

*Raising
the Tent of
Unity*

A. A. Furutan

Published by
Baha'i Publishing Trust
POST BOX : 19
NEW DELHI, INDIA.

Raising the Tent of Unity

The influence exerted by the Revelation of Baha'u'llah upon the physical world as well as the realm of the heart.

THE Revelation of the Bab, as testified by 'Abdu'l-Baha, is likened to the sun when it enters the Vernal Equinox; the station of Baha'u'llah, on the other hand, is commemorated when the sun reaches its highest point at midsummer. Thus these two successive Revelations which have shed illumination upon the earth from the unseen Realm, can be regarded as two distinct seasons. The Revelation of the Bab is similar to the regenerating and life-giving springtime which brings freshness and fertility to the earth, while the second Revelation is likened to the period of fruitfulness in the summer.

The inception of the former, the life-giving Revelation of the Bab caused the soil of men's hearts and minds to be prepared through the love of God, so that the spiritual seeds and flowers could be planted therein; while the advent of the latter in the "year eighty" ushered in the fruit-laden summer, when the sun reaches its highest station. This spiritual summer adorned the trees of the seeking and receptive souls with wondrous fruits and delectable bounties.

Now if we survey the course of man's intellectual development in recent centuries, we shall notice that since the advent of the Revelation of the Bab in 1844 (1260 A.H.), the world of being has entered upon a new phase, that intellectual and spiritual powers of man have been quickened enormously and that an unprecedented potentiality has been infused in man, enabling him to perceive spiritual truths, to understand and discover hidden things and to study and formulate the laws of science. Thus the year 1844 may be said to have marked the termination of the phase of man's childhood and signaled the "coming of age" of the human race.

Here is an analogy. If we place the water on the fire and heat it, it begins to absorb the heat from the moment it is put on the fire. It gradually approaches the boiling point, and if we continue the act of heating, the temperature rises steadily to 100° C. when the water begins to boil. In a similar manner, the world of humanity has advanced gradually throughout ages and centuries as a result of the guidance and education bestowed upon it by the Divine Manifestations. Then in the year 1844, the glorious effulgence of the Sun of Truth shone upon the world of creation in its utmost splendor and brought about mankind's "coming of age". During the past centuries man has been groping along the path of material and spiritual progress as a caravan trudges along the road in the dark with the aid of the stars and the moon. Today the Sun of Truth is shining in the plenitude of its glory and the caravan of human civilization

is advancing by leaps and bounds in the dazzling light of the Sun.

Those detached and devoted souls who turned to the Sun of Truth and received divine bounties and confirmations directly from the Manifestation of God, became imbued with wondrous powers and displayed many amazing deeds. The evidence of their spiritual power has caused all men to wonder. A careful study of the history of the Faith would acquaint us with those momentous events which stand associated with their prodigious lives.

It is remarkable that even the rest of humanity who showed indifference to the Call of God and failed to receive illumination from the Day-Star of His Revelation should have been also affected by the Light of this New Day. They have been prompted unconsciously to make wonderful progress in various stages of material civilization within a brief period. Imagine a newly-born babe flashing past a hundred years' life-span overnight!

It is evident that when the spring season comes and the vernal showers fall abundantly everywhere, the whole earth becomes verdant automatically, grass grows everywhere and the trees blossom forth in luxuriant beauty. If you go to the top of a rocky mountain in springtime, you can find lots of green plants growing even out of tiny crevices in the solid rock.

The Momentous Influence of the Baha'i Revelation

Now let us elaborate the point about the momentous influence of the

Baha'i Revelation. We note that from the remote past which goes back to 6,000 years B.C. until the year 1844, the total number of inventions that the men of learning and science succeeded in bringing to light were no more than about seventy. Some of these inventions are very significant, others are secondary. The former comprise such inventions as: papyrus, water-clocks, draw-bridge, gunpowder, printing press, telescope, microscope and others. This means that during this vast stretch of time which runs into many centuries only about seventy inventions were given to us by the men of learning. On the average it comes to only one new invention for every 150 years.

Let us now consider the space of time between 1844 and 1949. In the course of one hundred and five years no less than 90 important inventions have appeared, that is to say roughly one new invention per year. To enumerate but a few, we have: photography and the many developments related to it including motion pictures in color; engines powered by various fuels which drive trains, automobiles, airplanes, ships and submarines; the many devices for recording and reproducing sound with ever increasing fidelity; the X Ray, radio, television, and the host of other inventions made possible through the discovery of electricity and the harnessing of the power in the atom.

This amazing outburst of inventive talent which has manifested itself since 1844 arrests our attention and is unmistakably attributable to the divine

creative power released through the Revelation of Baha'u'llah.

The Day that the Sun of Truth Has Shone

In a Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Baha we read as follows: "O ye the friends and handmaids of the Merciful! This is the Day that the Sun of Truth has shone from the horizon of existence. Its dawn is so resplendent and its rays are so brilliant that the heavy clouds were dispersed and the Sun shone with the utmost brightness from the horizon of the world. That is why a new regeneration is witnessed in all the created things. Consider how much the sphere of sciences and arts has been expanded in this age. How many wonderful discoveries and innovations have appeared; to what extent the powers of thought have progressed and what great inventions have been materialized. This century is equal to one hundred centuries. That is to say if one were to put together the achievements of a hundred centuries against those which have appeared in this century, the latter would far exceed those of the past hundred centuries. For example, if you collected all the books that were written and compiled throughout the past ages and similarly gathered together all the books and publications that have appeared in this century, the volume of the books published in this age would be many times more than the volume of the books written in the past ages.

"Consider what a great influence has the Daystar of the world exerted upon the realities of all beings. But a thousand times alas! that the eyes are blind, the ears are deaf and the

minds and hearts are heedless to this sublime Grace. Therefore, strive with all your hearts to awaken those who slumber. And upon you be the Glory of the Most Glorious!"

However, it is noteworthy that since the appearance of the Bab, as human capacity of perception increased and enormous strides were made in material progress, mankind has been, to a corresponding degree, increasingly tormented by the devastating fires of its highly materialistic civilization.

We Baha'is believe that the sole remedy for all the ills and afflictions which have assailed humanity today lies in following the Teachings of Baha'u'llah—a remedy for the application of which His Holiness the Bab offered up His life and thousands of Baha'is have been persecuted to death.

The fact is that the longer men delay in accepting this holy Cause, the longer they hesitate to utilize this divinely-bestowed healing Remedy, the more distant will grow their hour of deliverance from the ills and sufferings that afflict them and the farther off will be the Day when the Ark of human prosperity and salvation, having weathered grave dangers, would reach the haven of security.

Experience shows that nothing else but the priceless Faith of Baha'u'llah, nothing short of His world-encircling, world-redeeming Order could bring salvation to man and release him from the fetters of prejudice. This mighty Cause is fed by the Power supplied from the Kingdom of God, its vigor is sustained by heavenly might, its wond-

rous spirit has flowed into the hearts of men and has uprooted age-old superstitions and vain imaginings.

To Succeed in Uniting the Heart of Men

History bears witness that none of the world's potentates, kings or emperors, notwithstanding their invincible power, their vast armies, their unlimited wealth and resources, did ever succeed in uniting the hearts of men or in creating harmony between two religious sects. This is because only the divine Manifestations have the power to establish fellowship and concord among men. In the Quran it is written: "And if thou should have given all that is on earth, thou could not have brought reconciliation and unity among their hearts, but God verily united them." (Sura 8, verse 63). And that is how in this holy Dispensation, through the power of the Word of God and the outpourings of His exalted Pen, people from diverse religions, creeds and factions, who previously bore hatred against one another; people from every race and culture, whether eastern or western, are now all united under the unfurled banner of the Cause of Baha'u'llah with the utmost unity and love as the members of a single family. One cannot observe the slightest evidence of estrangement or alienation amongst them.

The Meaning of Isaiah's Prophecy

"Universal Peace," 'Abdu'l-Baha affirms, "is a momentous enterprise, but it requires unity of conscience which is the foundation for this mighty enterprise." Thus the meaning of

Isaiah's prophecy becomes evident, where it says :

“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 of His ways, and we will walk in His path : 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 people ; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not raise sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” (Isaiah II : 2-4)

Now the Baha'i world is a fine replica of this glorious world to come, the advent of which is but the ardent desire of all mankind. If the inhabitants of this earth assembled beneath the Tent of Unity and drank the Water of everlasting life from this Fountain, then every trace of enmity, strife and discord would disappear and all men would abide in perfect freedom and security.

The Word of God Is Able to Unite

In one of His Tablets 'Abdu'l-Baha says : “Today nothing but the potency of the Word of God, which dominates the realities of things, is able to unite and harmonize the minds, thoughts,

hearts and souls of the world of humanity under the shade of one tree. This power pervades all things and motivates all men ; it coordinates and organizes the world of humanity.

“Praise be to God ! In this Day the radiant light of the Word of God has dawned upon all the horizons, and people from every group, tribe, nation, race and community have gathered beneath the shade of the Word and are united and assembled together in utmost harmony.

“How numerous are the meetings that are embellished by the presence of peoples from different countries, races and tribes ! Should a soul enter this meeting, he would think that those present must have come from the same fatherland, the same country, the same tribe, having a single thought, a single opinion, a single object, while in fact one comes from America, one from Africa, one from Asia, another from Europe, from India or from Turkistan ; one is an Arab, a Turk, a Persian, a Greek ; and notwithstanding this, they meet together with the utmost harmony, unity, love, freedom, oneness and joy. All this is due to the influence of the Word. If all the earthly powers join together, they cannot establish even one such gathering that could turn the different nations into a single community through the same love, fellowship, joy and enthusiasm ; and by raising a melody in the midmost heart of the world, it is able to abolish strife, quarrel, war and bloodshed and to establish the universal peace, reconciliation and oneness of mankind. Is there any power than can withstand the in-

fluence of the Word of God? No, by the Almighty God! The evidences are obvious and the proof is conclusive. An unbiased observer will be amazed and astonished. He would bear witness that all the nations, races, tribes and governments of the world should be very joyous, grateful and contented on account of the Teachings and Exhortations of Baha'u'llah, since these divine Teachings change the beasts of prey into grazing animals and transform the creeping creatures into the fowls of the air. They change human beings into heavenly angels and enable the world of humanity to become a repository of the divine perfections."

The Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, Shoghi Effendi wrote: "These momentous events have all transpired in the world during the few years after the termination of the first Baha'i Century. Therefore it is obvious how great are the events that will gradually unfold themselves in the course of this stupendous century—the century associated with the rise of the divinely-ordained New World Order—and in the subsequent centuries of this blessed second Age of the Baha'i Era as well as in the Golden Age which constitutes the last, the crowning Age of the first Era of this Holy Cycle."

TL
 - A closed plastic tube
 - for TRAINS
 with water