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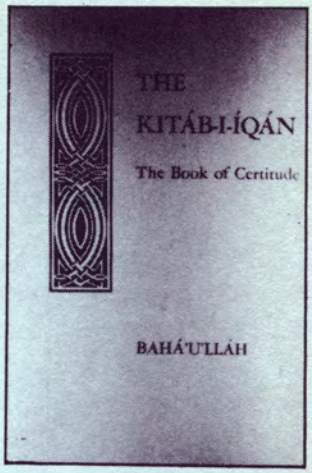

THE KITÁB-I-ÍQÁN

The Book of Certitude

A Study Guide
by Horace Holley

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A Study Guide

INTRODUCTION

In presenting his translation of The Kitáb-i-Íqán, Shoghi Effendi referred to the Íqán as "this book of unsurpassed preeminence among the writings of the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation."

Consideration of the scope of the work in the light of this description brings out how many are the themes which Bahá'u'lláh interwove in producing the truths whose mission is to give assurance and steadfastness to the soul of man in this age.

The Kitáb-i-Íqán is the key to the study of comparative religion, in establishing the oneness of all the successive Manifestations of God and Founders of an independent Religion. It reveals the unique function of the Manifestation, His return from age to age, and the reasons for the periodic rise and fall of religions.

The Íqán is the Christian's discovery of Islám, the point of union for Christian, Jew and Muḥammadan, and thereby the basis of union between East and West.

The Íqán discloses the mystery of man's search for God and attainment of meeting with Him. It interprets prophecy and symbol, ending the age of prophecy.

The Íqán upholds a conception of the Essence and Manifestation of God high above the realm of anthropomorphism and the corruption of the Ṣúfí, Hindu and "new thought" identification of self with God.

Through study and meditation on this sacred text, one becomes confirmed in his faith and acquires understanding through the Light shining above the clouds of prejudice, superstition and materialism which have so darkened the modern mind.

The Kitáb-i-Íqán is its own teacher and its own guide, as it is its own reward. The aim of the present outline is merely to assist individuals and groups in working out a helpful method of approach, by indicating some of the dominant themes and their references in the text. But the reverent attention of the student himself, and his determination to attain a first-hand knowledge of the Íqán, is the essential requisite.

I. THE PATH OF FAITH

A. They that tread the path of faith (3).
B. Consider the past (4-7).
C. The indignities heaped upon the Prophets of God (6-7).
-Noah (7-9).
-Hud (9).
-Ṣáliḥ (9-10).
-Abraham (10-11).
-Moses (11-12).
-Jesus (17-20).
D. Advent of every true Manifestation accompanied by strife (12-13).
E. Whatever in days gone by hath been the cause of the denial (13-14).
F. Leaders of religion have hindered their people (15-17).
G. The true meaning is revealed to none except those that manifest (17).
H. Thus hath God laid hold of them for their sins (18).
I. When a true seeker determines (192-194).
J. The attributes of the exalted (195).
K. Only when the lamp of search is kindled (195-196).
L. The City of Certitude (197-200).

References: Pages 3-20; 192-200

II. PROPHECY AND SYMBOL

A. I go away and come again unto you (20).
B. In the Dispensation of the Qur'án both the Book and the Cause of Jesus were confirmed (20-21). Neither the person of Jesus nor His writings hath differed from that of Muhammad and of His holy Book (21).
C. Consider the distinction, variation and unity characteristic of the various Manifestations (21-22).
D. The companions and disciples of Jesus asked Him concerning those signs that must needs signalize the return of His Manifestation (22, 24-33).
E. The breeze of life cannot last (23).
F. That these divine Luminaries seem to be confined to specific designations (34-35).
G. The term "suns": applied to the Prophets (35).
-divines of the former Manifestations (36-38).
-laws and teachings (38-40).
-the sun shall be darkened (41-42).
H. The cleaving of the heavens (44-45, 48-49).
I. The changing of the earth (46-48).
J. The purpose underlying all these symbolic terms (49, 52-53).
-The Qiblih (49-52).
-The incident of Moses (53-56).
-The state of Mary (56-57).
-The fire of vengeance - the waters of mercy (57-58).
K. Take heed, O brother! (58).
L. He is made manifest in this day (58-61).
M. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man (61-62).
-Abraham (62-63).
-Moses (63).
-Jesus (64-65).
-Muḥammad (65).
-The Báb (65-66).
N. Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn (66-67).

O. The term "heaven": loftiness and exaltation (67).
-coming in the clouds of heaven (67).
-Heaven of Command, Will, divine Purpose (68).
P. The resplendent morn of true knowledge (68-69).
-Divine Knowledge, Satanic Knowledge (69-70).
Q. The term "clouds":
-those things contrary to human desires (71).
-annulment of laws (71).
-exalting of the illiterate (72).
-the human temple of the Prophet (72-73).
-the dark clouds that intervene (73-74).
R. Should we ask for a testimony of His truth (75).
S. The symbolic term "smoke" (76-78).
T. Ere long the standards of divine power (78).
U. The term "angels" (78-80).
V. The adherents of Jesus have never understood these words (80-81).
W. Such objections and differences have persisted in every age (81-83).
X. Those signs that must needs herald the revelation of the Muḥammadan Dispensation (83-89).
Y. A number assert that the genuine text of the gospel doth not exist among the Christians (89-90).
Z. Behold Truth so clearly that thou wilt need no proof (90-92).
A-1. All things have their consummation in belief in Him (92-93).
B-1. The Qur'án an impregnable stronghold until the year sixty (200-201).
C-1. The testimony of guidance (201-221).
D-1. Amongst the proofs (221-226).
E-1. The sign of truth and falsehood (227-229).
F-1. Even the year hath been specifically recorded (253-254).
-Four signs from four Prophets (254).
-A twofold language (254-256).
G-1. We perceive none who seeketh the guidance (256-257).

References: Pages 20-93;200-229:253-257

III. GOD IN MANIFESTATION

A. The Luminaries of truth are endowed with an all-compelling power (97).
B. The unknowable Essence (98-99).
C. Those luminous Gems appear (99-100).
D. Attributes and names of God (100-101).
E. Man hath been invested with the robe of such gifts (101-102).
F. The Manifestations of the Sun of Truth (103).
G. All the Prophets are the bearers of His names (103-104).
H. Why is it that the sovereignty of the Qá'im hath not been made manifest? (106-109).
I. Whosoever acknowledged His truth and turned unto Him (113-114).
J. The terms "life" and "death" (114).
K. The verdict of the Last Day (114-116).
L. "Trumpet" and "resurrection" (116-120).
M. The sovereignty of Him Who is the King of kings (123-127).
-Consider the power of those drops of blood (127-128).
-Though their dwelling be in the dust (130).
-This poverty and these riches (132).
-To outward seeming devoid of power (133).
-Thy sins are forgiven thee (133-134).
N. The inner meanings of sovereignty (134-135).
-After Moses no Prophet should be sent (135-136).
-Two stations assigned unto each of the Luminaries (176-178).
-They are all but one person, one soul (178-180).
-An utterance that would conform to the requirements of the occasion (181-182).
-The new moons (182).
-The Spirit (183).
-The veil of Knowledge (187-188).
-Seek enlightenment from the illumined (191-192).

O. The Báb hath revealed an Epistle unto the divines (229-230).
P. He arose and steadfastly proclaimed (230-231).
Q. He prophesied His own martyrdom (231-232).
R. Steadfastness in the Faith is a sure testimony (233-234).
S. Ascendency revealed throughout the world (234-235).
T. The repudiation the mightiest proof (236-237).
U. The testimony of God unto the people (237-238).
-Annulment of rules and customs (238).
-Renunciation of all things (239).
-Expectation that the Promised One will uphold the former Dispensation (239-240).
-Renewal of ordinances and laws (240).
-Object of every Revelation (240-241).
-Out of Banú-Háshim shall come a Youth (242-243).
V. When the Qá'im shall arise (243-247).
W. We entreat the learned men of the Bayán (248-250).
X. We betook Ourselves to a wilderness (250-252).
Y. They that have hearts to understand (252-253).
References: Pages 97-120; 123-136; 176-192; 229-253

IV. THE PRESENCE OF GOD

A. How can He be conceived as powerless? (136-137).
B. The essential Purpose and the knowledge of the Mystery and Substance of the Cause of God ... attaining unto the Presence of God (138-139).
-Day of Resurrection (139-141).
-Most Holy Outpouring (141).
-Holy Outpouring (141-142).
-Attaining to the presence of these Holy Luminaries (142-143).
-No day is mightier than this Day (144-145).
-How can he be called learned? (145-146).
-Sign of the Day of Revelation (146-147).
-Testimony of the Qur'án (169).
-Resurrection and attainment unto His Presence (169-170).
-Respite to an appointed time (170-172).
-1280 years have passed (172).
-How the peoples are brought to a reckoning (172-174).
C. Able to unfold innumerable mysteries (175-176).

References: Pages 136-147; 168-176

V. THE RETURN

A. The purpose of the Prophets to affirm the spiritual significance of the terms "life", "resurrection" and "judgment" (120).
B. Only those will attain the knowledge of the Word of God that have turned unto Him (122-123).
C. Unnumbered doors of knowledge set open (147-148).
D. Already have Apostles before me come to you (148-149).
-How could those people in the days of Muḥammad have existed thousands of years before? (149-150).
-If Muḥammad was the "return" of the Prophets, His Companions must be the "return" of the bygone Companions. (151).
-The Prophets regarded as one soul and the same person (152-154).
-The return of their chosen ones definitely proved (154).
-The people so transformed that they renounce all things (155-156).
-Have not this people exemplified the mysteries of "rebirth" and "return"? (156).
-Potency of the Divine Elixir (157-159).
-Those who lead in faith can be regarded as the "return" of those who had achieved this distinction in a former Dispensation (158-159).
-Consider the rose (159).
-Observe the "return" of the same qualities (160).
E. The worlds of unity, diversity, variation, oneness, limitation and detachment (160-161).
-The term "Seal of the Prophets" (162).
-The "first" and the "last" (162-163).
F. In that Court all names are non-existent (163).
G. Piercing the veils of glory (164).
-Blindly following religious leaders (164-166).
-Certain terms also "veils of glory" (166).
-How many the mysteries (167).
-"I was with a thousand Adams" (167-168).

References: Pages 120-123; 147-168