

# Lights of 'Irfán

Studies in the Principal Bahá'í Beliefs

*Papers Presented at the  
'Irfán Colloquia and Seminars*



Book Eighteen



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*Such are the mysteries of the Word of God, which have been unveiled and made manifest, that haply thou mayest apprehend the morning light of divine guidance, mayest quench, by the power of reliance and renunciation, the lamp of idle fancy, of vain imaginings, of hesitation, and doubt, and mayest kindle, in the inmost chamber of thine heart, the new-born light of divine knowledge and certitude.*

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 48

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## Preface

We have received a rich collection of divinely revealed words. Bahá'u'lláh refers to that collection as an ocean containing precious pearls of meanings and mysteries hidden in its depth. He repeatedly calls upon each one of the believers to dive deeply in this ocean and try to discover and extract those pearls. This is a spiritual obligation for each individual believer. By making it an individual obligation, He has made such efforts a permanent activity at all times. The beauty of this unprecedented, collective, and continuing endeavor is that it releases such studies from the monopoly of a selected few and opens the door to everyone for such undertaking. Since the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes of people are different and their experiences are constantly changing in quality and quantity, the end results of such studies will be an immense, diverse, and endless body of spiritual knowledge. It will be a collective effort that each individual member will benefit from its outcome. This process releases us from religious rigidity, and stagnation, and generates vitality in our understanding and beliefs. `Irfán Colloquia and the *Lights of `Irfán* are facilities for support and promotion of such endeavors.

The present volume includes articles employing a variety of approaches in discovering the pearls of knowledge and meanings from the ocean of Bahá'í sacred texts. Articles published in this book present the views and understandings of their authors and are not necessarily congruous with the formal and prevalent views, thus encouraging other scholars to further investigate the same subjects. In addition, the texts of the

articles are published as provided by the authors. Their writing styles and scholarly approaches are therefore different.

The references of the article on “Nietzsche and the Bahá’í Writings” which was published in Book Seventeen was mistakenly omitted in electronic transfer of the manuscript. It is republished here in its revised and complete text. Provisional translations of the Bahá’í Writings in English by the authors are for the documentation of the contents of the articles and should not be separately published and distributed as authorized translations. Articles are published in this volume according to the alphabetical order of the authors’ surnames.

‘Irfán publications are sponsored by the generous support of Haj Mehdi Arjmand Memorial Fund and voluntary contributions of the friends of the ‘Irfan Colloquium. It is hoped that such supports as well as the collaboration of scholars would make it possible to continue the ‘Irfan project and services.

Iraj Ayman

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