## Malcolm Dedman

# Nine-Pointed Star 

## An Oratorio about Progressive Revelation

for Soprano, Mezzo-soprano, Tenor, Baritone and Bass soloists, SATB Chorus and Orchestra



Total Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

## Orchestration for 'Nine-Pointed Star'

2 Flutes, 2nd doubling Piccolo
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in Bb , 1st doubling Clarinet in Eb
Bass Clarinet in Bb
Alto Saxophone in Eb , doubling Tenor in Bb
2 Bassoons, 2nd doubling contra-bassoon
4 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in Bb
2 Tenor Trombones, 2nd doubling Bass Trombone
Tuba
Timpani (suggested sizes: 32 ", 28 ", 25 " \& 23 ")
3 Percussion, see below*
Celesta
Harp
Soprano solo
Mezzo-soprano solo
Tenor solo
Baritone solo
Bass solo

SATB Chorus
Strings (NB, Basses require low C)

* Instruments required by the 3 percussionists:


## Part 1

1. Marimba, Crotales, Pair of Bongos, Set of 5 Tom-toms, Tubular Bells.
2. High Djembe, Glockenspiel, Tambourine, Pair of Congas.
3. Low Djembe, Maracas, Large Suspended Cymbal, Tam-tam.

## Part 2

1. Marimba, Vibraphone, Three Gongs ('semi-piched'), Crotales, Pair of Bongos.
2. High Djembe, Glockenspiel, Cabasa, Bass Drum, Pair of Congas.
3. Low Djembe, Finger Cymbals (unpitched), Maracas, Tam-tam, Large Suspended Cymbal. Pair of Timbales.

## Part 3

1. Marimba, Tubular Bells, Vibraphone (cello bow needed), Pair of Bongos, Set of 5 Tom-toms, Wood Block
2. High Djembe, Glockenspiel, Pair of Congas, Side Drum, Cabasa, Tambourine,
3. Low Djembe, Tam-tam, Triangle, Large Suspended Cymbal, Pair of Timbales, Maracas.

## All Parts (complete)

1. Marimba, Crotales, Pair of Bongos, Set of 5 Tom-toms, Tubular Bells, Vibraphone, Three Gongs ('semi-pitched'), Wood Block
2. High Djembe, Glockenspiel, Tambourine, Pair of Congas, Cabasa, Bass Drum, Side Drum.
3. Low Djembe, Maracas, Large Suspended Cymbal, Tam-tam, Finger Cymbals (unpitched), Pair of Timbales, Triangle.

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## Brief Programme Note for 'Nine-Pointed Star'

This oratorio shows the progress of religion from Hindu to Bahá'i. The Bahá'i Faith claims that all true religion is one, so the composer has selected texts to show not only the similarities in the teachings of the major religions, but also to show that religious teaching is progressive, hence 'progressive revelation'. It is, unfortunately, people of the different Faiths that have caused division through misunderstanding and incorrect or misleading translations. It is the composer's wish that these texts will bring about greater understanding of religious Faith in general.

The major teachers ('Messengers' or, more correctly, 'Manifestations of God') are represented by a nine-pointed star, one of the symbols of the Bahá'i Faith. The three parts of the oratorio represent three different phases: 'The Early Years' (Hindu, Judaism and Zoroastrian); 'The Age of Enlightenment, Son of Man and the Seal of the Prophets', (Buddhism, Christianity and Muslim); and 'A New Universal Cycle - the Cycle of Fulfilment', as expressed by the three major figures of the Bahá'í Faith (The Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá). The composer has supplemented the religious texts with comments and typical questions in which the quotes provide some answers.

The major points of focus which show the similarity between the teachings of these religions are: they show that there is only one Creator-God; they all teach about love and they all believe humans move onto another form of life after the physical body has died. By accepting and focussing on these similarities and not on the differences, through a greater understanding, society can begin to evolve a civilisation of peace. This is the promise of 'The Most Great Peace' as expressed by the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith.

## Texts for 'Nine-Pointed Star'

Note, all texts with no reference are written by the composer.
All quotes from the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, are from the English Standard Version.

## Part 1: The Early Years

## 1. Prelude

Chorus (spoken): IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD, THE EXALTED, THE MOST HIGH.
Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-İqán, p1
Chorus (sung): Know of a certainty that, in every Dispensation, the light of Divine Revelation hath been vouchsafed to men in direct proportion to their spiritual capacity.

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p87

## 2. Krishna

Chorus: Krishna, Krishna, the first point of the star, Krishna!
Tenor: Essence and symbol of Divine Love, with human life and love as a reflection of the Divine.
Mezzo-soprano: So did Pandu's Son behold
All this universe enfold
All its huge diversity
Into one vast shape, and be
Visible, and viewed, and blended
In one Body - subtle, splendid,
Nameless - th' All-comprehending
God of Gods, the Never-Ending Deity!
Bhagavad Gita 11:13, (translated by Edwin Arnold)
Chorus: What of Love?
Tenor \& Baritone: I am alike for all! I know not hate,
I know not favour! What is made is Mine!
But them that worship Me with love, I love;
They are in Me , and I in them!
Bhagavad Gita 9:29, (translated by Edwin Arnold)
Chorus: What happens after death?
Bass \& Chorus: And thus it has been said elsewhere: He who has his senses hidden as in sleep, and who, while in the cavern of his senses, but no longer ruled by them, sees, as in a dream, with the purest intellect, Him who is called Pranava, the leader, the bright, the sleepless, free from old age, from death, and sorrow; he is himself also called Pranava, and becomes a leader, bright, sleepless, free from old age, from death, and sorrow.

Upanishads vol. 2, Maitrayana-Brahmaya-Upanishad, v25
Chorus chants 'Aum' from the word 'Pranava'.

Note: 'Aum' is pronounced slowly with a gradual change to each vowel and final hum - 'A - U-M'

## 3. Abraham and Moses

Chorus: The second and third points of the star are Abraham and Moses, Divine Manifestations of the Jews.
Baritone: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.

Exodus 20:2-3
Chorus: Abraham, the father of the Covenant; prototype of all believers and a link in the chain of prophets. Abraham was instructed by God:

Bass: As for you, you shall keep my Covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. Genesis 17:9

Tenor: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Chorus: Moses, the leader of the Israelites to the Promised Land, the Lawgiver.
Baritone \& Bass: Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey."

Exodus 3:16-17
Chorus: The Law has been summarised:
Soprano: What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellowman. This is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary. Talmud for the Shabbath 31a

Chorus: What of death? What happens after death?
Tenor: And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Daniel 12:2
Chorus: ... the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. Ecclesiastes 12:7

## 4. Zoroaster

Chorus: The fourth point of the star: Zoroaster. Zoroastrians worship one God, Whom they call Ahura Mazda, meaning 'Wise Lord'. They say He claims:

Bass: I am the Keeper; I am the Creator and the Maintainer; I am the Discerner; I am the Most Beneficent Spirit. The Teachings of Zoroaster, by S.A. Kapadia

Soprano \& Female Chorus: According to the ritual we worship Ahura Mazda; according to the ritual we worship the Bountiful Immortals; and we sacrifice to the sacrificial word correctly spoken, and to every Mathra as to a sacred word of reason.

The Zend-Avesta - Visperad 13:1
Chorus: $\quad$ All that is created must be treated with love and respect.
Mezzo-soprano: And so thou, O youth of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, of good religion! Didst love me for that greatness, goodness, fairness, sweet-scentedness, victorious strength, and freedom from sorrow, in which I appear to thee.

The Zend-Avesta, Fragments (Sacred Books of the East, 2:11)
Chorus: And what of death? It is said Zoroastrians believe that when a person dies, it is the body that dies and the spiritual components continue to exist in the spiritual existence.

Tenor \& Baritone: I will speak of that which the Holiest declared to me as the word that is best for mortals to obey; while he said: "they who for my sake render him obedience, shall all attain unto Welfare and Immortality by the actions of the Good Spirit".

The Zend-Avesta, Avesta - Yasna 45:5

## Part 2: The Age of Enlightenment, Son of Man and the Seal of the Prophets

## 5. Interlude

Chorus (spoken): IN THE NAME OF THE ONE TRUE GOD. Bahá'u'lláh, Tabernacle of Unity, p3

## 6. The Buddha

Chorus: The Buddha, the fifth point of the star, taught his followers that the highest aim is the state of Nirvana, a state of ultimate peace, the release of all suffering.

Baritone: Pluck out your desire, like one does an autumn lotus with one's hand. Devote yourself to the path of peace, the Nirvana proclaimed by the Blessed One.

Dhammapada 20:13 (translated by J. Richards)
Chorus: $\quad$ So what is the 'Noble Eightfold Path'?
Bass: Following this Path you will put an end to suffering. I have taught you the Way after realising the removal of the arrow myself.

Dhammapada 20:3 (translated by J. Richards)
Chorus: What do Buddhists say about love?
Soprano \& Mezzo-soprano: Let one live in love; let one be adept in one's duties; then joyfully one will see the end of sorrow.

Dhammapada 25:17 (translated by J. Richards)
Chorus: If Nirvana is our goal, can there be immortal life?
Tenor and Male Chorus: Awareness is the path of immortality;
thoughtlessness is the path of death.
Those who are aware do not die.
The thoughtless are as if dead already.
Dhammapada 2:1 (translated by J. Richards)
Basses of the chorus use overtone singing and tenors and basses chant 'Aum'.

Note: For pronunciation of 'Aum', see page iv

## 7. Jesus

Semi-chorus: The sixth point of the star is Jesus. The Christ Spirit came to earth in the form of Jesus, a Jew, to give us a greater understanding of the Law of God, of neighbourly love and immortality. Through His death, He could save us from our sins.

Mezzo-soprano, Tenor and Baritone: (Setting of 'Kyrie' by Guillaume Dufay)
Soprano: After the lapse of time the Israelites deteriorated and became subject to the Romans and the Greeks. Then the brilliant Star of Jesus rose from the horizon upon the Israelites, brightening the world, until all sects and creeds and nations were taught the beauty of unity. There cannot be any better proof than this that Jesus was the Word of God.
'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p42
Chorus: Jesus announced His commandments:
Baritone: The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.

Mark 12:29-31
Chorus: Jesus said of love:
Mezzo-soprano \& Tenor: You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Matthew 5:43-45

Chorus: Christ, the Son of God, says of eternal life:
Bass: Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My Word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

John 5:24-25

## 8. Muhammad

Chorus: The seventh point of the star is Muhammad, founder of Islam.
Tenor: Muhammad recognised the sublime grandeur of Christ and the greatness of Moses and the prophets. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp48-49

Chorus: Muhammad reaffirmed the Laws revealed by Moses and summarised by Jesus:
Baritone: If ye love God, then follow me: God will love you and forgive your sins, for God is Forgiving, Merciful. The Qur'an, Sura 3:29 (translated by Rodwell)

Mezzo-soprano: Worship God, and join not aught with Him in worship. Be good to parents, and to kindred, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to a neighbour, whether kinsman or new-comer, and to a fellow traveller, and to the wayfarer, and to the slaves whom your right hands hold...

The Qur'an, Sura 4:40 (translated by Rodwell)
Chorus: So we are taught to love our Lord God and fellow humans.
Soprano: Desire not the world, and God will love you; and desire not what men have, and they will love you.

Gail - Six Lessons on Islam, p. 21
Chorus: On the subject of death, Muhammad declares:
Bass: $\quad$ No one can die except by God's permission, according to the Book that fixeth the term of life. He who desireth the recompense of this world, we will give him thereof; And he who desireth the recompense of the next life, we will give him thereof! And we will certainly reward the thankful.

The Qur'an Sura 3:139 (translated by Rodwell)

## Part 3: A New Universal Cycle - the Cycle of Fulfilment

## 9. Interlude

Chorus: In the name of God, the One, the Incomparable, the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p1

## 10. The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh

Chorus: The last two points of the Star represent The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, forerunner and founder of the Bahá'í Faith.
Mezzo-soprano: His Holiness the Prophet Muhammad made a covenant concerning His Holiness The Báb, and The Báb was the One promised by Muhammad, for Muhammad gave the tidings of His coming.
'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 358
Soprano: Indeed God is but one God, and far be it from His glory that there should be aught else besides Him. All those who shall attain unto Him on the Day of Resurrection are but His servants, and God is, of a truth, a sufficient Protector.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p61 (translated by Habib Taherzadeh)
Chorus: The path to guidance is one of love and compassion, not of force and coercion. This hath been God's method in the past, and shall continue to be in the future!

Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p77 (translated by Habib Taherzadeh)
Tenor \& Bass: Bear thou witness that verily He is I, Myself, the Sovereign, the Omnipotent. He is the One Who ordaineth life and death and unto Him shall all return. Indeed there is none other God but Him and all men bow down in adoration before Him.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p9 (translated by Habib Taherzadeh)

Chorus and soloists: The Báb was indeed the One promised but, more importantly, He foretold the coming of a far higher station, Bahá'u'lláh, - 'He whom God shall make manifest'. Bahá'u'lláh, confirmer of past Holy Teachings; Writer of new truths that will lead humanity to peace, has shown the unity of all religion:

Baritone: If thou be of the inmates of this city within the ocean of divine unity, thou wilt view all the Prophets and Messengers of God as one soul and one body, as one light and one spirit, in such wise that the first among them would be last and the last would be first.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, p33 (translated by Javáhiru'l-Asrár)
Tenor: $\quad$ For they have all arisen to proclaim His Cause and have established the laws of divine wisdom.
Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, p33 (translated by Javáhiru'l-Asrár)
Tenor \& Baritone: They are, one and all, the Manifestations of His Self, the Repositories of His might, the Treasuries of His Revelation, the Dawning-Places of His splendour and the Daysprings of His light.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, p33 (translated by Javáhiru'l-Asrár)
Soprano, Mezzo-soprano \& Female Chorus: Through them are manifested the signs of sanctity in the realities of all things and the tokens of oneness in the essences of all beings. And since in their inmost Beings they are the same Luminaries and the self-same Mysteries, thou shouldst view their outward conditions in the same light, that thou mayest recognise them all as one Being, nay, find them united in their words, speech, and utterance.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, pp33-34 (translated by Javáhiru'l-Asrár)

Note: To pronounce Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, sing the 'á' as'ah' (as in 'car'). The 'a' is pronounced as in 'cat' Báb is therefore 'Barb' and Bahá'u;lláh is 'Bahar-oo-larh'.
Bahá'í is pronounced 'Bahar-ee'.
'Abdu'l-Bahá (next page) is pronounced 'Abdool-Baharh',

## 11. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá

Chorus: Bahá'u'lláh's son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, re-enforced His Father's many teachings. He also had a clear vision for the future of mankind.

Bass: $\quad$ Praise be to God! the mediaeval ages of darkness have passed away and this century of radiance has dawned, -- this century wherein the reality of things is becoming evident, -- wherein science is penetrating the mysteries of the universe, the oneness of the world of humanity is being established and service to mankind is the paramount motive of all existence.
‘Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'I World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p279
Tenor: $\quad$ Shall we remain steeped in our fanaticisms and cling to our prejudices? Is it fitting that we should still be bound and restricted by ancient fables and superstitions of the past; be handicapped by superannuated beliefs and the ignorances of dark ages, waging religious wars, fighting and shedding blood, shunning and anathematising each other? Is this becoming?
'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p279
Soprano and Mezzo-soprano: Is it not better for us to be loving and considerate toward each other? Is it not preferable to enjoy fellowship and unity; join in anthems of praise to the most high God and extol all His prophets in the spirit of acceptance and true vision? Then indeed this world will become a paradise and the promised Day of God will dawn.
'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p280
Chorus: 'Abdu'l-Bahá affirms His vision of the future; God's promise:
Mezzo-soprano, Tenor \& Baritone: The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers.
'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p19-20

## 12. Postlude

Chorus and Soloists: Praise be to God, the Eternal that perisheth not, the Everlasting that declineth not, the Self-Subsisting that altereth not. He it is Who is transcendent in His sovereignty, Who is manifest through His signs, and is hidden through His mysteries.

Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p1

## Nine-Pointed Star

Part 1: The Early Years

## Malcolm Dedman and Various Scriptures

1. Prelude









## 2. Krishna





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| Alto Saxophone | Q4 | - | - |  |  |  |
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| Horns 1 \& 2 in $F$ | ${ }^{2}$ |  | - | - | - | - | - | - |
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| Homs $/$ \& 2 in |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Horns 3 \& 4 in $F$ | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Homs ${ }^{\text {d }}$ - F | ${ }^{4}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 Trumpets | R | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
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| 2 Tenor Trombones | 2:4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
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| Tuba | 2:4 |  | - | - | - | - | - | - |




| Soprano | $6_{6}^{4}$ |  | $\underline{-}$ | - | - | - | - | - |  |  |  |
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| Violin 2 | $0^{4}$ | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |  |  |  |
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| Viola | 154 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |  | - |  |
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| Violoncello | 2:4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |  | - |  |
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9. Interlude











## 10a. The Báb





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Poco Meno Mosso e Molto Tranquillo ( $\quad=80$ )
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Timpani $\left[\begin{array}{l}\text { Tuning } \\ 2: 4 \ldots \\ 4\end{array}\right.$







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