی فقر حقیقی و فنای اصلی)

The Names of The Seven Valleys

‘Aṭṭár’s names of the valleys, the stages of the wayfarer’s journey along the spiritual path, were possibly adopted by Bahá’u’lláh as the starting point for discourse because of the recipient’s familiarity with, or the relevance of the recipient’s questions to, ‘Aṭṭár’s works.

Translation of *The Seven Valleys*

The Seven Valleys was translated into English by Marzieh Gail in consultation with her father, Alí-Kuli Khan Nabil-al-Douleh. The publication date of the first English translation was 1945. The second edition of *The Seven Valleys* published in 1968 and 1975 by the US Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

The Subject Matter of *The Seven Valleys*

The Seven Valleys is generally considered as:

- A complex Mystical Treatise guiding the wayfarers in treading the path of spirituality

But it also contains:

- An outline of the Bahá'í theology and,
- Fundamental Concepts for Reformation of Mysticism

The Subject Matter of *The Seven Valleys*

While employing the mystical language,

- ❖ Bahá'u'lláh reforms mysticism by redefining the goal and the path of mystical wayfaring,
- ❖ Describes many theological concepts and provides an outline of the fundamental principles of the Bahá'í theology, some of which were unprecedented in the history of the religious discourse.

The Unprecedented Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

- ❖ The absolute transcendence of God, inaccessible to and exalted above the comprehension of all created things, even the Manifestations of God.
- ❖ The Manifestation of God is the ultimate goal of mystical and spiritual quest.
- ❖ The Manifestation of God is the Godhead in the human world and the world of creation.

The Unprecedented Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

- ❖ The Manifestation of God must be recognized by His own self.
- ❖ The unity of the essence of all Manifestations of God, which are the appearances of the Primal Will in the world at different times and under different names.
- ❖ The relativity of the stations of firstness and lastness of all Manifestations of God.

The Unprecedented Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

- ❖ The continuity and progressive process of Divine revelation and the relativity of the religious truth.
- ❖ The notion that following religious precepts and treading the mystical path, which were traditionally considered as separate and incompatible ways to search for truth, are not only compatible but must be harmonized in the spiritual quest for truth.
- ❖ Allusions to His own divine station.

The Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

- ❖ The absolute transcendence of God, inaccessible to and exalted above the comprehension of all created things, even the Manifestations of God.

For God is, in His Essence, holy above ascent and descent, entrance and exit; He hath through all eternity been free of the attributes of human creatures, and ever will remain so. No man hath ever known Him; no soul hath ever found the pathway to His Being. Every mystic knower hath wandered far astray in the valley of the knowledge of Him; every saint hath lost his way in seeking to comprehend His Essence. Sanctified is He above the understanding of the wise; exalted is He above the knowledge of the knowing!

(Baha'u'llah, The Seven Valleys, Paragraph 57, p. 22)

The Theological Concepts

In

The Seven Valleys

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!"

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, XXVI, pp. 60–64)

The Theological Concepts

In

The Seven Valleys

To indicate that even the Manifestations of God do not comprehend God, He in The Seven Valleys stated:

How can utter nothingness gallop its steed in the field of preexistence, or a fleeting shadow reach to the everlasting sun? The Friend hath said, “But for Thee, we had not known Thee,” and the Beloved hath said, “nor attained Thy presence.”

(Baha'u'llah, The Seven Valleys, Paragraph 58, p. 23)

The Theological Concepts

In

The Seven Valleys

The above statement can be viewed as:

*How can utter nothingness gallop its steed in the field of preexistence, or a fleeting shadow reach to the everlasting sun? The Friend or the Lord of 'But for Thee (Habíb-i-Lawlák) said, "we had not known Thee," and the Beloved (of O'Adná) hath said, "nor attained Thy presence."**

* The text in Italics is this author's understanding and translation of this statement in original Persian

The Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

The following concepts are all presented in the first paragraph of The Seven Valleys:

- ❖ The Manifestation of God is the ultimate goal of mystical and spiritual quest.
- ❖ The Manifestation of God is the Godhead in the human world and the world of creation.
- ❖ The Manifestation of God must be recognized by His own self.

The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh

The First Paragraph

Praise be to God Who hath made being to come forth from nothingness; graven upon the tablet of man the secrets of preexistence; taught him from the mysteries of divine utterance that which he knew not; made him a Luminous Book unto those who believed and surrendered themselves; caused him to witness the creation of all things (Kullu Shay') in this black and ruinous age, and to speak forth from the apex of eternity with a wondrous voice in the Excellent Temple: to the end that every man may testify, in himself, by himself, in the station of the Manifestation of his Lord, that verily there is no God save Him, and that every man may thereby win his way to the summit of realities,

(Baha'u'llah, The Seven Valleys, p. 1)

The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh

The First Paragraph

*Praise be to God Who hath made being to come forth from nothingness; graven upon the tablet of **Man** the secrets of preexistence; taught **Him** from the mysteries of divine utterance that which **He** knew not; made **Him** a Luminous Book unto those who believed and surrendered themselves; caused **Him** to witness the creation of all things (Kullu Shay') in this black and ruinous age, and to speak forth from the apex of eternity with a wondrous voice in the Excellent Temple: to the end that **all will witness in Him, by His own self**, in the station of the Manifestation of **His** Lord, that verily there is no God save Him, and that **all** may thereby win **their** way to the summit of realities. (the parts shown in green are based on this author's understanding of the original text)*

The Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

- ❖ The unity of the essence of all Manifestations of God, which are the appearances of the Primal Will in the world at different times and under different names.

And I praise and glorify the first sea which hath branched from the ocean of the Divine Essence, and the first morn which hath glowed from the Horizon of Oneness, and the first sun which hath risen in the Heaven of Eternity, and the first fire which was lit from the Lamp of Preexistence in the lantern of singleness, He who was Aḥmad in the kingdom of the exalted ones, and Muḥammad amongst the concourse of the near ones, and Maḥmúd in the realm of the sincere ones.

(Baha'u'llah, The Seven Valleys, p. 1)

The Theological Concepts In The Seven Valleys

- ❖ The relativity of the stations of firstness and lastness of all Manifestations of God.

He is the first and the last, the Seen and the Hidden.

- ❖ The continuity and progressive process of Divine revelation and the relativity of the religious truth.

though the grace of the All-Bounteous One is never stilled and never ceasing, yet to each time and era a portion is allotted and a bounty set apart, this in a given measure.

Reformation of Mysticism

Practical mysticism has been historically defined and understood as the way of life and practice which was aimed at enabling a person to experience direct communion and eventual union with God and that this union can be attained through subjective experience. Mystical experience was also defined as immediate consciousness of the transcendent or ultimate reality or God, pursuit of union with God through direct experience and engagement in practices that nurture direct experience.

Reformation of Mysticism

Mystics were found in every religion and every part of the world, but under the teachings and influence of Islam, the mystic way of thought and practice—referred to as *ṭarīqat*, which means “the Path” or “the spiritual discipline” for finding and becoming one with Truth (God)—found a more defined form. Ascetic mystic Muslims were called Ṣūfīs

Reformation of Mysticism

The preferred or customary procedure was to separate from the society, live as a mendicant or go into seclusion and lead an anchoritic life style while treading the path by following, imitating and emulating a spiritual leader, preferably in a Şúfí monastery, to become one with God by achieving the state of annihilation or nothingness (*faná*) and total absorption into God through meditation, contemplation, and ecstasy (*vajd*).

Reformation of Mysticism

The prevailing attitude was that ṭaríqat (treading the path) takes the mystic to a level that he does not need to comply with Sharí‘at, or religious laws. Some Şúfis came to believe that following the Sharí‘at would prevent them from advancing on the Ṭaríqat (the mystic path), to achieve the Truth (*ḥaqíqat*) and becoming one with God (*vuşúl bih ḥaqíqat*).

Reformation of Mysticism

Bahá'u'lláh did not denounce or reject mysticism, but reformed it by redefining its goal and its path. He confirmed and promoted mystical approach to religion that is based on the notion and belief that knowledge of religious truth, acquisition of spiritual virtues, personal spiritual development and “transition from the life of sense to the life of spirit” can be gained and accomplished by prayer, study and meditation on the revealed words.

Shoghi Effendi stated that: “The Bahá'í Faith, like all other Divine religions, is thus fundamentally mystic in character. Its chief goal is the development of the individual and society through the acquisition of spiritual virtues and powers.” (Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, 87)

Reformation of Mysticism

In the Seven Valleys, Bahá'u'lláh demonstrated that the concept of human beings becoming one with God is the result of vain imagination and as mentioned above, affirmed:

- The absolute transcendence of God who is inaccessible to and exalted above the comprehension of all created things, even the Manifestations of God.
- That Manifestation of God is the ultimate goal of mystical and spiritual quest.
- That Manifestation of God is the Godhead in the human world and the world of creation.

Reformation of Mysticism

He redefined the Ṭaríqat (the mystic path) by stating that the wayfarer must turn away from seclusion and anchoritic life and imitating the leaders and go in search for the beloved (truth):

It is incumbent on these servants that they cleanse the heart -- which is the wellspring of divine treasures -- from every marking, and that they turn away from imitation, which is following the traces of their forefathers and sires.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, p. 5)

Reformation of Mysticism

- **O My Brother, journey upon these planes in the spirit of search, not in blind imitation.**

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, p. 24)

- **On this journey the traveler abideth in every land and dwelleth in every region. In every face, he seeketh the beauty of the Friend; in every country he looketh for the Beloved. He joineth every company, and seeketh fellowship with every soul, that haply in some mind he may uncover the secret of the Friend, or in some face he may behold the beauty of the Loved One.**

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, p. 7)

Reformation of Mysticism

He indicates that at this time and the present age, with the appearance of the Manifestation of God, to search for truth and to tread the mystic path, one is not in need of a lamp (Şúfí leader):

At this hour the morn of knowledge hath arisen and the lamps of wayfaring and wandering are quenched.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, p. 7)

Reformation of Mysticism

To tread the mystical path, instead of following a Şúfí leader (Master) in a Şúfí monastery, a wayfarer can find the Truth by dwelling within the shadow of the tree of knowledge, i.e., recognizing the Manifestation of God, study and meditate on His Revelation.

Now forget them all, that thou mayest learn from the Master of Love in the **schoolhouse of oneness**, and return unto God, and forsake the **inner land of unreality** for thy true station, and dwell within the shadow of the tree of knowledge.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, paragraph. 72)

Reformation of Mysticism

The notion that following religious precepts and treading the mystical path, which were traditionally considered as separate and incompatible ways to search for truth, are not only compatible but must be harmonized in the spiritual quest for truth.

In all these journeys the traveler must stray not the breadth of a hair from the "Law," for this is indeed the secret of the "Path" and the fruit of the Tree of "Truth"; and in all these stages he must cling to the robe of obedience to the commandments, and hold fast to the cord of shunning all forbidden things, that he may be nourished from the cup of the Law and informed of the mysteries of Truth.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, p. 39)

Bahá'u'lláh's allusions to His own divine station

In The Seven Valleys, Bahá'u'lláh makes several allusions to His own divine station.

I therefore reveal unto thee sacred and resplendent tokens from the planes of glory, to attract thee into the court of holiness and nearness and beauty, and draw thee to a station wherein thou shalt see nothing in creation save the Face of thy Beloved One, the Honored, and behold all created things only as in the day wherein none hath a mention

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, paragraph. 3)

Bahá'u'lláh's allusions to His own divine station

There is many an utterance of the mystic seers and doctors of former times which I have not mentioned here, since I mislike the copious citation from sayings of the past; for quotation from the words of others proveth acquired learning, not the divine bestowal. Even so much as We have quoted here is out of deference to the wont of men and after the manner of the friends. Further, such matters are beyond the scope of this epistle. Our unwillingness to recount their sayings is not from pride, rather is it a manifestation of wisdom and a demonstration of grace.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, p. 25)

The Study Of The Seven Valleys

Shoghi Effendi stated that in *The Seven Valleys* Bahá'u'lláh “**describes the seven stages which the soul of the seeker must needs traverse ere it can attain the object of its existence.**”

This indicates that whoever is interested in attaining the objects of its existence can get help in this process by reading and studying *The Seven Valleys*.

What is the Purpose of Reading of The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh

As Bahá'u'lláh stated in *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*:
“[I]n every age, the reading of the scriptures and holy books is for no other purpose except to enable the reader to apprehend their meaning and unravel their innermost mysteries. Otherwise reading, with no understanding, is of no abiding profit unto man.”

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán* (The Book of Certitude), 172

Study of The Seven Valleys

Due to the fact that The Seven Valleys contains many references to mystical concepts, the Qur'án, and Islamic theology and the fact that there are problems with the current English translation, study of The Seven Valleys presents a challenge.

Study of The Seven Valleys

The approximate rendering of the text in some parts of the current English translation, combined with the complexity of the subject matter and unfamiliarity with the mystical and historical references cause confusion and misunderstanding for some of the readers that rely solely on the English translation.

Study of The Seven Valleys

The seven valleys are the conditions of the wayfarer's soul. These are not solid or rigid stages. Bahá'u'lláh stated that the purpose of the revelation of The Seven Valleys was to provide the guidance for wayfarer to traverse through these seven conditions by moving:

Study of The Seven Valleys

“from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland” to take “leave of self, and ... reach to the ocean of nearness and union”, to attract the wayfarer “into the court of holiness and nearness and beauty”, and “from the earthly homeland to the first, heavenly abode in the Center of Realities.”

Study of The Seven Valleys

This journey starts when the wayfarer takes the “journey from the plane of heedlessness into the realm of being”. The plane of heedlessness is a place wherein the people are unaware of their own condition, are complacent and self-satisfied, and do not feel a need for search. Bahá’u’lláh describes the condition of those who are in the plane of heedlessness in the Hidden Words.

Study of The Seven Valleys

O YE THAT ARE LYING AS DEAD ON
THE COUCH OF HEEDLESSNESS!

Ages have passed and your precious
lives are well-nigh ended, yet not a
single breath of purity hath reached Our
court of holiness from you.....

(The Hidden Words, Persian No. 20)

Study of The Seven Valleys

As we saw Shoghi Effendi stated that Bahá'í Faith is fundamentally mystical in character, therefore we are all wayfarers treading the mystical path, taking this journey inward from separation and multiplicity to inner state of unity in presence of the beloved, as described by Bahá'u'lláh in The Hidden Words:

Study Of The Seven Valleys

O SON OF SPIRIT!

I created thee rich, why dost thou bring thyself down to poverty? Noble I made thee, wherewith dost thou abase thyself? ...Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting.

(Baha'u'llah, The Arabic Hidden Words)

Study of The Seven Valleys

The journey of the wayfarer in the Seven Valleys is the process of cleansing, purifying, and preparing the soul of man to be able to receive and recognize the Word of God and enter to the presence of the Manifestation of God in the City of His Revelation, thus achieving “that blessed and everlasting life that perisheth not.”

Study of The Seven Valleys

This is confirmed in a Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh, which defines achieving the goals of The Seven Valleys. A provisional translation of a part of that Tablet (by this author) is presented here:

[Y]ou have mentioned in your letter regarding the Risáliy-i-Sulúk, which was revealed in the Persian language. This treatise was revealed prior to the declaration in the vernacular of the people. The reason for its revelation was that a Sunni Muslim, who was both a mystic and a scholar, sent a letter to the **Most Holy Presence** in Iraq. Therefore, in accordance with divine wisdom, this treatise was revealed in the manner and style current among the people.

Study of The Seven Valleys

In this day, whoever has turned his face and directed his attention towards the **Most Sublime Horizon** and recognized the **Truth** has traversed the Seven Valleys or the seven stations and attained to all that is described therein, for, in this revelation, all vain imaginings and superstitions are discarded and destroyed. After recognizing the **Truth**, all are commanded to acquire beneficial knowledge and to abandon baseless traditions and superstitions. We beseech God to enable His servants to achieve to what He wills and desires for them from the wonders of His bounty, His generosity, and His favors. Verily, He is the Guardian of those who have turned unto Him and the Lord of those who are devoted to Him.

Extracts from a Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh, sent by His amanuenses in response to the questions of a believer, published in Vahid Rafati's *Yádnámiy-i-Misbáh-i-Munír* (Hofheim: Bahá'í-Verlag, 2006), pages 360 and 462.

Study of The Seven Valleys

But if as Shoghi Effendi stated, Bahá'u'lláh “describes the seven stages which the soul of **the seeker** must needs traverse ere it can attain the object of its existence” and if the Manifestation of God is the ultimate goal of mystical and spiritual quest, then as stated in the above Tablet, Bahá'ís who recognized Bahá'u'lláh have already traversed all the seven valleys. We might ask then why should the Bahá'ís study The Seven Valleys?

Study of The Seven Valleys

For answering this question, I first refer you to a part of a prayers from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

“O’ God, save us from the limited world and help us to gain admittance to your unbounded world, so that we tread in your path, seek after you and behold your beauty and perfection.”

Study of The Seven Valleys

Therefore, Bahá'ís are also seekers who desire to tread the path towards the beloved.

They traverse the Seven Valleys in hope of attaining to the object of their existence, the paradise of beholding His beauty and perfection.

Study of The Seven Valleys

What should Bahá'ís do after they traverse the Seven Valleys?

Hand of the Cause George
Townshend explains this in his
meditation on The Seven Valleys:

Study of The Seven Valleys

And when the Seven Valleys are traversed to the end; and the Goal is won and Thy Paradise attained, what will remain for any servant of Thine, but to begin his journey again and travel on and on through the infinitudes of wisdom and love, passing from light to fuller light, from Truth to further Truth, from Beauty to more perfect Beauty.

Bahá'í World, Vol. 7 (1936-1938), pp. 623-5.

Why This Book Was Written

In this regard the following statement by Shoghi Effendi regarding the English translation is noteworthy:

"Regarding your question concerning the passage in 'Seven Valleys' referring to pre-existence. This in no way presupposes the existence of the individual soul before conception. **The term has not been absolutely accurately translated.**"

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, January 5, 1948, Compilations, Lights of Guidance, p. 505)

The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh

- Importance and Station of
The Seven Valleys
- Translation of
The Seven Valleys
- Style and Subject Matter of
The Seven Valleys