



# BAHAISM II. BAHAI CALENDAR AND FESTIVALS

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## BAHAISM

### ii. Bahai Calendar and Festivals

The notion of renewal of time, implicit in most religious dispensations, is made explicit in the writings of the [Bāb](#) and [Bahā'-Allāh](#). To give this spiritual metaphor a concrete frame and to signalize the importance of the dispensation which he came to herald, the Bāb inaugurated a new calendar. In a significant break with the Islamic system, he abandoned the lunar month and adopted the solar year, commencing with the astronomically fixed vernal equinox (March 21), the ancient Persian new year festival of Now Rūz (q.v.; Persian *Bayān* 6:14). Bahā'-Allāh confirmed this calendar in *al-Ketāb al-aqdas* (40:258-60; see [aqdas](#)), and 'Abd-al-Bahā' set the final number of Bahai holy days, i.e., festivals and commemorative days on which work is suspended, at nine per year. The Bahai year (see [badī'](#)) consists of 19 months of 19 days each, i.e., 361 days, with the addition of four intercalary days (five in leap years) between the 18th and the 19th months in order to adjust the calendar to the solar year. The Bāb named the months after the attributes of God. The original Arabic names and their accepted English equivalents and correspondence dates to the Gregorian calendar are shown in [Chart 4](#).

The intercalary days are February 26 to March 1 inclusive. The 19th month is



designated as the month of fasting. The nine holy days are: (1) festival of Now Rūz (New Year), March 21; (2) 1st day of the festival of Reżwān (Declaration of Bahā'-Allāh) April 21; (3) 9th day of the festival of Reżwān, April 29; (4) 12th day of the festival of Reżwān, May 2; (5) declaration of the Bāb, May 23; (6) ascension of Bahā'-Allāh, May 29; (7) martyrdom of the Bāb, July 9; (8) birth of the Bāb, October 20; (9) birth of Bahā'-Allāh, November 12.

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