

THE BOOKS OF GOD ARE OPEN

By E. S. Campbell

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". . . and the books were opened and another book was opened."

--( Revelation 20:12 ).

"The Book of God is wide open and His Word is summoning mankind unto Him."

--( Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, XCII, pp. 183, 4 ).

T H E B O O K S O F G O D A R E O P E N

- I. THE GREAT DAY OF GOD -- IMPENDING CATAclysmic  
UPHEAVALS.
  
- II. THE BEST BELOVED IS COME -- THE APPEARANCE OF  
THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD.
  
- III. THE MOST GREAT PEACE -- THE KINGDOM OF GOD  
UPON EARTH.

"LISTEN--

it is the Eternal speaking -- do not be too proud to hearken; do honor to the Eternal your God before the darkness falls, before your footsteps stumble on the twilight hills, before the gleam you look for turns to a dead gloom. If you will not listen, then I must weep in secret for your pride, mine eyes must stream with tears, for the Eternal's flock borne off to exile." -- (Jeremiah 13:15, Moffatt's Translation).

"I WISH TO AWAKEN YOU

out of your deep slumber. Do you know in what day you are living? Do you realize in what dispensation you exist? Have you not read in the Holy Scriptures that at the consummation of the ages there would dawn a day -- the sum total of all past days?" -- ('Abdu'l-Bahá in Promulgation of Universal Peace).

"THE TIME FOREORDAINED

unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God as recorded in the Holy Scriptures have all been fulfilled. Out of Zion hath gone forth the Law of God, and Jerusalem, and the hills and land thereof, are filled with the glory of his Revelation. Happy is the man that pondereth in his heart that which hath been revealed in the books of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

Meditate upon this, O ye beloved of God, and let your ears be attentive to His Word, so that ye may, by His Grace and Mercy, drink your fill from the crystal waters of constancy and become as steadfast and immovable as the mountain in His Cause."  
--(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 12, 13)

"THIS IS THE DAY

whereon human ears have been privileged to hear what He Who conversed with God (Moses) heard upon Sinai, what He Who is the Friend of God (Muhammad) heard when lifted up towards Him, what He Who is the Spirit of God (Jesus) heard as he ascended unto Him, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting."  
(Advent of Divine Justice, p. 66)

"GREAT INDEED IS THIS DAY!

The allusions made to it in all the Sacred Scriptures as the Day of God attest its greatness. The soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous Day. All the divers kindreds of the earth have, likewise, yearned to attain it." (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 11)

"THE BOOK OF GOD IS WIDE OPEN,

and His Word is summoning mankind unto Him. No more than a mere handful, however, hath been found willing to cleave to His Cause, or to become the instruments for its promotion. These few have been endued with the Divine Elixir that can, alone, transmute into purest gold the dross of the world, and have been empowered to administer the infallible remedy for all the ills that afflict the children of men. No man can obtain everlasting life unless he embraceth the truth of this inestimable, this wondrous, and sublime Revelation."  
(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 183)

## THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES

when viewed in the light of their real intent and purpose, are a graphic portrayal of the events which are unfolding before our very eyes in this Day of Days. Not only so, but the Prophets of all the Divinely revealed religions, not to mention the sages, poets and secular historians, have harmonized on the marvelous theme-song of the coming of the Best Beloved; they all have joined in the magnificent chorus celebrating the Coming of the Lord of Glory with His Anointed to set up the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

The sharp of spiritual sight perceive that the Books of God are now open and that "another book is opened" (Rev. 20:12) and that the peoples of the world and the works of their hands are being weighed and judged. Since no prophecy may be understood until it is fulfilled (Cf. Dan. 12:8, 9) and since the events of recent decades have remarkably increased in severity, let us examine the course of these events in the light of Sacred Writ.

## "BEHOLD THE DISTURBANCES

which, for many a long year, have afflicted the earth, and the perturbation that hath seized its peoples. It hath either been ravaged by war, or tormented by sudden and unforeseen calamities. Though the world is encompassed with misery and distress, yet no man hath paused to reflect what the cause or source of that may be. Whenever the True Counselor uttered a word in admonishment, lo, they all denounced Him as a mover of mischief and rejected His claim. How bewildering, how confusing is such behavior!" (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 218)

## "WHAT SHALL BE THE END OF THESE THINGS?"

This question from the Hebrew Scriptures reflects the astonishment of the Prophet Daniel as he witnessed, more than two thousand years ago, a spiritual preview of the events which would signalize the consummation of the Age.

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end: and many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased. And I heard, but I understood not: Then I said 'O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?' and he said 'Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end'." (Daniel 12:4-10)

The reader will observe that while the Prophet himself had recorded that he did not understand the visions he was relating, he did not ask for an explanation of them. He appears to have asked how one might know when the end of this order of things had arrived. The answer had already been given in the graphic description: "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased". At what time during the more than two thousand years that have elapsed since these words were spoken has there been such a sudden upsurge of knowledge or such an increase in transportation as that which the world has witnessed during the past hundred years.

Another Hebrew prophet, Nahum by name, writing at about the same time, and looking to the same day of consummation says:

"The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation.... the chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle against one another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches; they shall run like lightnings." (Nahum 2:3, 4)

Let the reader reflect: If the day in which we are living is not the day of preparation, in what other age since these words were spoken, did the chariots either look or behave like this?

In the light of the foregoing consider the patient and pointed discourse of Jesus as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew:

The disciples had come to him privately saying,

"Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming? and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, 'Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many'". (Matthew 24: 3-51)

From the foregoing it is clear that the disciples understood and expected Jesus' return and the end of the world to appear simultaneously. The reader will also observe that Jesus let the observation stand unchallenged thus indicating that their understanding on this point was correct.

The entire twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew goes on to unfold, step by step, with unerring accuracy and with unmistakable clarity Jesus' discourse on the events leading up to the Great Day of God. Some of

#### THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

which he noted are these:

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, and the end is not yet. For nation shall rise up against nation and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." (Matthew 24:6-8) --And the end is not yet....these are but the beginning of sorrows.....

"Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of the nations for my name's sake," Jesus continues in this same twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, "And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of many shall wax cold, but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." (Matthew 24: 9-13)

At this point the reader will surely recall the vivid characterization of the last days given a little later by the Apostle Paul in an admonition to young Timothy:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, blasphemous, disobedient unto parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." (II Tim. 3:1-5)

In a similar vein is the prophecy of the learned Shaikul Akbar Muhiudin Ibne Arabi written in ancient India centuries ago and describing the conditions which would prevail immediately preceding the advent of the Qiamat (or, The Great Resurrection):

"There shall be no peace except the sleep. The people of the East will praise those of the West, women will be considered men's equals, iron will be more costly than gold, a new metal resembling silver will be discovered, people will like to take their food before the shops in open bazaars, dresses will be very short, women will shamelessly roam outside their houses, people will be in their beds even after the sun has risen, they will fly in the air like birds, they will be able to send messages instantly to other countries. Beds, etc., will be of iron; people will be conveyed from one place to another by lifeless things which will pass through the earth at great speed, the sun will come down to the earth at night and people will welcome its rays." (Cf. Shirin Fozdar, in "World Order Magazine", Aug. 1, 1947, pp. 185FF) (Also Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Ch. CXII.)

"And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another,...and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold...and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:10-14)

It was in 1841, after the Christian missionaries had carried the gospel to the far away recesses of Tibet, that the American Bible Society went on record stating that now the Gospel has at last been preached in all the world. Three years later, on the eve of May 23, 1844, there arose in Shiraz, Persia, a young Persian, by name 'Ali-Muhammad, who took the spiritual title of "The Báb" which means "The Door", or "The Gate", and who declared that he was the Forerunner and Herald of "Him whom God would make Manifest"; "the Promised One of all the ages"; and "The Glory of God". Nineteen years later the Promised One appeared, in the person of Mirzá Husein Ali, prince of the province of Núr in Persia, who made His declaration and who took the spiritual title of "Bahá'u'lláh" which means "The Glory of God".

Let us now return to the discourse of Jesus in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (Whoso readeth, let him understand....)" (Matthew 24:10).

Here, Jesus makes reference to the eighth chapter of Daniel where the time for the appearance of the Lord of Glory is specifically pointed out and named:

"Then I heard one saint speaking and another saint said unto that certain saint which spoke, 'How long shall be the vision, concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?'" (Daniel 8:13-17.) Whereupon the following answer was made: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed -- 'At the time of the end shall be the vision'" (Daniel 8:14.)

From the time of decree of Artaxerxes, in 457 B.C., for the rebuilding and restoration of Jerusalem, to the birth of Jesus the Christ we have 456 years and from the birth of Jesus to the declaration of the Bab (on May 23rd), 1844 we have a period of 1844 years, and since the day of the Lord is a year (Cf. Numbers 14:34), we have a total of 2300 days--when, "at the time of the end shall be the vision."

(See also, Daniel 9:23-27.)

Here the students of religion will recall that one William Miller, founder of a Christian sect called from his name, "The Millerites", fixed the time for the event, commonly referred to as the second-coming of Christ, as 1843-1844. About this same

time a group of Christians from Stuttgart in Germany moved to Mt. Carmel and established a community. Over the doorways of the homes they built they inscribed these words: "Der Herr ist Nahe", which means "The Lord is Nigh".

While it would appear that there could be no clearer indication of the time of the appearance of the Manifestation of God, than that which Daniel has given, he proceeds to give other signs which would mark the time of this great event:

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince, which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." (Daniel 12:1.)

Let us now turn again to Jesus' discourse in the twenty-fourth chapter, verse twenty-one and note how completely his description parallels that of Daniel:

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor shall ever be."

Thus, step by step, both the discourse of Daniel and that of Jesus, depict an unrelenting intensification of travail which will end in the complete convulsion of civilization. Jesus concludes the discourse with these words:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light and the stars shall fall from the heaven: and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven...."

(Here read Ezekiel 1:4-28 where both the moment, the manner of the likeness of the appearance of the Manifestation are depicted in sharp focus....)

"And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:30.)

While it is not clear whether the words of Jesus "And the powers of the heaven shall be shaken" indicate a literal or phenomenal catastrophe it is a fact that all the Holy Books are replete with allusions to

#### A MOST GREAT CONVULSION

through which the earth would pass towards the consummation of the age and which would itself be a contributing factor in this consummation.

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Peter 3:10.)

(See also Matt. 24:42-44; Luke 12:35-40; I Thes. 5:1-7; Rev. 3:3; and Rev. 16:14-16.)

"Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall move out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, in the day of his fierce anger." (Isa. 13:13.)

"The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall and not rise again." (Isaiah 24:20.)

(Cf. Also Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Ch. LXI; Ch. LXX, p.1, Ch. CVIII.)



"Thou shall be visited of the Lord of Hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." (Ezek. 38:20.)

(See also Luke 21:11; and Nahum 1:5.)

"Enter into the rock and hide in the dust, for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." (Isaiah 2:11.)

(See here, Isa. 3:16, 4:2.)

"I will shake the heavens and the earth...and the desire of all nations shall come...(and) fill this house with glory." (Haggai 2:6, 7.)

(See also Isa. 24:1; Zech. 13:8,9; Ezek. 6:11,12; Matt. 24:21,22; Ezek.1:4-49; Hab. 2:14, et al.)

"For the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of the Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." (Matt. 16:27.)

(See also, Matt. 13:41-43; Luke 21:20-28.)

"The world is in travail and its agitation waxeth day by day. Its face is turned toward waywardness and unbelief. Such will be its plight, that to disclose it now would not be meet and seemly; its perversity will long continue, and when the appointed hour is come there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then and only then, will the Divine Standard be unfurled, and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody." (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, LXI, p. 118)

One of the phases of the judgment of God is portrayed as the utter destruction of a completely commercialized and materialized civilization through a collapse of its financial structure. In order to comprehend the swiftness and finality of

#### THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

upon Babylon, the symbol of this completely commercialized and materialized civilization, let the reader review and ponder the eighteenth chapter of Revelation, where the final denouement is depicted in this graphic passage:

"And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, 'Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all.'

And the voice of harpers and minstrels and flute players and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee;

And no craftsman, of whatever craft, shall be found any more at all in thee;

And the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in thee;

And the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee;

For thy merchants were the princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth." (Revelation 18:21-24)

(See here Isa. 47:1-15; (esp. 7-9); Isa. 24:1-23; Rev. 18:1-24; Isa. 3:16-4:2; Ezek. 38:19-23; Isa. 29:5-12; Joel 2:1-11; Obadiah 15; Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Ch. XII; Isaiah 34:1-17.)

"And I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of whose head like the pure wool; his throne like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened." (Daniel 7:9, 10)

(See especially Daniel 7:14, 27; and also Rev. 20:12.)

"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." (Zech. 14:9)

(See also I Kings 8:27, where Solomon queries, "Will God indeed dwell upon earth?" See also Jude 14; Isa. 2:2, 3; Mic. 4:1-8; Tit. 2:13; Dan. 7:44; Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Ch. X; Isaiah 6; Zech. 8:20-22; Luke 13:29; Isa. 28:6; Isa. 42:8.)

"Afterward he brought me to the GATE that looketh toward the east, and behold, THE GLORY OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL came from the way of the east; and his voice was like the noise of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory....And the GLORY OF THE LORD came into the house by WAY of the GATE whose prospect is toward the east." (Ezekiel 43:1-4)

The Bahá'í's believe that the foregoing verses refer to The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and their respective birthplaces, The Báb having been born in Shiráz in Persia and Bahá'u'lláh having been born in Teheran to the eastward from Shiráz.

#### WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY?

"Lift up your heads, O ye Gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye Gates; even lift them up ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory." (Psalms 24:7-10)

This passage, the Bahá'í's believe, refers to "The Báb" whose name means "The Gate" and Bahá'u'lláh whose name means "The Glory of God". The Báb, who was the gateway to the great new dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, was also an independent Prophet, or a Manifestation of God in his own right. He inaugurated the Bábí dispensation whose duration was to cease when "The Glory of God" should appear. When Bahá'u'lláh appeared 19 years later the Bábí dispensation came to an end by the implicit command of The Báb who had instructed his followers to turn immediately to Bahá'u'lláh, thus demonstrating how in the Divine economy religious dispensations are abrogated with finality in favor of a new dispensation of the Religion of God.

Let it be pointed out in this connection that all the great Divinely revealed religions are looking for the simultaneous return and re-manifestation of two great

prophets: Thus "in the Bible the Jews have the promise of the Lord of Hosts and the Messiah; in the Gospels the return of Christ and Elijah is promised; in the religion of Muhammad there is the promise of the Mahdi and the Messiah; it is the same with the Zoroastrian and the other religions." (So, 'Abdul-Bahá in Some Answered Questions Chap. X, pp. 46, 47.)

(See also Rev. 11:3-5.)

#### HE IS LORD OF THE VINEYARD

"There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants and beat one and slew another and stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the first; but they did unto them likewise. But last of all, he sent unto them his son saying, 'They will reverence my Son.' But when the husbandmen saw the Son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come let us kill him, and let us seize his inheritance.' And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him. When the Lord therefore of the Vineyard cometh, What will he do unto those husbandmen?" (Matthew 21: 33-41)

In the foregoing parable Jesus not only prefigures his own death, as the son and heir of the kingdom, but he also identifies "The Father" as "The Lord of the Vineyard".

That Jesus, who was manifested in the flesh in the station of the Son, will return, that is, he will re-appear and be re-manifested in the station of the Father is clear from other verses from the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures as well as from other Sacred Writings.

(See John 17:11, 26; John 20:17; I Tim. 6:14; and John 1:18)

#### "THE BEST BELOVED IS COME!"

In His right hand is the sealed Wine of His name. Happy is the man that turneth unto Him, and drinketh his fill, and exclaimeth: 'Praise be to Thee, O Revealer of the signs of God!' By the righteousness of the Almighty! Every hidden thing hath been manifested through the power of truth. All the favors of God have been sent down, as a token of His grace. The waters of everlasting life have, in their fullness, been proffered unto men. Every single cup hath been borne round by the hand of the Well-Beloved. Draw near, and tarry not, though it be for one short moment." (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Ch. XIV, p. 34; Ch. XVII; XVIII)

#### THE GOLDEN KEY

to the understanding of all the Sacred Inspired Writings is an understanding of the Bahá'í principle of the unity of God and His prophets. This point has been elucidated with characteristic clarity by Bahá'u'lláh in the following terms:

"It is clear and evident to thee that all the prophets are the Temples of the Cause of God, who have appeared clothed in divers attire. If thou wilt observe with discriminating eyes, thou wilt behold them all abiding in the same tabernacle, soaring in the same heaven, seated upon the same throne, uttering the same speech, and proclaiming the same Faith. Such is the unity of those essences of Being, those luminaries of infinite and immeasurable splendor!" (Bahá'í World Faith, p. 22)

## JESUS TAUGHT THE UNITY OF THE PROPHETS

That Jesus understood, and taught the principle of the oneness of the prophets of God is seen from the following:

"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of Me."  
(John 5:46)

(See also, Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; and Mark 9:11-13; where John the Baptist is identified as Elias. See also, Matt. 16:27; Matt. 11:13, 14; John 8:19; and John 15:26.)

Thus Jesus, himself, could say: "Before Abraham was, I AM." (Note especially John 8:58 of the larger context 16-58.)

(See also John 17:1-26, noting especially verses 12, 23, 26.)

Wherefore also, Moses, "The Man of God", in blessing the Children of Israel before his death, hath said:

"The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Páran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law unto them." (Deut. 33:2)

Here Moses names a succession of five Manifestations of God. Note that while he alone of the five had at that time appeared he visualizes all as having already appeared, speaking of them as he does in the past tense. This succession we recognize to be: Moses and Jesus from Sinai; Muhammad and The Báb who rose up from Seir and shined forth from Páran, The Báb whose advent was attended by 10,000 martyrs to his Cause (Cf. Jude 14); and Bahá'u'lláh is He from whose right hand went forth a fiery law in the letters which He addressed to the crowned heads of the earth.

(Query: If Moses could see and name the next five Manifestations to come, why did he not name the next ten? The answer is, he could have, but he was concerned only with those who belonged to this cycle.)

(Cf. Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, XXXIX, p. 88ff.; XLVII, p.101; XXII, pp. 54,55; also Ch. XXIV.)

While particular appellations such as "The Friend of God", "The Son of God", and "The Seal of the Prophets" apply especially to Abraham, Jesus and Muhammad respectively, it is clear that the appellations "The King of Glory", "the Lord of Hosts", "the Eternal Truth", "the Ancient of Days", "the Desire of all Nations", "the Best Beloved" and "the Glory of God" refer primarily to the Great Universal Manifestation of God whose appearance marks the consummation of the age and the ushering in of a new civilization and a divine new order upon earth.

### UNTO ALL TRUTH

Let those who contend that the Revelation which Jesus brought is final ponder in their hearts the import of their contention. In effect they say: "This is God's final revelation; God's final messenger; this is the last message we shall ever have from God; there is no more; this is the end; - and indeed it is; - but only the end of an age; the end of a series of religious dispensations which make up a religious cycle as musical measures make up the score of a beautiful symphony.

Let those who make the contention that their prophet is final be reminded that

the adherents of all the religious dispensations of the past have, without exception, taken this position with reference to the new dispensation. Here is a mystery: while each new dispensation of the Religion of God always acknowledges, accredits and accepts the preceding dispensations, as in the case of the Christian recognizing the Jewish, and of the Mohammedan recognizing both the Christian and the Jewish, only a mere handful of prepared souls in any established dispensation are able to recognize and accept the Manifestation of God in his new attire and embrace his teachings for the new day of God.

That Jesus himself moreover, did not regard his revelation as final may be seen from the following words:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now...Howbeit, when the spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth." (John 15:12,13)

(See also John 15:26; John 14:16-20; John 14:26; Heb. 4:3-11, especially verses 8-10)

"The Comforter whose advent all the scriptures have promised is now come that he may reveal unto you all knowledge and wisdom. Seek him over the entire surface of the earth, haply ye may find him." (World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 104, 5)

From the foregoing it is clear that a series of several great events are expected to appear in the contingent world, either concurrently or serially, between the initial appearance of the Manifestation of God and the final ushering in of the Kingdom of God upon earth. These are: a cataclysmic upheaval; a world-wide economic collapse and a fiery holocaust or Armageddon.

If the reader entertains any doubts as to whether these events are to be taken literally or figuratively let him ask himself if they could not be fulfilled in both senses at one and the same time. These events will presumably be fulfilled in every sense in which they may conceivably be expected to be fulfilled and that whatever sign may be required will be forthcoming and surely supplied so that no man shall have grounds for excuse.

#### A NEW CIVILIZATION

"And he that sitteth on the throne said, 'Behold I make all things new'". (Revelation 21:5)

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say 'Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:2-4)

(See also, Isa. 60:1-22; Rev. 21:10-26; Rev. 22:3,4; Isa. 54:1-17)

A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

Jesus had much to say about the Kingdom of God. He taught his disciples to pray for its coming (Cf. Matt. 6:10); He says that the preaching of the Kingdom of God was his mission: "I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent." (Luke 4:43)

At no point does he claim to have come to establish the Kingdom of God on earth but when the Jews would have inaugurated this kingdom by forcibly crowning him king, he eluded them and fled into the mountains (Cf. John 6:15); on another occasion he explained that the bestowing of positions of preference in the Kingdom of God was not within his prerogative but in the hands of the Father who heads the Kingdom, (Cf. Matt. 20:20-23).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying,

'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God:

And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; for the first things are passed away.'

And he that sitteth on the throne said, 'Behold I make all things new.' And he saith, 'Write: for these things are faithful and true.'

And he said unto me, 'They are come to pass. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death'". (Rev. 21:1-8)

(See also, Isa. 65:17-25; II Peter 3:13; Isa. 29:17-24; Isa. 35:1-10; Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Ch. XXV)

Briefly the intent of the foregoing promises and prophecies, the Bahá'í's believe, is that the Great Day of God is at hand; that we have already entered it in fact; that the events which would signalize its advent are gradually unfolding before our very eyes or are immediately impending; that we are witnessing the death pangs of one civilization in anticipation of the establishment of a new, Divinely created and Divinely administered, civilization -- the Kingdom of God upon the earth; and that the Bahá'í World Faith itself holds the key to the unity of the human race and that it is the door to the New Age.

That the world is moving toward this Divinely ordained destiny; that, indeed, it stands upon the very threshold of its realization will be seen from a careful perusal of the implications of the following statement by Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í World Faith:

"The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the estab-

lishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded.

This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples.

A world executive, backed by an international force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system.

A mechanism of world intercommunication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrance and restrictions, and functioning with marvelous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will act as the nerve center of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate.

A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind. In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop.

The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated.

National rivalries, hatreds and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and cooperation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear.

The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standards of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race." (Shoghi Effendi in God Passes By)

In conclusion, let all who hope for the fulfillment of the Promise of God through the ages, whether they be Jewish, Christian, or Mohammedan, reflect upon the following utterance concerning Akká and Haifa made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to a believer:

The view from the Pilgrim Home is very attractive, especially as it faces the Blessed tomb of Bahá'u'lláh. In the future the distance between Akká and Haifa will be built up, and the two cities will join and clasp hands, becoming the two terminal sections of one mighty metropolis.

As I now look over this scene, I see so clearly that it will become one of the first emporiums of the world. This large semi-circular bay will be transformed into the finest harbor, wherein the ships of all nations will seek shelter and refuge. The great vessels of all peoples will come to this port, bringing on their decks thousands and thousands of men and women from every part of the globe.

The mountain and the plain will be dotted with the most modern buildings and palaces. Industries will be established and various institutions of philanthropic nature will be founded. The flowers of civilization and culture from all nations will be brought here to blend their fragrance together and blaze the way for the brotherhood of man.

Wonderful gardens, orchards, groves and parks will be laid out on all sides. At night the great city will be lighted by electricity. The entire harbor from Akká to Haifa will be one path of illumination. Powerful searchlights will be placed on both sides of Mount Carmel to guide the steamers. Mount Carmel itself, from top to bottom, will be submerged in a sea of lights. A person standing on the summit of Mount Carmel, and the passengers of the steamers coming to it, will look upon the most sublime and majestic spectacle of the whole world.

From every part of the mountain the symphony of Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá! will be raised, and before the daybreak soul-entrancing music accompanied by melodious voices will be uplifted towards the throne of the Almighty.

Indeed, God's ways are mysterious and unsearchable. What outward relation exists between Shiráz and Tihrán, Baghdad and Constantinople, Adrianople, Akká and Haifa? God worked patiently, step by step, through these various cities, according to His own definite and eternal plan, so that the prophecies and predictions as foretold by the prophets might be fulfilled.

(Here Cf. Hos. 2:15; Mic. 7:12; Isa. 65:10 and especially Zech. 4:14)

This golden thread of promise concerning the Messianic Millennium runs through the Bible, and it was so destined that God in His own good time would cause its appearance. Not even a single word will be left meaningless and unfulfilled. (Bahá'u'lláh and The New Era, Chapter XIV, pp. 303 and FF.)

"Our Father, Who are in Heaven

Thy Kingdom Come . . . !