



# *Materials for the Study of the Dawn-Breakers, Nabil's Narrative*

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Updated Feb 12, 2019

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## **Reading: Introduction, Chapters 1-26 & Epilogue**

Key Characters and Tablets

Progressive Map with Newly-Introduced Cities

*Read and discuss the chapter*

Post-Reading self-test: Key Episodes

Suggested Memorization

Suggested Additional Readings

## **Additional External Resources**

Printable enlarged Dawn-Breakers (PDF)

[bit.ly/db-printed](http://bit.ly/db-printed)

Ocean (Dawn-Breakers with Audio)

[bit.ly/ocean2install](http://bit.ly/ocean2install)

Poster-size Map of Iran

[bit.ly/badasht-map-iran](http://bit.ly/badasht-map-iran)

Poster-size Timeline of key Characters (PDF)

[bit.ly/badasht-timeline](http://bit.ly/badasht-timeline)

Chronology of Major Events (PDF)

[bit.ly/badasht-chronology](http://bit.ly/badasht-chronology)

Various Dawn-Breakers Study Groups (on Facebook):

[bit.ly/db-study-groups](http://bit.ly/db-study-groups)

## History and Importance of the Dawn-Breakers

## Role of Study and Teaching in the Bahá'í Life

## Challenging features of the Dawn-Breakers

## Some Suggested Approaches to Studying the Dawn-Breakers

- Intensive weekend introduction
- Intensive 10-day retreat
- Local study class
- Personal study

## Pronunciation of Persian Names

Bahá'í literature commonly includes some Persian words. These words, such as “Bahá'í” itself, may contain accented vowels, dot-under characters (like ħ and ẓ) and underscored letter groups (such as dh, and th). These special characters help identify the original Persian letters and at the same time suggest a correct pronunciation.

Fortunately, the Persian transliteration system used in Bahá'í books is extremely simple and most letters are pronounced exactly as an English speaker would intuitively expect. There are, in fact, only **four exceptions** which a reader will need to learn (u, ħ, th & dh). The goal here is not to attain a fully native pronunciation but rather to achieve a basically correct pronunciation and with it, sufficient self-confidence for the reader.

### **Just Three Vowels** *(and a couple mixed vowels)*

The most important element of Persian pronunciation are the vowel sounds. There are basically three to remember (a, i, and u) and each one is either short or long. The long versions are indicated with an accent (á, í, and ú). To quickly learn the vowels, just remember a word for each which rhymes with the correct sound:

<b>a</b> - like cat	<b>i</b> - like bed	<b>u</b> - ‘o’ like boat
<b>á</b> - like father	<b>í</b> - like tree	<b>ú</b> - like moon

These are all simple and intuitive. **The only exception is the short “u” which is pronounced as an “o”.** Although this seems a bit odd, it is entirely consistent so once you have memorized the one exception, you have mastered basic Persian vowels.

There are also a few vowel combinations the reader should know:

**aw** - ‘ow’ as in ‘row’ or ‘tow’. For example: Kawthar or Naw-Rúz  
**ih** - ‘eyh’ — the feminine suffix. For example: Munir**ih** or Táhir**ih**  
**iy** or **ay** - ‘ay’ as in ‘say’. For example: Siyyid or Ĥusayn

### **Underscores**

Several Persian letters are represented by two English letters connected with an underscore. The easy ones are:

**sh**

**ch**

**kh** - as a ‘k’ from the back of the throat. For example: Khán or Khurásán

**gh** - as a ‘g’ from the back of the throat



Only two characters do not sound as they first look. They are:

**dh** - as a 'z' as in Ádhirbayján or Dhabíh

**th** - as an 's' as in Hadíth or Kawthar

## Dot-Unders

The Persian alphabet has a few characters with nearly identical sounds (similar to how our 'c' in 'cat' and 'k' in 'kitten' are basically repeated sounds). In order to tell which letter is being used, the transliteration sometimes provides a dot under the second version. For example, Persian has two letters with the 'h' sound. The second is indicated as **ḥ** -- but it is still pronounced basically as 'h'. The dotted letters are:

**ḥ**

**ṭ**

**ẓ**

**ṣ**

**ḍ** - pronounced as 'z' as in Riḍván or Riḍá

These are fairly straightforward and **only the 'ḍ' is a surprise (pronounced as 'z')**.

One common mistake is to exaggerate dotted letters, for example, pronouncing "Aḥmad" as "A**kh**mad". In Persian and Arabic, consonants are not mixed together so each one is pronounced exactly as it is written. Therefore the 'ḥ' is simply an 'h' aspirated slightly without adding a vowel: "aḥmad".

Likewise, vowels are not modified by consonants as in English, so it is helpful, when learning, to first sound out the vowels and then repeat the word adding consonants. So "Aḥmad" become "a--a-", "aḥmad"

## Just a Few Other Very Simple Rules

1. The letter 'r' is very lightly rolled:

example: Táhirih, Rúḥí, Riḍván

2. When consonants are doubled, just pause on the consonant a little:

examples: Sunn**í**, Mullá

3. When a connecting vowel is used between two words, the two words are often written as one word with dashes. The connecting vowel is pronounced as part of the first word:

examples: **Alláh-u**-Abhá, **Kitáb-i**-Íqán

4. In English, consonants are often merged into a new sound like with **th**, **sh**, and **ng**. This is not so in Persian. Each consonant should be pronounced separately.

examples: faran**g**í, Sangis**a**r, Baṭ**h**á, Faṭ**h**

## Glossary Memorization Exercise

## Geography Memorization Exercise

## Backstories: Shí'ah Islam and the martyrdom of Husayn

