**THE BADÍ’ CALENDAR**

**Brief Introduction**

The most widely used calendars today are either solar or lunar-based. With a solar-based calendar, the dates indicate the position of the earth in its orbit around the sun. In a similar way, the dates of the lunar-based calendars indicate the position of the moon, in its orbit around the earth. The Gregorian calendar that is so widely used today is solar-based and is today more or less the official Christian Calendar. The only pure lunar-based calendar used today, is the Islamic calendar.

It is worth noting that both of these calendars were introduced after the Ascension of Christ and Muhammad. The Gregorian calendar was introduces in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII and Caliph Umar introduced the Islamic calendar in 638. As such, the Manifestations of God Themselves did not introduce these calendars. However, the Báb Himself set the foundation of the Badí’ Calendar.

One reason for why the Báb chose to introduce the Badí’ Calendar (which is solar-based as opposed to the lunar-based Islamic calendar) might be the need for a clear demarcation from Islam. Shoghi Effendi says:

> . . . the Bábí Dispensation was essentially in the nature of a religious and indeed social revolution, and its duration had therefore to be short, but full of tragic events, of sweeping and drastic reforms. Those drastic measures enforced by the Báb and His followers were taken with the view of undermining the very foundations of Shi’ih orthodoxy, and thus paving the way for the coming of Bahá’u’lláh. [1]

**Years**

The Universal House of Justice, in their letter dated 10th of July 2014, write:

> The setting of the sun on 20 March 2015 will signalize the end of the year 171, the close of the ninth Váḥid of the first Kull-i-Shay’ of the Bahá’í Era. [2]

Shoghi Effendi explains the structure of years in the Badí’ Calendar. He says:

> The Báb has divided the years following the date of His Revelation into cycles of nineteen years each. Each cycle of nineteen years He has named a Váḥid, and nineteen Váḥids constitute a period called by Him a Kull-i-Shay’. The
The numerical value of the word "Vahíd" is 19 and that of "Kull-i-Shay" is 361. "Vahid" signifies unity and is symbolic of the unity of God. [3]

This means that we are currently in the first Kull-i-Shay. The Kull-i-Shay that we are currently in started in 1844 and will conclude 361 years after 1844.

The end of year 171 of the Badi Calendar will conclude the 9th Vahid. Each Vahid is 19 years. Each year in a Vahid has a name and these are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Alif</td>
<td>A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bá</td>
<td>B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ab</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Dál  D.
5. Báb  Gate
6. Váv  V
7. Abad  Eternity
8. Jád  Generosity
9. Bahá  Splendor
10. Hubb  Love
11. Bahháj  Delightful
12. Javáb  Answer
13. Ahad  Single
14. Vahháb  Bountiful
15. Vidá'd'  Affection
16. Badi'  Beginning
17. Bahí  Luminous
18. Abhá  Most Luminous
19. Váhid  Unity

**Months**

Shoghi Effendi has explained that:

“The Báb has regarded the solar year of 365 days, 5 hours, and 50 odd minutes, as consisting of 19 months of 19 days each, [361 days in total] every new day being reckoned as starting from sunset, not midnight. Every fourth year the number of intercalary days is raised from four to five. [3]

The names of the months are as shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Bahá</td>
<td>Splendor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Jalál</td>
<td>Glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Jamál</td>
<td>Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>'Azamat</td>
<td>Grandeur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Núr</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Rahmat</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Kalimát</td>
<td>Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Kamál</td>
<td>Perfection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Asmá’</td>
<td>Names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>'Izzat</td>
<td>Might</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Mashíyyat</td>
<td>Will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>'Ilm</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Days

Each day of the month also has a name. The names of the days follow the same order as the months and are the same as those of the months of the year. For instance, the first day of the month of Words is Splendor (as the first month is Splendor).

Each weekday also has a name. These are as listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Jalál</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Jamál</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Kamál</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Perfection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Fidál</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>'Idál</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Istijíl</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Majesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Istiqlíl</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friday is the day of rest. In a letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, it says:

"Abdu'l-Bahá gives no reason whatever why Friday has been chosen as the day of rest in the Bahá'í calendar. He just affirms it." [4]

Naw-Rúz

The year starts at Naw-Rúz when the vernal equinox takes place." In the Kitab-i-Aqdas, it is written that:

The Festival of Naw-Rúz falleth on the day that the sun entereth the sign of Aries [means vernal equinox] even should this occur no more than one minute before sunset. [2]
The vernal equinox is that moment when the earth, in its orbit around the sun, is in a position where the earth axis is not tilted towards or away from the sun. At this moment, both the north and the south hemispheres of the earth are equally illuminated.

The vernal equinox does not take place at the exact same time every year and therefore it varies. Therefore, at that exact time, when the vernal equinox occurs, it might be 2pm in Europe and perhaps past sunset at another place. The point of reference had not been clarified. Shoghi Effendi says:

*Regarding Naw-Rúz: If the vernal equinox falls on the 21st of March before sunset, it is celebrated on that day. If at any time after sunset, Naw-Rúz will then, as stated by Bahá’u’lláh, fall on the 22nd. As to which spot should be regarded as the standard, this is a matter which the Universal House of Justice will have to decided. “ [5]*

The Universal House of Justice has now clarified “*which spot should be regarded as the standard*”. They say:

*We have decided that Ṭihrán, the birthplace of the Abhá Beauty, will be the spot on the earth that will serve as the standard for determining, by means of astronomical computations from reliable sources, the moment of the vernal equinox in the northern hemisphere and thereby the day of Naw-Rúz for the Bahá’í world. [2]*

In other words, Ṭihrán is the “spot” and as such, if the vernal equinox occurs when the sun has already set in Ṭihrán, then Naw-Rúz is on 21st of March.
However, if the vernal equinox takes place before sunset in Ẓihrán, then Naw-Rúz is on the 20th of March. Likewise, if the vernal equinox takes place after the sunset of 21st of March, Naw-Rúz will be on the 22nd of March.

**Twin Holy Days**

The lunar calendar and the solar calendar are not aligned to each other. One lunar year is roughly 354 days whereas a solar year is 365. Therefore, one specific date in the Islamic calendar can occur at any time in solar-based calendars. If you notice, the fasting month of the Muslims (Ramadan) can occur at any time of the solar-based year.

The Báb was born on the 1st of Muharram in 1819 and Bahá’u’lláh on the 2nd of Muharram in 1817. In Islamic calendar, these days are two consecutive days. However, as the Báb was born in 1819 and Bahá’u’lláh was born in 1817, these two years, when transposed to Gregorian calendar, became 20th of October and 12th of November (as lunar year is shorter). As such, they were not “twin” or conjoined. This has now been changed. The Universal House of Justice says:

“The Festivals of the Twin Birthdays, the Birth of the Báb and the Birth of Bahá’u’lláh, have, in the East, been traditionally observed according to their correspondence to the first and second days of Muḥarram in the Islamic calendar. “These two days are accounted as one in the sight of God”, Bahá’u’lláh affirms. Yet, a letter written on behalf of the Guardian states, “In the future, no doubt all of the Holy Days will follow the Solar calendar, and provisions be made as to how the Twin Festivals will be celebrated universally.” How to satisfy the intrinsic lunar character of these blessed Days within the context of a solar calendar has hitherto been unanswered. We have decided that they will now be observed on the first and the second day following the occurrence of the eighth new moon after Naw-Rúz, as determined in advance by astronomical tables using Ẓihrán as the point of reference. [2] ”

The Universal House of Justice have “connected” the lunar aspect of the Twin Holy Days with the solar calendar by determining the time of the Twin Holy Days as “of the eighth new moon after Naw-Rúz”.

A new moon is the first phase of the moon in its orbit around the earth. It is at that time when the moon is, in its orbit, closest to the sun. The moon can be at any point in its orbit at the time of vernal equinox. Therefore, the dates of the Twin Holy Days will vary. The Universal House of Justice says:
This will result in the observance of the Twin Birthdays moving, year to year, within the months of Mashíyyat, ‘Ilm, and Qudrat of the Badi’ calendar, or from mid-October to mid-November according to the Gregorian calendar. Next year, the Birth of the Báb will occur on 10 Qudrat and the Birth of Bahá’u’lláh on 11 Qudrat.” [2]

The Universal House of Justice states that the Twin Holy Days will fall on 10th and 11th of Qudrat in 2015, which corresponds to 13th and 14th of November.

**Other Holy Days**

All the other Holy Days will now be determined in accordance with the Badi’ Calendar as opposed to the past when it was locked to the Gregorian calendar. The dates of the Holy Days will therefore depend on which day Naw-Rúz is that year.

The Universal House of Justice has clarified that:

*The alignment of the dates of the Badi’ calendar with other calendars will shift depending on the occurrence of Naw-Rúz. The number of days of Ayyám-i-Há will vary according to the timing of the vernal equinox in successive years; the year commencing on Naw-Rúz 172 B.E. will include four such days.*

*The dates of the remaining Holy Days will be fixed within the solar calendar in accordance with explicit statements of Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi; we have decided to set aside certain discrepancies in the historical record. The dates are:*

- Naw-Rúz, 1 Bahá;
- the Festival of Riḍván, 13 Jalál to 5 Jamál;
- the Declaration of the Báb, 8 ‘Azamat;
- the Ascension of Bahá’u’lláh, 13 ‘Azamat;
- the Martyrdom of the Báb, 17 Rahmat;
- the Day of the Covenant, 4 Qawl; and
- the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, 6 Qawl. [2]

**Historical Step**

The Universal House of Justice concludes the letter with:

*It will be evident from the decisions delineated that Bahá’ís of both East and West will find some elements of the calendar to be different from those to which they have been accustomed.*
The adoption of a new calendar in each dispensation is a symbol of the power of Divine Revelation to reshape human perception of material, social, and spiritual reality. Through it, sacred moments are distinguished, humanity’s place in time and space reimagined, and the rhythm of life recast. Next Naw-Rúz will mark yet another historic step in the manifestation of the unity of the people of Bahá and the unfoldment of Bahá’u’lláh’s World Order. [2]

References

1. Shoghi Effendi, quoted from Bahá’u’lláh, Kitáb-i Aqdas, note 109
2. Universal House of Justice, letter dated 10th of July 2014 about the Bādī’ Calendar
5. Shoghi Effendi, directives from the Guardian nr 76