

(Earth Turning on Its Axis)

In Ruth J. Moffett's book
New Keys to the Book of ^{p.104}
Revelation (pub. BPT of India, 1977)
She quotes 'Abdul-Bahá as
saying:

"A few days the earth will roll
on its axis and these fleeting
visions will be completely forgotten."

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in Egypt in 1913"

Actually, on p. 297 of Abdul Baha in
Egypt Abdul-Baha's quote reads

"A few days shall roll on their axis,
and all these conditions will become
non-existent, evanescent and completely
forgotten." [Ed. Clearly it reads *andwardly*]

(GOD SPEAKS AGAIN)

NEW KEYS
TO
THE BOOK OF REVELATION

By
RUTH J. MOFFETT

"O thou who art waiting, tarry no longer for He is come. Behold His
Tabernacle and His Glory dwelling therein. It is the ancient Glory
with a new Manifestation."—Bahá'u'lláh.

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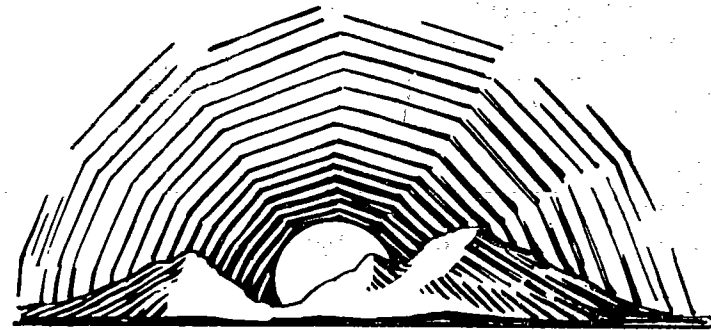
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THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED TO

'ABDU'L-BAHA

CENTER OF THE COVENANT AND INTERPRETER OF THE WORD OF GOD, IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION FOR THE KEYS OF TRUTH, FOR THE UNERRING GUIDANCE, THE LOVING SOLACE, THE REVIVIFYING ENCOURAGEMENT, THE UNSWERVING JUSTICE RENDERED TO THE MILLIONS, WHO, LIKE THE AUTHOR, AMID THE VEXING PROBLEMS OF LIFE, FIND THEMSELVES IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN BY 'ABDU'L-BAHA TO THE GLORY OF GOD IN THIS NEW DAY.

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1977



WORDS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ ABOUT THE HOLY BIBLE

- During the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the City Temple in London, England, in 1911, He wrote in the large Bible, used by generations of clergymen, the following :

"This book is the holy book of God and of sacred inspiration. It is the Bible of salvation, the noble Gospel. It is the mystery of the Kingdom and its lights. It is the divine bounty and the sign of the guidance of God."

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

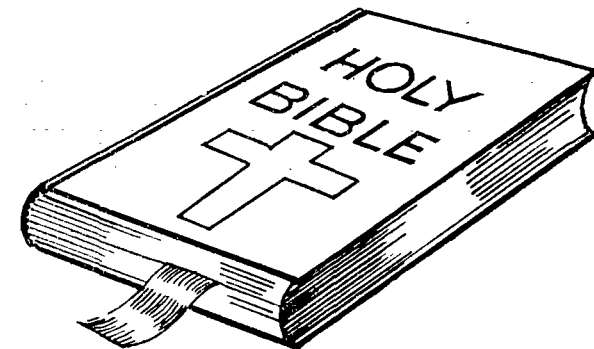
- Here are just two of His further references :

"Thou has written that thou lovest the Bible. Undoubtedly, the friends and maid-servants of the Merciful should know the value of the Bible, for they are the ones who have discovered the real significances and have become cognizant of the hidden mystery of the Holy Book."

—Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Vol. 1, p. 218

- "I beg of God through the confirmations and assistance of the True One thou mayest show the utmost eloquence, fluency, ability and skill in teaching the real significance of the Bible. Turn toward the Kingdom of Abhá and seek the bounty of the Holy Spirit. Loosen the tongue and the confirmations of the Spirit shall reach thee".

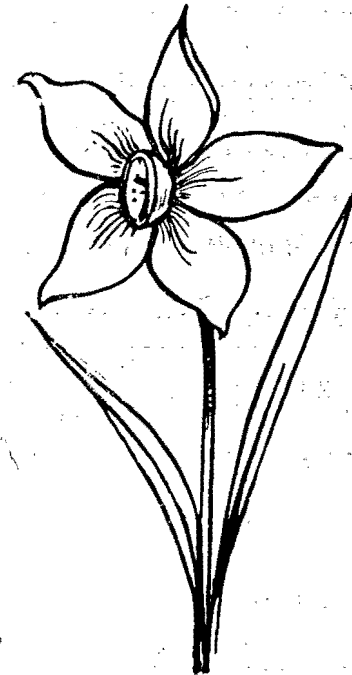
—Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Vol. 2, p. 243



**"THE SIGN OF THE
GUIDANCE OF GOD"**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The encouragement of many has made this book possible. The author wishes to express great gratitude and appreciation to Shoghi Effendi, beloved Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, for his profound wisdom and his answers to many perplexing questions; to Martha Root for the inspiration she gave the author to undertake this arduous work; to Dorothy Baker for her far-sighted and continuous encouragement; to Robert Lee Moffett, F. St. George Spendlove and to many others who have assisted in this great task; also gratitude to the countless others, who in lectures and classes and seminars have shown deep interest and who have urged that this book be made available to all those interested in building a nobler humanity and a "new heaven and a new earth."



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INTRODUCTION

A climactic minute, a day, a year, an age, a cycle, all have just passed into eternity! The Book of Revelation records this rare moment in history, as revealed by Christ. The Master Key to this awe-inspiring Revelation is given by Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet of God for the New Age. It is explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His duly appointed and recorded Interpreter. The author has taken this Master Key to open the doors of insight that the reader may thereby clearly apprehend in his own soul the vital significance of this auspicious moment in the spiritual history of mankind; that he may confidently cross, with divine authority, the bridge of understanding from the vague and misty Yesterday into the Golden Age of Tomorrow.

"The world needs a new Isaiah or a John!" said a columnist in the New York Times. An historian said, "Never before has there been a period in human history when it was so necessary that a Divine Plan for mankind be revealed; that the greater realities be made plain, and that the innate purpose and the next steps in the progress of humanity become known."

The Book of Revelation is full of thrilling highlights and shadows, a symbolic picture of expanding horizons of Truth, of the fulfillment of prophecies of all ages, of the culmination of a great cycle. It points to the future stages of man's unfoldment. Here is a spiritual bridge from Yesterday to Tomorrow built by Jesus Christ.

This is a Book of sublime Revelation, which to many is an enigma. It is one of the most profound and important books of Sacred Writings, possessing most beautiful and extraordinary literary form, a clear vision and spiritual power.

The Book of Revelation of St. John, the Psalms, the Book of Ruth, are considered by scholars to be the masterpieces of all literature. Great as are the works of Shakespeare and others, these have added spiritual values. Much, however, depends upon its interpretation, as is true of all Sacred Writings.

It is well to understand first the seven different methods that have been used for interpreting Sacred Writings so that we may better comprehend the many different expositions of this remarkable Book of Revelation.

1. The "Early Christian"—Historical method.

This approach holds that the Book of Revelation has no message except for those who first received it, and that it was written primarily for the encouragement and edification of the early Christians. This method is therefore literal and limited to the conditions of the early Christian Church.

2. The "Holy Roman Empire" method.

This method relates to the events in the history of the Roman Empire, and attaches undue emphasis to the Holy Roman Empire and to the countries under its dominion. Its only strong point is that it partially avoids literal interpretations.

3. The Futurist method.

This method accepts all of the Book as unfulfilled events, to be fulfilled in the future after the Second Coming of Christ and the "millennial rule of His saints." This interpretation is obviously inadequate, as many of the events are already fulfilled.

4. The Preterist method.

"Preter" means past. The Preterists' belief is opposite to that of the Futurists. They look backward believing that all of the events of the Book are fulfilled, thus making its message inapplicable to the events of this day.

5. The Philosophical method.

This method is completely divorced from the historical background and is expressed in terms of philosophical, symbolic, psychological and astrological symbols. It looks upon the Book as a discussion about the forces which underlie an event, but denies the event. It refers to all men of all ages and to the symbols as applying to any or all periods of time. The objection is that this method removes the Book of Revelation too far from the definite times stated therein, admits of no specific prophecies of specific events, and in fact denies the value of all prophecy.

6. The Historical—Symbolic method.

This method combines the historic and symbolic aspects, and at the same time attempts to relate them to the affairs of this Day. But as there are many conflicting interpretations they cannot all be right. "Truth is never contradictory, though we may see different facets of the Crystal of Truth, they do not disagree." This method, therefore, is not satisfactory.

7. The Authoritative—Authentic method.

This is the only remaining method left for our consideration. It relates the Past, the Present and the Future with clarity. This method recognizes the "Keys" as given not by the author but by One who has established all the proofs and evidences of His station as a Prophet or Voice of God speaking to mankind, and Who has recorded them with His Own Pen. The recognition of the "Keys" as originating from a Divine Source, eliminates controversy and establishes unity, harmony and clear understanding, opens the door of inner significances and thus preserves the Truth. This is the only method that is authoritative and authentic, clear and satisfactory.

Although the other methods of interpretation are not denied nor belittled, the reader is asked to sincerely consider the Authoritative—Authentic Method, using THE MASTER KEY, which is given by One Who is come as the Revelator, the World Educator, the Manifestation or Voice of God, speaking to mankind for this Day, for "God Speaks Again."

The Book of Revelation is to the religious systems of today somewhat like the Old Testament prophecies were to the Jews of yesterday, clouded with challenging mystery and obscurity. What could be more strange to the Jews than the teaching that a divine child should be born of a poor virgin, that a person despised and numbered among the malefactors should be established on the throne of David forever? Yet the pious Jew looked into the Holy Book with reverence and with the eye of patient expectation, awaiting the triumph of Israel.

Inasmuch as the Book of Revelation is the stated Revelation of Christ, the Divine Revelator, not the Revelation of St. John, and since no human being has been able to open the seals of the entire book, therefore only a proven Prophet of God like Christ could give the divinely authoritative Keys. Only as He leaves

His Message written, signed and sealed by Himself can the Keys contained therein be truly authentic. If the Keys are applied and they do not open the seals, one can well say that they are not the right Keys. If they are sincerely applied and they do open the locks, one must admit that they are the right Keys. The test of the validity of any key is: "Does it open the Lock?" Sometimes a certain key may open a certain lock, but nothing more. It takes the Master Key to open all the doors, or seals. The Master Key can be given only by the proven Prophet of God—the latest Messenger Who has appeared as Bahá'u'lláh "The Glory of God" foretold by Christ, the Divine Author of the awe-inspiring Book of Revelation, which is for all Faiths. Symbols obviously when rightly understood, "enable one to see the unseeable, to paint the unpaintable, and to express the inexpressible."

Slowly the veil of the twilight cycle of the past lifts, and the Sun of Glory brings the dawn of a New Day. It is established by innumerable proofs to be considered later, that the splendor of that Glory shines through Bahá'u'lláh, God's latest Messenger, Who has come to regenerate and unite mankind in very deed and truth; to gather them all to the one table of His bounty, and to lift all mankind to a loftier stage in his endless progress and unfoldment. May we, with open mind and heart, apply this Master Key to ascertain if it opens this remarkable sealed book—the Book of Revelation. Bahá'u'lláh has declared: "All the signs have been revealed; every prophetic allusion hath been manifested. Whatever hath been enshrined in all the Scriptures of the past hath been made evident. To doubt and hesitate is no longer possible... Time is pressing. The Divine Charger is impatient and can tarry no longer."—W.O.B. p. 111. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, while discoursing on understanding prophecy and specifying the importance of the Book of Revelation: "Consequently be engaged in perusing St. John's Revelation; all these signs are spoken of in that vision. Thou shalt soon behold things still greater than this."—T.A.B. p. 286.

It is to be understood that this book is not an interpretation by the author, but it is an explanation based on Keys given by Bahá'u'lláh and explained by Shoghi Effendi, the appointed interpreter, to the author. This helps in our understanding of this very important Book of Revelation revealed by Jesus Christ.

These Keys presented unlock not only our Christian Bible but other Sacred Books as well, to a clearer understanding and deeper appreciation. May this book enable the reader to disregard fallible human interpretation and to turn more and more steadfastly to the Revealed Word, which is the indispensable guide, critically needed in this dark period of increasing confusion and chaos, and thus gain the light of spiritual understanding, truth and illumination.

The Master Key opens the door to all Scriptures. "This is the Truth, and what truth is greater than the Revelation of St. John?... He, (Bahá'u'lláh) is the Alpha and Omega. He is the One that will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life, and bestow upon the sick the remedy of true salvation. He who such grace aideth is verily he that receiveth the most glorious heritage from the Prophets of God and His holy ones." B.W.F., pp. 350-351. "The correct interpretation of the Book of Revelation is a most powerful bridge of understanding into the new cycle." — J. Robert Buck, historian.

"The Book of Revelation is a very important book and very important in teaching the interpretation of Biblical passages to Christians," wrote Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, in a letter to the author, dated August 13, 1944. He stated that the Book of Revelation is the Master Bridge revealed by Christ for the followers of all religions, leading to the Kingdom of God upon the earth. This Master Key is sincerely presented after many years of research by the author, for the benefit of those eager to perceive the prophetic beacon light of truth, which has gleamed throughout the centuries. May this light inspire you to assist it to shine brightly in this Day. Let us pray that souls may arise with the fire of the love of God in their hearts, and become the servants of God and the quickeners of mankind, ushering in the day of peace and progress and unity upon the earth! The King James version is used as that is closest in spirit to the original Aramaic language which Christ used in His Day. We urge prayerful approach to a rereading of this entire book — that all may obtain more of the light of understanding.

"Verily, Christ said, 'Come that I may make you fishers of men', and today we say, 'Come! that we may make you quickeners of the world!' Lo! This is the Day of Grace! Come ye that I may make you kings of the realm of My Kingdom...

and I will make you the friends of My Soul in the realm of My Greatness and the Companions of My Beauty in the heaven of My Might forever." —Bahá'u'lláh, (G.P.B., Intro.)

* "That which is preeminent above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, and is the gift of Divine Revelation. Every bounty conferred by the Creator upon man, be it material or spiritual, is subservient unto this. It is, in its essence, and will ever so remain, the Bread which cometh down from Heaven. It is God's supreme testimony, the clearest evidence of His truth, the sign of His consummate bounty, the token of His all-encompassing mercy, the proof of His most loving providence, the symbol of His most perfect grace. He hath, indeed, partaken of this highest gift of God who hath recognized His Manifestation in this Day." —B.W.F. p. 122.



"THE SYMBOL OF HIS
PERFECT GRACE"

ANTICIPATORY PREFACE

A train of seven camels moved rhythmically along the white sands of the Mediterranean Sea in the little fishing village of Haifa. The softly lapping waves creaming over their tired feet brought relief in the hot tropical sun. The camel driver humbly prostrated himself on the shining sands in gratitude to God for having enabled him to enter the Holy Land and to worship on the Mountain of God—Mount Carmel.

A young lad by the name of John, son of Zebedee, the well-to-do fisherman, said to the weary traveler, "Have you seen Him, Jesus the Son of Man? O Sir! You must see Him! He is the great Healer! He is the Light of the World!"

This was the same John who, with his brother James, answered the call of Christ. It was he who was miraculously delivered from a cauldron of boiling oil in Rome, after the crucifixion of his beloved Master, and later at an advanced age was sent to the penal island of Patmos to work in the mines.

John is generally believed to have been younger than his brother James. His life may be divided into three periods: (1) Before his call to discipleship he no doubt lived with his parents in or near Bethsaida, and little is known of him. When the voice of John the Baptist was heard in the wilderness of Judea and the multitudes flocked to hear him, the sons of Zebedee were among the number and young John eagerly listened. (2) Then a greater One than John the Baptist arose, Jesus the Christ. Believers turned to Him. Peter, James and John came within the innermost circle of our Lord's followers, and John enjoyed the worthy distinction of being called the "beloved disciple," who witnessed the crucifixion and transfiguration and was with the Christ during His agony. John was the first of the disciples to recognize Christ after His Resurrection, and his zeal was unwearied, as with Peter he spread the teachings of Christ. Fifteen years after Paul's first visit to Jerusalem, John was there at the settlement of the great questions agitating the church, and his position and influence were

those of one who "seemed to be a pillar."—Gal 2:9. (3) The traditions of a later age connect him with Ephesus after his departure from Jerusalem. It is held that the Seven Asian Churches were his special charges, and that he had much to do in saving them from "soul-destroying error." All of the other disciples had experienced violent martyrdom, and because of his failure to conform to the command of Emperor-worship, John was banished to the island of Patmos. There, as a prisoner, he labored in the mines at an extremely old age, and received from Christ the remarkable Revelation which closes the New Testament. Polycarp, Ignatius and Papias were his disciples, and at that great age, after seeing the mission of Christ extended from Palestine westward to Italy and Gaul, he passed away, leaving his great heritage as a warning and a guide for all mankind.

Picture this elderly prisoner with the flowing beard, radiant countenance and purity of heart, sitting on a rock at the mouth of a cave on the lonely barren penal island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, receiving and writing one of the greatest messages thus far revealed to man. John, the beloved disciple, was perhaps the only soul in the entire world with the understanding mind, profundity, purity of heart, devotion of spirit and love of Christ, who had the spiritual capacity to receive such a great and divine communication. Rapidly and prayerfully he wrote as Christ unfolded this great symbolic and amazing historic Revelation and commanded him to write what he saw and heard of the "things which *must* shortly come to pass."—Rev. 1:1.

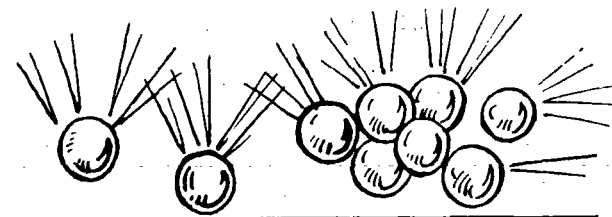
John had already chronicled the prophecies of Christ, that He would come in the Glory of the Father; "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."—John 14:16. "And now I have told you before it come to pass that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe."—John 14:29.

The following pages are an explanation of this great Revelation of Christ as recorded by John in the King James version, the Keys of which are given not by the author but by the Comforter—the Manifestation of God for this age. Bahá'u'lláh has appointed 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Moon reflecting His Light, as the Interpreter of His word including these Keys, lifting them above human interpretation and giving them divine authority and authenticity.

It is the hope of the author to present here a clearer understanding of the integrating and disintegrating forces sweeping the world today; the assurance of continuous world progress toward unity and peace, a new spiritual vision, a new perspective on life, and, **THROUGH THE MASTER KEY REVEALED BY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH A SHINING RAY OF HOPE FOR EVERY SOUL UPON THIS PLANET!**

One should earnestly seek in the Ocean of Truth for the pearls of greatest price.

"My holy, My divinely ordained Revelation may be likened unto an ocean in whose depths are concealed innumerable pearls of great price, of surpassing lustre. It is the duty of every seeker to bestir himself and strive to attain the shores of this ocean, so that he may, in proportion to the eagerness of his search and the efforts he hath exerted, partake of such benefits as have been pre-ordained in God's irrevocable and hidden Tablets." —Bahá'u'lláh —B.W.F. p. 66.



PEARLS OF SUCH LUSTRE !

THE SONG CELESTIAL

God Speaks:

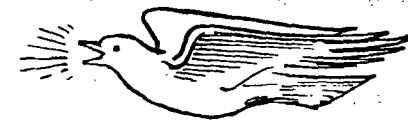
Each Day is Judgment Day; but comes a Day
Of Days when I Myself in Power rise
Amongst the dead and open ready eyes
Unto My Glory.

In the atmosphere
Of faith in My past, Prophets those have died
To self, the world and all but Me beside.

Hast thou not heard? "Those who in Christ are dead
Shall meet Him in the air."

These nothing fear
For they shall know Him when He doth appear,
No matter what His Name or Birth or Nation;
No matter what may be His earthly station,
For from the sea of Names they long have fled.
They know Him by the shining of His Light,
As those whose eyes are open see the bright
And cloudless sun; for the benign bestowing
Of His great bounties, like the sunlight flowing,
Declare Him. He hath Names unto the knowing.
Their spirits meet Him, their long-promised One:
With man's interpretations they have done;
Their longing hearts in Certitude find rest;
They recognize My Song and seek My Nest.

—by Howard Colby Ives



THE SONG OF JOY

CHAPTER I

THE VOICE OF GOD

One Like unto the Son of Man

“Behold I stand at the door and knock.” —Rev. 3:20

The curtain rises on the greatest drama in all history. “This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ,” the clarion call that has rung down through the centuries. It is established that this Book of Revelation was given by Christ to John: ‘to show unto his servants the things which *must* shortly come to pass.’ Most scholars state that the Book was received and recorded by John in 96 A.D. on the Island of Patmos. John was commanded by Christ to send this message to the “seven churches which are in Asia,” — v.11—to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, the first little Christian missions in what is now Western Turkey. Whereas in the authoritative — authentic interpretation these “churches” refer not only to the early missions, but to the seven great divinely revealed religious systems of the past in the Adamic Cycle, Whose Founders have shed increasing splendour on the Universal Revelation for the New Day. — See P.U.P. p. 158.

It has been stated by the distinguished scholar, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, that “The successive Founders of all past Religions, Who, from time immemorial, have shed, with ever-increasing intensity, the splendour of one common Revelation at the various stages which have marked the advance of mankind toward maturity, may thus, in a sense, be regarded as preliminary Manifestations, anticipating and paving the way for the advent of that Day of Days when the whole earth will have fructified and the tree of humanity will have yielded its destined fruit.” —W.O.B. p. 166.

These great divinely-revealed religious systems of the past Cycle still existing today are Sabeanism, Hinduism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. The respective

Founders of these Systems were possibly Enoch; as believed by some of the Sabeans but not fully established, Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus the Christ and Muhammad. In this new cycle, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh were the Founders of the Bábí Faith and the Bahá'í Faith, respectively.

It is important also to know the overall pattern including the time and place of the appearances of these Prophets, that we may better comprehend this great symbolic message of Christ as revealed in the Book of Revelation. According to our best scholars, Krishna appeared in India sometime between 3000 and 2000 B.C.; the birth of Christ occurred in Palestine about 5 or 4 B.C. Muhammad's advent was in Arabia in 622 A.D. The Báb was born in Shiráz, Persia in 1819 and declared His Mission in 1844. Bahá'u'lláh was born in Tihrán, Persia in 1817 and made the declaration of His Station and Mission in Baghdád, Iráq in 1863. Each Founder brought the Laws and the Word of God for the Age in which He appeared, and each One was the Star, or Angel, of His Church, or System.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, explains that "The Manifestation of God is the real divine temple and collective centre of which the outer church is but a symbol...Recall the statement of His Holiness Jesus Christ in the Gospel. Addressing Peter, He said, 'Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build My Church.' It is evident, therefore, that the Church of God is the Law of God and that the actual edifice is but one symbol thereof. For the law of God is a collective centre which unites various peoples, nativities, tongues and opinions. All find shelter in its protection and become attracted to it." — P.U.P. p. 158.

'Abdu'l-Bahá explains in the following powerful words some of the symbolism used by Christ.

Church—The Collective Center

"The purpose of this is that the church is a collective centre. Temples are the symbols of the reality and divinity of God; the collective centre of mankind...it is evident that the church is the collective centre for mankind. For this reason there have been churches and temples in all the divine religions; but the real collective centres are the Manifestations of God, of whom the church or temple is a symbol and expression. That is to say, the Manifestation of God is the real divine temple and collective

centre of which the outer church is but a symbol." — P.U.P. p. 158.

"Therefore, it is shown that the Divine Manifestations of God are the collective centres of God. These heavenly Messengers are the real shepherds of humanity, for whenever They appear in the world They unite the scattered sheep. The collective centre has always appeared in the Orient. His Holiness Abraham, His Holiness Moses, His Holiness Jesus Christ, His Holiness Muhammad were collective centres of Their day and time, and all arose in the East. Today His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh is the collective centre of unity for all mankind and the splendor of His light has likewise dawned in the east." — P.U.P. p. 159.

Each Divine Revelator is the Star of Guidance and the Mirror reflecting the light by which we learn to know God. Minds are powerless to comprehend God and souls are unable to perceive His Exalted Essence. "Therefore all that the human reality knows discovers, and understands of the names, the attributes, and perfections of God, refer to these Holy Manifestations." — S.A.Q. p. 169. "These sanctified Mirrors, these Day Springs of ancient glory, are, one and all, the Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe, its Essence and ultimate Purpose. From Him proceed Their knowledge and power; from Him is derived Their sovereignty. The beauty of Their countenance is but a reflection of His image, and Their revelation a sign of His deathless glory. They are the Treasuries of Divine Knowledge, and the Repositories of celestial wisdom. Through Them is transmitted a grace that is infinite and by Them is revealed the Light that can never fade." — Gl. p. 47. In our immaturity we have failed to appreciate Their stations. Today we are beginning to comprehend the greatness of Their mission and that each One is the Collective Centre of His Age. — P.U.P. p. 158.

Christ declared that He "is the faithful witness." — v. 5. The witness of whom? Of the One Who is to come, as each Prophet before Him has been. In the same verse, He stated that he "is the first begotten of the dead." This means that He is the One Who came to raise mankind out of spiritual deadness. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that "those souls who are not vivified and attracted by the Holy Spirit are accounted among the dead, because their souls are deprived of the breath of the Holy Spirit, and these persons after physical death are in a certain condition,

having feeling and discernment in their environment, but in comparison with the pure souls who have been vivified by the Holy Spirit, they are as dead and deprived." — T.A.B. p. 670. This idea of "deadness" is emphasized many times through all Sacred Writings. It is one of the Keys to the Book of Revelation.

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." —v. 5. His blood, here, symbolically, is the great spiritual Life Force with which Christ bathed all that turned unto Him. We have only to turn the pages of history to see the upliftment that came to all mankind as the result of His washing us in His "blood", or spiritual Life Force. The Revelation continues: "in His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen. Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, said the Lord, which is, and was, and which is to come, the Almighty." v. 9. "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the Isle which is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Bahá'u'lláh states, "O kings of Christendom! Heard ye not the saying of Jesus, the Spirit of God, I go away, and come again unto you. Wherefore then, did ye fail, when He did come again unto you in the clouds of heaven, to draw nigh unto Him, that ye might behold, His face, and be of them that attained His Presence?" —Gl. p. 246.

This is the Christ Who is speaking: "He was" and He Himself said that He was of the "Order of Melchizedek", and the "is to come," could be no other than the Divine Revelator for this new cycle. Bahá'u'lláh declares; "The Revelation of all the Prophets of God, and the most cherished Desire of His Messengers hath now, by virtue of the pervasive Will of the Almighty and at His irresistible bidding, been revealed unto men. The advent of such a Revelation hath been heralded in all the sacred Scriptures." —G.P.B. p. 5. This prophetic statement of Christ is thus fulfilled.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and

send it unto the seven churches.'—v. 10-11. "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned I saw seven golden candle-sticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks One like unto the Son of Man,...His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire."—v. 12-14.

Christ is called the "Son of Man." Here John states, "One like unto the Son of Man," or "like unto" Christ. Christ is revealing this very great message in 96 A.D. "of things which must shortly come to pass." Muhammad, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh have come since that time, and many references and authorities acclaim Bahá'u'lláh as the One "like unto" Christ! For example one reference states that He is "the Spirit of Jesus Christ returned in the Glory of the Father." John 16. & G.P.B. p. 151. Therefore it is He, Bahá'u'lláh, Who is "like unto" Christ and Who stands amidst the seven golden candlesticks. In Rev. 1:20, we read that the seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches or, as has been stated, the seven Divinely-revealed religious systems.

"His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow."—v. 14. Notice how the whiteness is re-emphasized. This Key is very important. After the horrible persecutions of the Báb and His followers, Bahá'u'lláh was, in 1852, put in chains and thrown into the Black Pit in Tihiran, with one hundred and fifty criminals. The dungeon was without fresh air or light, one of the most horrible and unspeakably foul places on earth. Words cannot describe its loathsomeness and the suffering of the prisoners. The sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá told the author the following story in Haifa, Israel. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the little son of Bahá'u'lláh, then less than nine years old, was extremely troubled about his Father's having been put into that awesome, horrible pit. One day he walked right past the sentry and guards, just as they were bringing Bahá'u'lláh up, chained to two other prisoners. The chains were so heavy that He bore their marks the rest of His life. Little 'Abdu'l-Bahá was horrified and heart-broken to see that his Father's hair, in this very short time and though He was only 35 years old, had turned "white like wool, white as snow."—v. 14, G.P.B. p. 169. This is considered a disgrace among Orientals, therefore, they dye their hair when it becomes white or gray. Later, when exiled from Persia, the family dyed Bahá'u'lláh's hair to cover the disgrace so called. This is one of the many signs or

proofs to the whole Christian World that Bahá'u'lláh is the One that Christ foretold, Who is "like unto the Son of Man standing among the seven golden candlesticks." "His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow." Another sign given by Christ was thus fulfilled, in addition to the supreme proof of the power and wisdom of Christ, "By their fruits shall ye know Them." The words of Bahá'u'lláh, His works and their power to transform the lives and characters of men are sufficient proof....

"And His eyes were as a flame of fire."—v. 14. There is no photograph of any Prophet of God before Bahá'u'lláh, not even of Jesus the Christ. Photography was not discovered until 1838 by Daguerre during the lifetime of Bahá'u'lláh, and only one photograph was taken of Him. This is preserved in the sacred archives in Haifa, Israel. Those who have been privileged to see it usually say, "It is indescribable, but His eyes are like a flame of fire!" Almost all of the pilgrims have described it in this way. How could one describe that picture of the visible link between the outer and the inner, the physical and the spiritual, the human and the divine? Even the photograph seems to express indescribable majesty, grandeur and power, interpenetrated with tender understanding love and compassion! Here are the very lips from which poured forth the Word of God, the Laws for the new World Order, and the Plans for a new Creation! Here is the very form through which the Spirit of God became manifest, the face of One Who had given Life to a dead world! Here are the "eyes like a flame of fire," that pierce the very soul! It seems as though the Almighty is looking through His eyes, and, through our eyes, into the inner heart of our being! A mere human being is overwhelmed by it! Slowly we become aware that another of the signs foretold by Christ has been fulfilled.

"And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace."—v. 15. "Feet" usually symbolizes understanding and molten brass is one of the most blinding metals, thus indicating the splendors of His Light. "And His voice as the sound of many waters."—v. 15. In the heavenly books, the divine counsels and commands have been compared to water. So, in the Qur'an, it is said, "And We have caused a pure water to descend from Heaven.—T.A.B. p. 581. In all the sacred writings, "waters" usually refer to spiritual knowledge. Although Christ had all knowledge and all power, He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you,

but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth."—John 16:12,13. Few could read or write at the time of Christ, therefore, little recorded knowledge was needed. But today much is needed, and Bahá'u'lláh's Voice and Pen is as "The sound of many waters," which is also recorded, bringing a fresh outpouring of knowledge in a veritable deluge for mankind.

"And He had in His right hand seven stars."—v.16. The right hand is usually known as the hand of power. In verse 20, it is stated that, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." "Bahá'u'lláh holds the seven Revelators in His right hand, unitedly, exalting Them and lifting the essence of Their teachings into the great New Cycle—The Kingdom of the Father upon the Earth." (Letter from Shoghi Effendi to the author.)

"And out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword:"—v. 16, which is the sword of Truth; "and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength,"—v. 16, that is, at the time of its zenith. "I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death."—v. 18. What is hell? Is it a place of fire and brimstone with a devil and his pitchfork frying his victims over the flames? No! Bahá'u'lláh explains that hell is remoteness from God and heaven is nearness to God. Therefore the Key to the understanding of heaven and hell is the Word of God. As we turn and apply it to our lives, or turn away and fail to live it, we have heaven or hell here and now. Christ foretold that the One like unto the Son of Man would come in the Glory of the Father and bring the Word of God for the New Day. (Ref. Matt. 16:27) "Heaven is the condition of spiritual life and Hell that of spiritual death." B.N.E. pp. 231-232. Christ, in verses 19 and 20, commands John to write the things he has seen, the things which are, and the things which are to be hereafter, that this prophetic Revelation may enable man to diffuse the great glad tidings of Christ's Spirit, thus hastening the advent of that blessed day when God's Will shall be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.

CHAPTER II

THE VISION BRIGHTENS
Message to the Four Churches

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."—Rev. 2:7.

The churches appear.

The seven churches are usually considered to be the first mission churches in Western Turkey ministered to by John. However, these shortly became ruins and are not sufficiently important to have addressed to them such a great Revelation as we find in the forthcoming chapters. Therefore, it is obvious that a larger more universal significance is meant, for which 'Abdu'l-Bahá has given the Key.

It is interesting to study the messages to the seven churches, which Christ commanded John to send "unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."—Chap. I:11. In the Greek language the names of these churches have symbolic meanings, which also help us to understand the message revealed for each.

Ephesus	—	Pure.
Smyrna	—	Persecuted.
Pergamos	—	Popular.
Thyatira	—	Sacrifice.
Sardis	—	Lack of Zeal.
Philadelphia	—	Brotherly Love.
Laodicea	—	Lukewarm.

In order not to become confused, some call these messages, "seven little poems," each one being divided into seven parts. The first part is the salutation to the church and the identification of the One speaking; the second part is that for which the church is commended; the third is that for which it is condemned; the

fourth is the punishment for the evil for which it is condemned; the fifth is the reward for the good for which it is commended; the sixth is the promise; and the seventh is what we might call "the refrain." Sometimes the promise is the seventh place; following "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." What churches? The churches are the religious systems. What Spirit? The Spirit of the "angel" or Revelator of each "church", to Whom the people turn in Their Day, for guidance. —P.U.P. p. 158.

"These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;"—v.1. "He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand" is the One like unto Christ, Bahá'u'lláh, Who commends this church for its works and its patience. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."—v.4. This means, as explained in the Bahá'í Writings, that this church has forgotten or turned away from the Truth as revealed by its Prophet in the day and age in which He appeared, and has put a stronger emphasis upon its own conceptions than upon the Word of God, which is the Truth.

That church is, however, commended for hating "the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate"—v.6. This is strong language for a Prophet of God to use, but He does not say that He hates the people—only their deeds. In every age there are groups of people who rise in active opposition of the Revelator, who are symbolically like the Nicolaitans and who obstruct the progress of His Cause.

In the first message poem, the promise is of greatest importance; "I will give thee a crown of life."—v.10; meaning that which is more than immortality. It is "eternal life", which every soul, consciously or unconsciously, is seeking. As Christ said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—John 10:10.

In the second message, to the angel of the church of Smyrna, "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive,"—v.8, refers to the 18th verse in Chapter I. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, "Then know that for the dominion of the reality of Christ there is no beginning and there is no end. Everlastingly that Luminous Entity hath been sitting on the throne of might and everlastingly It will have a penetrating dominion over the

worlds of existence. This dominion is eternal and everlasting and has no abrupt end."—T.A.B. 159. 'Abdu'l-Bahá further explains that this same Luminous Reality is again shining upon the world, through the One like unto the Son of Man, (Bahá'u'lláh) Who holds the seven stars in His right hand. In The Book of Certitude, the Kitáb-i-Iqán, Bahá'u'lláh states, referring to the Christ Spirit, "I am He Himself, and He is I Myself."—Kitáb-i-Iqán, p. 100.

The promise is the important part of the second message. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."—v.11. The second death cannot take place until after the first death, therefore the first death does not refer to the death of the body, as we have thought, but to our failure to become alive by the Spirit and teachings of Christ. Resurrection is the birth of the individual to spiritual life, through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed by the Manifestation of God. Christ said, "Ye must be born again." The first birth is the turning to, or the recognition of the Spirit of God in Christ; and the second birth means turning, in recognition of the same Spirit, to the One through Whom God is speaking in this Day—Bahá'u'lláh. Likewise, the "second death" means failing to turn to Him. The promise is that "he that over-cometh" his unbelief will not be hurt or suffer the "second death," but will turn to that Great One, Who has brought Life to mankind for this Day.

"Mankind is regenerated and quickened with a new birth. This is the "second birth" mentioned in all the heavenly books. Its accomplishment is through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.... When the holy, divine manifestations or prophets appear in the world, a cycle of radiance, an age of mercy dawns. Everything is renewed."—P.U.P. pp. 271-272. "I render Thee thanks, therefore, and extol Thee, in the name of all them that are dear to Thee, for that Thou hast caused them to be born again, by reason of the living waters which have flowed down out of the mouth of Thy Will."—B.W.F. p.147. "Every one of the important souls must arise, blowing over all parts of America the breath of life, conferring upon the people a new spirit, baptising them with the fire of the love of God, the water of life and the breaths of the Holy Spirit—so that the 'second birth' may become realized. For it is written in the Gospel: 'That which is born of the flesh is

flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit'."—B.W.F. pp. 420-421.

"Every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God is endowed with such potency as can instill a new life into every human frame...All the wondrous achievements ye now witness are the direct consequences of the Revelation of this Name."—Gl. pp. 141, 142.

It is therefore clear that the Word of God, revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in this day, releases that quickening, regenerating power which induces the "second birth."

The third message is addressed to the "Angel of the church of Pergamos." "These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges."—v. 12. We find in the first chapter that this is the One like unto the Son of Man, from Whose mouth went a "sharp two-edged sword"—the sword of Truth. This church is condemned "because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam."—v. 14. Balaam is the symbol of idol worship. People worship idols in this day as much as they did in ancient times when they made a graven image and cast their jewels or their young babies into the red hot arms of the idol. Balaam today is our love of possessions, of fortune, fame, power, of anything that turns us away from our service to God. Abraham taught the same lesson. According to a tradition, Abraham's father was the keeper of the idols in the Temple and left little Abraham to care for them, to keep them dusted, to bow before them and to feed them their rice. One day when the father returned, he was shocked to find all the smaller idols on the floor, shattered into many pieces. He angrily asked, "Who did this?" Abraham pointed to the big idol, in whose hands was a big mallet. "How could he shatter the little idols when he cannot move, nor speak, nor eat his rice?" Little Abraham said, "Father, why do you worship an idol that can neither move nor speak nor eat his rice?" "Worship God!" Mankind after 4000 years is still worshipping idols of his own vain imaginings.

The promise given to the church of Pergamos is, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna."—v. 17. It is the reality of things for which we are all striving; and when we truly turn toward God we "eat of the hidden manna" and gain spiritual nourishment and the knowledge of the reality of things. "And I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a

new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”—v. 17.

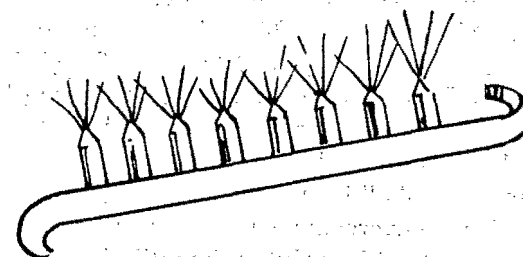
Throughout history we find references to the white stone and sometimes to the new name on the stone. Many people have seen the classical picture of the Bridge of Sighs, across the canal between the Doge’s palace and the prison, in Venice. The death cells are below the water level in dank, dark, awesome vaults with no windows—only a door through which the prisoner was thrown. In the door of this dungeon is a small hole through which a black stone was flung, which meant death. If the Doges acquitted the prisoner, a white stone, symbol of life, was cast through the hole in the door. The “new name” upon the White Stone is the Greatest Name of God, revealed by the Messenger of God for the New Age. It is not chosen by any religion of the past, but is the New Name foretold in Isaiah 62 : 2, “which the mouth of the Lord shall name”. The White Stone is the symbol of life and the “Greatest Name” on the symbol of life is the name of God for the New Age.—T.AB. p. 521.

The fourth message is directed to the church of Thyatira, which seems to be the fourth religious system. “These things, saith the Son of God, Who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass.”—v. 18. This church is commended for its works, its charity, its services, but is condemned because “thou sufferest that woman Jezebel...to teach and to seduce my servants.”—v. 20. Kings, rulers, peoples of all kinds, even those “before the altar,” have been enticed by the siren of materialism and gold.

The religious system of Thyatira is given a wonderful promise. “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.”—v. 26. “And I will give him the morning star.”—v. 28. This was fulfilled in the coming of the Báb as the Divine Morning Star, Who heralded the coming of the Sun of Truth for the New Day. Zoroaster was the founder of the Zoroastrian religious system that flourished in Persia at the time of Christ. What a divine coincidence that the Báb, the Herald of Bahá’u’lláh, was born in Shiráz, in Persia, in 1819, the land of Zoroaster’s birth and near His birthplace thus fulfilling the promise, “I will give Him the Morning Star!”—v. 28. “He (the Báb) is the ‘Mihdi’ (One Who is guided) awaited by the Sunnis, the return of John the Baptist, expected by the Christ-

ians, the ‘Ushidar-Máh (Morning Star), referred to in the Zoroastrian Scriptures.”—G.P.B. p. 58.

Thus we find the Promise, to those that overcome their unbelief, fulfilled through the coming of the Morning Star—the Báb!



THE LIGHT OF PROGRESS

CHAPTER III

THE NEW NAME
The Promise to Christianity

“Him that overcometh...I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”—Rev. 3:12

The curtain rises again with the fifth message addressed to the church in Sardis. This church is commended because it has kept the name and some have lived the name, but the church is dead. It is admonished to “be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”—v.2. This religious system, as have others, has kept the name of the Prophet but it has drifted away from His teachings. The promise given to this church is, “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.”—v.5. To overcome means to overcome evil, doubts, unbelief, prejudice and fear; and to be clothed in “white raiment” signifies to being clothed in heavenly qualities. “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.”—v. 5. This is a very wonderful promise which means the gift of eternal life. The little poem ends with the short refrain: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”—v. 6.

The sixth message or poem, is addressed to the church of Philadelphia which means “brotherly love,” as the names of all the churches are symbolic. Christianity is usually referred to as the religious system of brotherly love. This church is commended for its works, its faith, its patience, and because it “has not denied my name.” It is condemned, however, because “thou hast a little strength.”—v. 8. Of all the religious systems in the world, Christianity has been divided into more sects and branches than any

other. Naturally anything that is much divided becomes weak, and the more it is divided the weaker it becomes. Christ knew and foretold this almost two thousand years ago. Today we see the fulfillment and the need of establishing unity, for therein is strength. Today we see the slivers of Christianity being united by a new Spirit.

The promise given to this church is the most marvellous of all the promises. “Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.”—v. 12. A pillar means one of those who are chosen to uphold the New World Order: “He shall go no more out:”—v. 12, signifies that when we have found the truth, the Teaching of the Sun of Reality, which is what we have long been seeking, we, of course, will not go out to seek it again. We have found it! The promise continues: “I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”—v.12. How can a new civilization come out of heaven? Never has there been a civilization like the one rising in this day, where the basic laws, basic principles and an ocean of truth are given by God through the pen of His chosen Revelator, upon which the New Jerusalem, the new world civilization, is already being established. “The descent of the New Jerusalem is the divine law, the heavenly religion which secures the prosperity of the human world and is the effulgence of the illumination of the realms of God.”—T.A.B. p. 539.

The new name could be only the name of God as revealed by His latest Revelator. Bahá'u'lláh has stated: “The potency infused into all created things is the direct consequence of the Revelation of this most Blessed Name.”—B.W.F. p.100, Gl. p. 189. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”—v. 13.

The last of the messages to the seven churches is addressed to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, which is condemned because “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth.”—v. 15,16.

This is quite a condemnation. However, this church is admonished to repent, and we find courage in words that have been

beautifully expressed in poetry, song and painting. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—v.20. Many times have we heard these words interpreted individualistically and they are beautiful, good and true. We have longed to open the door, when Christ or one of the Prophets of God have knocked at the door of our hearts. How happy we are when we have opened the door from inside! This verse also has a larger, more universal meaning. The very word, the very title, "the Báb," means the door. He is the door of the New Cycle. He is the door to "Him whom God shall make manifest", the World Educator, Bahá'u'lláh, Who was standing at the threshold to usher in the great New World Order and the New Creation.

We have now caught a little glimpse of the loving messages and of the lessons that Christ commanded John to send to the seven "churches," the divinely revealed religious systems. This message or poem also closes with the refrain, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."—v.22 May we, henceforth, listen to the loving message that the Spirit gives, in prophecy of this Great New Day of God.

The following lines express beautifully the changeless Law of Love:

"God Speaks:

For when My Messengers to any age
Bring My new Law, They cancel every page
Writ by the past except the page of love,
For this is writ on Tablets firm as rock
Unchanging, ageless: and Their hands unlock
With love the door that to My Kingdom leads,
Blest is the soul who Their injunction heeds."

From "The Song Celestial"
by Howard Colby Ives, p.23.

CHAPTER IV

THE GLORIOUS THRONE

A Shining Rainbow

"...Behold that which hath been sent down from the Throne on high, and meditate thereon with innocent and sanctified hearts. Then will the truth of this Cause appear unto you as manifest as the sun in its noon-tide glory." —Bahá'u'lláh —B.W.F. p. 34.

For two thousand years the searching clergy and scholars have been unable to open this closed chapter and to interpret the signs, except according to their own conceptions. Christ revealed the signs, and Bahá'u'lláh has given the Master Key to interpret the signs of this strange book. In this fourth chapter we find many important locks which need important Keys. John is lifted up in spirit and "the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, 'come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter'."—v.1. Notice the emphasis on the word "must" rather than shall, "And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat upon the throne."—v.2. The word "throne" means the station of Prophethood, and even greater, that of the Manifestation. Christ said, "The Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory."—Matt. 19:28. In this Day Bahá'u'lláh, the Divine Educator, explains "throne" and "Manifestation" and "the station of Divine Concealment," still further. "Thus, viewed from the standpoint of their oneness and sublime detachment, the attributes of Godhead, Divinity, Supreme Singleness and Inmost Essence, have been, and are applicable to those Essences of Being, inasmuch as They all abide on the throne of Divine Revelation, and are established on the seat of Divine Concealment. Through Their appearance the Revelation of God is made manifest, and by Their countenance the Beauty of God is revealed. Thus it is that the accents of God Himself have been heard uttered by these Manifestations of the Divine Being."—Gl. p. 53.

The Prophets of God have given many symbolic descriptions of the Promised One sitting upon the throne of the Manifestation in the New Day. "And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone." —v.3. In ancient times the jasper stone was called the blood stone, because of its blood-like color. All through the Bible we find many references to it, also to "being washed in the blood of Christ." The jasper stone symbolizes the Spiritual Life-force which Christ gave for the quickening of the souls of men. This is the need of all men—to be bathed in that Spiritual Life-force. Bahá'u'lláh, sitting upon that throne, is again releasing that Spiritual Life-force today for the maturity of mankind. He also looks like a "sardine stone", which is milk-white and means great purity, without flaw or blemish, like the Spirit of Christ.

"And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." —v.3. A rainbow is made by a white beam of light shining through a prism which refracts the white light and breaks it into a band of seven prismatic colors, called the spectrum. The spectrum consists of the following colors of varying wave-lengths: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. This is the beautiful symbol of the love of God. The Throne is like a Divine Prism through which the white ray, the Love of God, shines through the successive Prophets to form the rainbow, each giving the ray of light whose "wave-length" is best suited to the capacity of the people in the day and age in which He appears. This shining rainbow was round about the throne, and shone "like unto an emerald." Emeralds are the color of beautiful fresh young green grass. This symbolizes that the Love of God, which had been revealed by the seven major Revelators, was again generating a fresh Spiritual Springtime.

"And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." —v.4. In each cycle the guardians, or holy Souls, nearest to the throne were twelve. Jacob had twelve sons; in the time of Moses there were twelve chiefs; in the time of Christ there were twelve disciples and in the Dispensation of Muhammad, there were twelve Imams. In this sacred Dispensation, the dawning of a new Cycle the number is doubled to twenty-four "elders" on the seat of discipleship and with the crown or spiritual authority, greater even

than the disciples of old, since none of those had "crowns of gold."

The twenty-four elders are identified by Shoghi Effendi, genealogically established Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. They are the Báb and His first disciples, known as the nineteen Letters of the Living, plus five more to be made known later. — (Letter by Guardian to author)

Shoghi Effendi writes: "These 'first Letters' generated from the Primal Point, this 'company of angels arrayed before God on the Day of His coming', these 'Repositories of His Mystery', these 'Springs that have welled out from the Source of His Revelation' these first companions who, in the words of the Persian Bayan, 'enjoy nearest access to God', 'these Luminaries that have from everlasting, bowed down, and will everlastingly continue to bow down, before the Celestial Throne', and lastly these 'elders' mentioned in the Book of Revelation as 'sitting before God on their seats', 'clothed in white raiment' and wearing on their heads 'crowns of gold' —these were, ere their dispersal, summoned to the Báb's presence, Who addressed to them His parting words, entrusted to each a specific task, and assigned to some of them as the proper field of their activities their native provinces. He enjoined them to observe the utmost caution and moderation in their behaviour, unveiled the loftiness of their rank, and stressed the magnitude of their responsibilities. He recalled the words addressed by Jesus to His disciples, and emphasized the superlative greatness of the New Day. He warned them lest by turning back they forfeit the Kingdom of God, and assured them that if they did God's bidding, God would make them His heirs and spiritual leaders among men. He hinted at the secret and announced the approach of a still mightier Day, and bade them prepare themselves for its advent." —G.P.B. pp. 7,8.

"And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." —v.5. Always after a new appearance of the Word of God, as revealed by the Revelator, there are storms of opposition and violation and earthquakes of doubt; and the "seven lamps burning before the throne" are the seven Revelators who are referred to in Rev. 1:16, as the seven "stars". The seven Spirits of God, we recall, are the seven Founders of these religious systems and their light is still burning

before the throne. The "seven golden candlesticks" mentioned in Rev. 1 : 13,20, it should be remembered, are the seven divinely revealed religious systems in the Adamic cycle.

"And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal;" —v.6. The sea of glass is the sea of truth, clear as crystal and untainted. Prophets have all given the truth, but only little droplets, or rivulets of truth, according to the capacity of mankind to receive it. Christ gave a river of truth, Bahá'u'lláh an ocean of Truth. Christ, himself, said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth." —John 16 : 12,13. Today the sea of truth, which Christ foretold, is rapidly spreading over the world "as the waters cover the sea." Bahá'u'lláh quotes an Islamic tradition: "Knowledge is twenty and seven letters. All that the Prophets have revealed are two letters thereof. No man, thus far, hath known more than these two letters. But when the Qá'im shall arise, He will cause the remaining twenty and five letters to be made manifest." —W.O.B. p. 125.

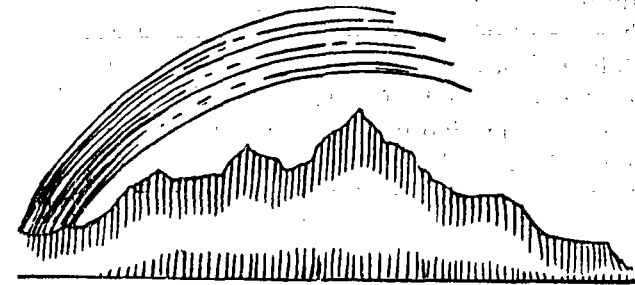
"And...round about the throne were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle" and the four beasts had each of them six wings about him..." —v.6-8. There have been many strange interpretations of these symbols, but the four beasts, or creatures, as explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in a tablet to a German believer, represent the first four rulers who will arise to spread the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh over the whole world, as the good king of India, King Asoka, organized Buddhism as the state religion in 264 B.C., and promulgated it actively throughout Asia and Emperor Constantine spread Christianity, throughout Europe. Beginning with the reign of Constantine, Christianity was not only recognized and tolerated, but became the official religion of the Roman Empire. What will be the results when four rulers in this day with eyes before, foresight, hindsight and insight, through the means and the "six wings" of modern science, spread the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, rapidly throughout the world? As far as is presently known, there is nothing in nature with "six wings". Does this not indicate that modern science will supply the power and speed of "six wings" to fulfill this amazing prophecy?

The great vision of Daniel, chapter 7, disclosed about 535, B.C.,

with symbols similar to those in this chapter, explains the rise and fall of the four great succeeding empires, and tells of the Ancient of Days, "Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool : his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire." —Dan. 7:9. It is historically established that Bahá'u'lláh appeared in the midst of the frightening conditions in the Islamic Empire, and that "His hair turned white like wool," as the snow. "The cruelties inflicted by My oppressors have bowed Me down, and turned My hair white." —G.P.B. p. 169.

Daniel foretold that "there was given to him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." —Dan. 7:14. This is, of course, a spiritual kingdom that will not pass away because it is based on the Word of God. "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." —Dan. 7:10. This verse refers to the Promised One, Bahá'u'lláh, Who opens the Books "and activates a New Creation; and myriads will minister unto him. —See G.P.B. 93,94.

How marvelous in the Revelation which Christ gave in this chapter, revealing the Great Divine Plan for the New Age as expressed by the symbols of the rainbow, the emerald, the four and twenty elders and the beasts with the many eyes and the six wings!



THE RAINBOW OF
PROMISE

CHAPTER V
THE MIGHTY BOOK
SEALED WITH SEVEN SEALS
The Glorious Throne Appears

“The essence of religion is to testify that which the Lord hath revealed, and follow that which He hath ordained in His mighty Book.”—B.W.F. p. 140.

John is now lifted in spirit to where he can examine more closely the One upon the Throne, “And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.”—v. 1. The right hand is a symbol of power, and “him that sat upon the throne,”—the Throne of Divine Splendor, is the manifestation of God. This “book” is declared to be the Word of God as revealed by all the Divine Messengers of God, and it has been prophetically a sealed book until the coming of the Promised One. That which was written on the backside of the book, and not sealed, is the Word of God revealed by the Báb heralding the New Age and the Glory of God, Lord of the New Age.

At the time of the great vision of Daniel, the Lord said unto him: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”—Dan. 12:4 “And one said. . . ‘How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?’ And I heard the man. . . swear by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.”—Dan. 12:6,7. “And I heard, but I understood not; then said I again, ‘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. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.’”—Dan. 12:8-10.

John looked again, “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?’ And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon”—v.2,3. John wept much because no one was found worthy to open the the book, to read the book, or even to look thereon. “And one of the elders saith unto me, ‘Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.’”—v. 5. There are many explanations about the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David. It has often been interpreted as referring to Christ. Christ, however, was not the Root of David, but the descendant of David, while verse five states that Juda was the Root of David. Jesse, the father of David, of the line of Juda, is the Root of David. Christ was not the Lion of the tribe of Juda, but came, in the symbol of sacrifice, as a lamb ordained for slaughter from the foundation of the world. Further research from many sources confirms this.

It must constantly be kept in mind that the Book of Revelation is the Revelation of Jesus the Christ, “to show the things which must shortly come to pass,” after 96 A.D.—Rev. 1:1. The One amidst the “seven golden candlesticks,” the One that “holdeth the seven stars in His right hand,” the One that sitteth on the throne has been identified, in previous chapters, to be Bahá’u’lláh, Who holds the book in His right hand, Who is of the line of Jesse, the Root of David. “Christ was descended genealogically from Abraham, Isaac, Juda and Jesse, the father of David, through Mary the Virgin. There His genealogical line ends as He left no physical heirs.”—Matt. 1:1-16

It is interesting to note that a second genealogical line of Bahá’u’lláh has also been traced back to Abraham, through another Jesse, one of the 6 sons of Katurah who migrated to Central Asia.—Shoghi Effendi to the Hand Agnes Alexander. May 12, 1937, Josephus, p. 327. “He derived His descent, on the one hand from Abraham ‘the Father of the Faithful’ through His wife Katurah, and on the other from Zoroaster, as well as from Yazdigird, the last King of the Sasanian Dynasty. He was moreover a descendant of Jesse, and belonged, through His father, Mirza Abbas, better known as Mirza Buzurg—a nobleman closely associated with the ministerial circles of the Court of Fath-‘Ali Shah.

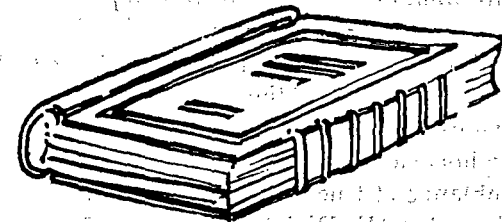
—to one of the most ancient and renowned families of Mazindaran.”—G.P.B. p.94. “He is the rod come forth out of the stem of Jesse” and the “Branch grown out of His roots.” Thus both Christ and Bahá’u’lláh stemmed from Jesse, the father of David, as foretold. “Who shall be established upon the Throne of David,” Who “will come with strong hand,” Who “shall judge among the nations,” Who “shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips slay the wicked,” and Who “shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Juda from the four corners of the earth.”—G.P.B. pp. 94-95.

Thus we see that it was He, Bahá’u’lláh, Who sat on the Throne with the book in His right hand. He it was Who “hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”—v.5. Is not Christ revealing that He, Bahá’u’lláh, is the Lion of the tribe of Juda, Who would open the Book? Then John saw in the midst of the twentyfour elders and of the four beasts, “a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.”—v.6. The lamb, we have always thought referred only to Christ, “ordained for slaughter from the foundation of the world,” but this particular lamb could not possibly refer to Christ, for three reasons. First, Christ is revealing the things “which must be hereafter,” after 96 A.D., and Christ had been martyred in 33 A.D.; second, Christ was not the only Prophet Who had a violent martyrdom. The Báb, the Prophet-Herald of Bahá’u’lláh also had the station of the Lamb “ordained for slaughter from the foundation of the world.” Christ and the Báb were the only Ones Who were horribly and outrageously martyred. Third, this other Lamb had “seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.”—v.6. The seven horns refer to seven countries under the rule of the Umayyad Dynasty, or Bani-Umayya, who dominated Islam.—S.A.Q. p.79. The seven eyes refer to the power of the Báb to open the books of the seven Divinely Revealed Religious Systems, one of which is Christianity, founded by Christ. Therefore, this Lamb is the second Lamb, the Báb Who “came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.”—v.7. This is a very important statement. Christ is here declaring that, though the Báb had the station of Prophethood, yet He received His power to open

the book that “was sealed with the seven seals”, from the One that sat upon the throne. The Báb declared, about His own book, “The Bayan deriveth all its glory from Him Whom God shall make manifest! All blessings be upon him who believeth in Him and woe betide him who rejecteth His truth.”—W.O.B. p. 101.

“And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.”—v.8. This is a beautiful symbol of uniting the prayers of the devoted ones into a spiritual fragrance as they all joyfully sang a new song, which is a new Revelation. It is significant that they recognized the station and authority of the Báb as they sang, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof.”—v.9.

Then John heard the voice of many angels “round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.”—v.11. Thus there were myriads of them acclaiming the worthiness, strength, honor, wisdom and glory of the Báb. “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, . . . Heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.—v.13. What a glorious spectacle of adoration was John permitted to see and hear, as Christ revealed it, of the One on the Throne, and of the Báb the Lamb of God, ordained for sacrifice “from the foundation of the world!”—I Peter I:20—Rev. 17:8.



**SEALED WITH
SEVEN SEALS**

CHAPTER VI

THE LAMB
Opening the Seven Seals

"And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."—Dan. 12 : 9.

Slowly the veil lifts.

Scholars for twenty centuries have been interpreting in various ways the meaning of the "seven seals". In the Promulgation of Universal Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, speaking in America stated: "The Revelations of St. John are not to be taken literally but spiritually. These are the mysteries of God. It is not the reading of the Word that profits you; it is the understanding of their meanings. Therefore pray God that you may be enabled to comprehend the mysteries of the divine Testaments."—P.U.P. p. 455. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stressed the need of studying the Book of Revelation that the inner meaning may be revealed, thus bringing spiritual comprehension of the Divine Teachings. John saw the Lamb begin to open the seals of the Book, which is the Word of God as revealed by all the Divine Revelators.—v.1. The Báb, the second Lamb, opened the first seal; "And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer."—v.2.

It is interesting to note that, throughout Sacred Writings, a horse usually means something riding forth. This rider had a bow but no arrow; and a crown, but not a golden crown. One of the meanings is that the white horse and its rider symbolize theology which rides forth in the semblance of true religion. True religion is the Word of God as given by His Divine Messengers; Theology is man's conception of it. Therefore, theology is of human origin, often containing not only man's conception of the nature of God, but also man-made laws and ordinances, which may be good and

helpful except when man puts them in place of the Word of God. Unfortunately many people are confused and have lost the power to distinguish between the Word of God and that which has been added or said about it. The white horse rides forth, conquering and to conquer; with a crown, but not a golden one, that is, without Divine Authority; with a bow without an arrow; that is, without power to reach the soul. Theology has authority but not Divine Authority. As people turn more and more to the soul-stirring Word of God as revealed by the Revelator for this new cycle, to the Word written by His Pen, there will be less and less need for the confusing and contradictory human conceptions and interpretations, and the power of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God will penetrate the minds and souls.

"God, and God alone, has the power to do whatever He wills, and the greatest proof of a Manifestation of God is the creative power of His word—its effectiveness to change and transform all human affairs and to triumph over all human opposition. Through the Word of the prophets God announces His Will, and the immediate or subsequent fulfillment of that word is the clearest proof of the prophet's claim and of the genuineness of his inspiration."—B.N.E. p. 285. The power of the Word of God will make theology unnecessary in the New Cycle.

The Lamb then opened the second seal. "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword."—v.4. The red horse has usually been taken as a symbol of war. This rider had a great sword in his hand, with which he took peace from the earth. This red horse has been riding forth for a very long time, but it will not be riding very long in the new cycle. All Prophets of the past have foretold the day of universal peace. In the Psalms of David, we read: "The Lord will give strength unto His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace."—Psalms 29:11. Haggai also foretold: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."—Hag. 2:9. 'Abdu'l-Bahá foretells peace in these beautiful words: "True civilization will unfurl its banner in the midmost heart of the world whenever a certain number of its distinguish-

ed and high-minded sovereigns ... shall ... arise ... to establish the Cause of Universal Peace."—W.O.B. p. 37.

When the Lamb opened the third seal, John saw a black horse ride forth whose rider had a pair of balances in his hand. And were they in balance? No, there was a measure of wheat in one side and a penny in the other; and again three measures of barley in one side and a penny in the other. It was all out of balance, signifying the injustice that has long been riding in our economic, educational and social systems. Although the black horse has been riding forth for centuries, in a loose-jointed society there are innumerable statements fortelling the passing of the old age of injustice and disunity and the dawn of the new Day, when the light of justice and unity will shine throughout the world. Bahá'u'lláh has declared: "The day, however, is approaching, when the faithful will behold the Day Star of justice shining in its full splendor from the Day Spring of glory."—Gl. p. 342.

When the Lamb, the Báb, opened the fourth seal, John saw a pale horse, which some might call an anemic looking horse, with a rider whose name was Death. "Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them, over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."—v. 8. Death does not mean the death of the body only, as is usually taught, but the absence of spiritual life. Hell is remoteness from God, and heaven is nearness to God. Resurrection is the birth of the individual to spiritual life through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed through the Manifestations of God. Never before in the history of mankind has there been so much godlessness and atheistic thought and "stygian darkness" as there is today, even among our youth, which fulfills the prophetic symbol of the pale horse riding forth. The Divine Revelator for the new cycle warns: "They that have disbelieved in God and rebelled against His sovereignty are the helpless victims of their corrupt inclinations and desires. These shall return to their abode in the fire of hell; ... wretched is the abode of the deniers!"—B.W.F. p. 112.

It is encouraging to realize that this fourth horse cannot always ride forth. For we have entered a New Day, a New Age, a New Cycle. There is a new consciousness, a new creation. Whenever the spirit of godlessness rides forth, there is evil,

famine and crime. When the people turn toward God, there is progress, and spiritual life and peace. 'Abdu'l-Bahá taught that, "Heaven is the state of perfection, and Hell that of imperfection; Heaven is harmony with God's will and with our fellows, and Hell is the want of such harmony; Heaven is the condition of spiritual life, and Hell that of spiritual death."—B.N.E. pp. 231, 232. Therefore, we see that the disturbing four horsemen of the Apocalypse cannot ride forth in the New Age.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."—v. 9-11. Those who are gathered under the altar are the martyrs of each Dispensation of the Prophets of God. The early believers in each Religious System have met with the utmost opposition, persecution and cruelty at the hands of their fellow countrymen. They died as did the martyrs for Christ, Muhammad, and all the Prophets of God. The first believers faced these calamities with sublime heroism, steadfastness and loving kindness as they gave their lives for the Cause of God. These martyrs were told to wait until a later time when others would be added to their number. Twenty thousand of the most sincere and devoted people of Persia, many of the most learned, were grossly tortured and massacred before and after the time of the execution of the Báb, thus fulfilling this prophecy. The love of God transmutes suffering into joy, martyrdom into reward and heavenly bliss.

Now we come to the opening of the sixth seal, which is full of meaning for us. "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sack-cloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."—v. 12-14.

In the Qur'an we read :

“When the sun shall be shrouded,
 And when the stars shall fall,
 And when the mountains are made to pass away...
 And when the leaves of the Book shall be unrolled,
 And when the heaven shall be uncovered,
 And when hell shall be made to blaze.”—Surih, 1xxxii.

This is a renewed statement of the same signs that Christ gave, as quoted in Matthew 24 and Luke 21:25-28. Christ had told His disciples that He was going to leave them but that He would come again unto them. They were very much troubled, for they loved Him devotedly, and did not want Him to leave them. Then the disciples asked, “When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?”—Matt. 24:3. Christ reemphasized in His Revelation to John (Rev. 6:12-14) five of these great signs that would occur *before* His return and the end of the cycle: 1. A great earthquake. 2. The darkening of the sun and moon called “The Dark Day.” 3. The shower, or falling, of stars. 4. The heaven departed as a scroll. 5. The moving of mountains and islands. He spoke of the tribulations of the days preceding these signs, which things seem to have been fulfilled in the terrible crimes of feudalism, the dreadful Inquisition, and the shaking events in the European world leading to the French Revolution. Toward the close of the days of tribulation, the Lisbon earthquake occurred in 1775.

So amazing were some of the historical events that have been considered as fulfillment that it would be worth while to consider them one by one. Professor W.H. Hobbs, geologist, states: “The earthquake in Lisbon, Portugal, in some respects, takes first place among all recorded earthquakes...In six minutes 60,000 people perished.” In “The Life of Voltaire,” the English author, James W. Parton states: “At twenty minutes to ten on the morning of November 1, 1775, Lisbon was firm and magnificent, on one of the most picturesque and commanding sites in the world—a city of superb approach. In six minutes the great city was in ruins...half of the world felt the convulsion...In Sweden, Africa and the West Indies...the perturbations were felt for more than a month afterward, even in distant parts of Europe.”—Vol. II, pp. 208-209. “The conflagration lasted a whole week. There was a tidal wave and floods. Six million people were affected by this great earthquake and the effects were distributed over nearly four million square

miles of the earth’s surface, and greatly surpassed anything of the kind ever recorded in history.”—Thomas Hunter in “Historical Account of Earthquakes.” (London)—pp. 72-74. The Lisbon Earthquake is the greatest on record between the time of Christ and the birth of Bahá’u’lláh in 1817. Thus the first of these signs bore its warning message to men, in the midst of an age of rationalism and unbelief, and by turning their thoughts toward the earth’s instability and human helplessness, gradually awakened them to the Love of God. The first of these signs was, therefore, fulfilled in 1775.

The second great sign given by Christ became known historically as “The Dark Day”. “On May 19, 1780, the birds, animals and people rose as usual and sang their morning songs,” as one account stated. “By 10:00 A.M., a thick darkness covered the land, and they again went to bed.”

In the “Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences,” published in Boston in 1785, A.N. Hollis, Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy in the University of Cambridge, Massachusetts, wrote a lengthy article about the remarkable darkness of this Dark Day which lasted from fifteen to twenty hours. He stated that the darkness was not caused by any eclipse, which is proven by relative positions of the planets of our systems at that time, for the moon was more than 150 degrees from the sun on that day. Although it was time for a full moon, it did not shine. There were no clouds or smoke that could cause such an extended darkness, in which even artificial light seemed to make no impression.—pp. 244-246. Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary, edition 1883, gives an account of this unexplainable darkness and ends by stating that “the true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is unknown.” This was confirmed from many sources and the historical cause of the darkness has yet to be explained. John Greenleaf Whittier wrote of this event in his noted poem entitled “Abraham Davenport”.

THE DARK DAY

by

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

1.

“Meanwhile in the old Statehouse, dim as ghosts,
 Sat the lawgivers of Connecticut,

Trembling beneath their legislative robes,
 'It is the Lord's Great Day! Let us adjourn!'
 Some said; and then, as with one accord,
 All eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport.
 He rose, slow cleaving with his steady voice
 The intolerable hush, 'This well may be
 The day of judgment which the world awaits';

2.

But be it so or not, I only know
 My present duty, and my Lord's command
 To occupy till He come. So at the post
 Where He hath set me in His providence
 I choose, for one, to meet Him face to face,
 No faithless servant, frightened from my task,
 But ready when the Lord of the harvest calls;
 And therefore, with all reverence, I would say,
 Let God do His work, we will see to ours.
 Bring in the candles."

Christ, looking across the unrolled scroll of history, gave these unusual signs and said, "The end is not yet."—Matt. 24:6. We have, first, the great earthquake, unlike anything before in history; second, the dark day, unlike anything else in previous history, the moon becoming as blood; and then, the third sign, when "the stars of heaven fell upon the earth; even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."—v. 13. Meteoric displays or swarms of shooting stars have been observed since the dawn of history; but this phenomenon coming in the order foretold by Christ in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and Revelation 6, is momentous.

An English scientist, Thomas Milner, F.R.G.S. wrote that "The attention of astronomers in Europe and all over the world was roused by this celestial display on the night of November 12-13, 1833, when the falling stars like a tempest broke over the earth pelting North America from the Gulf of Mexico to Halifax." "The Gallery of Nature."—p. 141. Denison Olmsted, Professor of Astronomy at Yale, wrote in the "American Journal of Science": "Probably no celestial phenomenon has ever occurred which was viewed with so much admiration and delight by one class of spec-

tators and with so much astonishment and fear by another class."—Vol. 25, p. 363. Another astronomer, Professor Simon Newcomb, states that this phenomenal exhibition of falling stars is the most remarkable one ever observed."—"Astronomy for Everybody."—p. 280. The French astronomer, Flammarion, wrote: "At the moment of maximum it was like half the number of snowflakes which we perceive in the air during an ordinary shower of snow, estimated at thirty four thousand stars an hour."—"Popular Astronomy"—p. 536. Dr. Humphreys of St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland, wrote in "The American Journal of Science"—Vol. 25, p. 372, "In the words of most people, they fell like flakes of snow." Dr. H.H. Jessup, Professor at the Presbyterian College of Beirut, describes the scene in his "Fifty-Three Years in Syria;" "On the morning of the fourteenth (November), at three o'clock, I was roused from a deep sleep by the voice of the young man calling, 'The stars are coming down!'... The meteors poured down like a rain of fire blown by a mighty wind. Many of them were large and varicolored, and left behind them a long train of fire. One immense green meteor came down over Lebanon, seeming as large as the moon, and exploded with a loud noise, leaving a green pillar of light in its train. It was vain to attempt to count them, and the display continued until dawn, when their light was obscured by the king of day... The Mohammedans gave the call to prayer from the minarets, and the common people were in terror." "Fifty-Three Years in Syria". Vol. I, pp. 316, 317.

Thoughtful people were awed by the fulfillment of the prophetic signs of Christ. Professor Alexander Twining, civil engineer, late instructor at Yale University wrote of the flaming visitants from space; "Had they held on their course unabated for three seconds longer, half a continent must, to all appearances, have been involved in unheard of calamity. But that Almighty Being Who made the world, and knew its dangers, gave it also its armature, endowing the atmospheric medium around it with protecting no less-than-life-sustaining properties." "It is not meet that such occurrences as those of November 13th should leave no more solid and permanent effect upon the human mind than the impression of a splendid scene."—"Am. Journal of Science," Vol. 26, p. 351 (1834). Multitudes felt that the great Creator had spoken to man with terrible magnitude and power in this notable

wonder of His heavens, foretold by Christ. A Missouri paper published an account that "Everything wore the aspect and hue of death, occasioned by the continued, pallid glare of these countless meteors, which in all their grandeur flamed lawless as though blown by a mighty wind, through the sky... There was scarcely a space in the firmament, or on the earth, which was not filled at every instant with these falling stars, or could you, in general, perceive any particular difference in appearance." "There was a grand, peculiar and indescribable gloom on all around, an awe-inspiring sublimity on all above; while the sanguine flood rolled a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven. And nature's self did seem to totter on the brink of time!"—Vol. 26, "American Journal of Science," p. 372, 382, (1834). Newcomb and other scientists stated that there was no known explanation for this phenomenon. Although there had been great showers of stars in 1599, 1799, 1833 and 1867, one like that of November 13, 1833, has never happened before or since in the records of mankind. Christ foretold that immediately after the shower of stars, which occurred on November 13, 1833, "then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven:...and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."—Matt. 24:30. "And...then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28. The only sign of the Son of Man in the phenomenal heavens is the sign of Aquarius in the astronomical zodiac, or clock of the heavens—the man with the watering pot pouring out a stream of water, which means spiritual knowledge or truth. It was on March 21, 1844, that the sun crossed the vernal equinox, entered the sign of Aquarius, and a great new astronomical cycle began. It was on May 23, 1844, that the Báb made His great declaration that the cycle had ended, that a new Day had dawned, and that "The Anticipated One", "Whom God shall make manifest," would appear, He, Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God! In considering Rev. 1:13, it was clearly established that One like unto the Son of Man, was made manifest. Christ spoke much about the Promised One Who would usher in the great Day of Judgment, and told of the regeneration when the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of the Father.

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together;"—v. 14. This is the fourth sign which could not have a

literal fulfillment consonant with the continued existence of our universe as we know from other references, but which means the rolling up of the old cycle and the rapid decline of religious authority. Today we see the staggering forces of disintegration undermining the old world order, putrid with corruption, and we see many evidences of the New World Order, which will be the foundation of the Golden Age of Peace. "Soon," Bahá'u'lláh states, "will the present-day Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead."—B.N.E. p. 279 & Gl. p. 7.

The fifth sign is that "every mountain and island were moved out of their places."—v. 14. Taken literally this would be astonishing. "Mountains" usually refer to those things that we thought would stand forever, such as our social and political systems, our economic and even our monetary system. Every thinking person knows that nothing is permanent. Today all things are undergoing very rapid changes. The world is in a state of transition. The "mountains" of yesterday are being rolled away to make way for a more glorious world of tomorrow. The "islands" are usually interpreted as referring to those isolating or separating forces such as dogmas, creeds, traditions, ceremonies, and denominational differences which divide people, rather than unite them.

These things shall be moved out of their places and the rich men, the rulers and the mighty men and all men of earth shall be filled with fear when the hour of their judgment is come—that hour when every institution, every system and ideology and every human soul, shall be tested. "The Day of Judgment," all the Prophets of God teach, "is the Day of the new Manifestation, by the acceptance or rejection of whose Revelation the sheep are separated from the goats, for the sheep know the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him."—B.N.E. p. 34.

In the Book of Certitude, Bahá'u'lláh explains that all these signs are both symbolical and historical and are not to be understood in their literal sense only. For instance, earthquakes symbolize the great changes which take place in human affairs at the end of the old cycle, such as the social, political and ecclesiastical upheavals which shake the very foundations of established traditions. Darkness symbolizes spiritual apathy and oppression when the pure teachings of the spiritual Suns have become obscured by misrepresentation, misunderstanding and prejudice. The "Falling of Stars" indicates that religious leaders have be-

come debased and worldly-minded.—B.N.E. pp. 278-279.

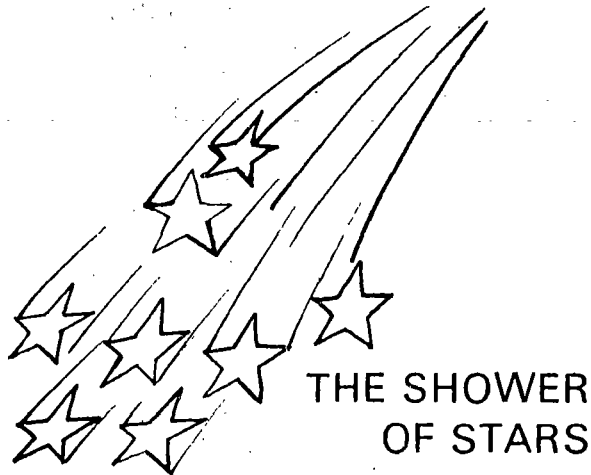
Scanning the pages of recorded history, in the light of the Word of God, we begin to glimpse the unrolling, majestic Plan of God, the fulfillment of the signs given by Christ of the Manifestation of the Holy Spirit again upon the earth, and the awe-inspiring Divine purpose of God to awaken men to know and to worship Him.

Howard Colby Ives expresses this beautifully in these lines from

THE SONG CELESTIAL.

“God Speaks:

For, in this gloomy and disastrous age
Man may perceive, if he will scan My Page,
The secret of Creation. There is he
Told of My Wisdom; for Humanity
Hath borne indeed its noblest fruit; My love
Disclosed in Man his Lord, that he may prove
All things and thereby with My aid may reach
The summit of the truth I fain would teach,
That all men’s probing eye and mind can see
Hath but one purpose, to discover Me.”



THE SHOWER
OF STARS

CHAPTER VII

SEAL OF THE LIVING GOD Sealing 144,000 of the Servants

“The Holy Spirit it is, which through the mediation of the Prophets of God, teaches spiritual virtues to man and enables him to attain Eternal Life.”—W.A.B. p. 51

Scientists have devoted an immense amount of study to life in its various expressions in the vegetable and animal kingdoms; but they have failed thus far to devote the same kind of study to the life of the spiritual kingdom. Every human being is striving consciously or unconsciously to gain more of the inner realities and the light of the spirit. Chapter VII opens the door to one of the most profound truths, of which all souls must sooner or later become aware. In the preceding chapters, Christ has given many signs which have already been fulfilled. “And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.”—v. 1. Could it be that the four winds were destined to decimate everything upon the earth? Then a mighty angel came, “having the seal of the living God; and He cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”—v. 2.3. “In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise”.—Eph. 1:13. “And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”—Eph. 4:30.

The mighty angel commanded the forces of destruction to be held back until the “chosen ones” had received the seal of the living God. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains that before man’s spirit becomes quickened, his days pass in mere existence; but when he

grasps the reality of things and their profound inner truths, he grows in perception, understanding and radiance. Only when his soul becomes afire with the Holy Spirit and he arises to serve, then is he sealed in the forehead with the seal of the living God, and becomes one of the "chosen ones".—P.U.P. p. 330.

"And I heard the number of them which were sealed."—v.4. All through the Sacred Writings, when it is stated, "I saw the number" or "I heard the number," there is a very great significance to the number itself. After saying this, John further stated: "and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousands of all the tribes of the children of Israel."—v.4. Many think that the "children of Israel" refers only to the Jews who are returning to rebuild Israel, the Israelites, but it has also another meaning. "Children of Israel", means "followers of the Light of God". It was foretold, in Isaiah 62:2, "and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Today the most universal name, which the mouth of the Lord hath named, is "Bahá'í", meaning "Followers of the Light of God." The "hundred and forty and four thousand" resolves to a nine of the sum of the digits and so designates completion and unity. Nine, which is the numerical value of "Bahá'", is the highest number and from it all other numbers are made, in our number system, the sum and the multiple of the units resolves to nine. Symbolically speaking, it means all those who have gained the "Unified or nine-consciousness" in recognition of the unity, divine station, and light of all of God's Revelators, and have become servants of the latest Messenger of God, Bahá'u'lláh. The tribes of the children of Israel are symbolic, not only of the spiritual part of Jacob's descendants, but of all who have attained the "Unified or nine-consciousness." "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly;...but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly."—Rom. 2:28, 29. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek;...For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Rom. 10:12, 13.

All of the tribes of the Children of Israel, such as Juda, Reuben, etc., that were sealed, mean symbolically, all the followers of the Light of God, who today have gained the "nine-consciousness" of recognition and risen in His service. These only are the chosen ones sealed in their foreheads. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "Undoubtedly, the friends of God have been endowed with

ability and capacity to serve on which account they become of the 'chosen' and not of the 'called'."—T.A.B. p. 109.

Another important key is "After this", the words with which the ninth verse begin. "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and (all the angles) fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God."—v. 11. "After this", meaning after the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads, John saw multitudes that no man could number who were given "white robes and palms," signifying the heavenly qualities with which the servants became adorned. "Palms" denote the cause of praise and thanksgiving, as when Christ entered a Jerusalem on "Palm Sunday" amidst the songs of praise and thanksgiving. In the vision of the things to come the unnumbered multitudes were given palms as they stood before the throne and the Lamb. The angels round about the throne and the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders bowed before the throne and the Lamb in recognition and in reverence. John was asked, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—v. 13, 14. The ones who are given the white robe and the palms, are those who, because of their suffering in the great tribulation, were compelled to recognize the One upon the throne. Those who come after the great tribulation which is yet to come, are also given the palms. "Disappointment and the frustration of hopes shall surround the people from every direction until they are obliged to turn to God." "All the people of the world will become believers...Unquestionably, all will come under the shadow of the Cause of God."—B.N.E. p. 302.

Are all the multitudes who sing praise of the One upon the throne, sealed in their foreheads? In all the Sacred Writings there are many references to the many who are called and the few who are chosen. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains in these words; "His High-

ness the Almighty hath chosen the friends from among the concourse of men and hath specialized them with the most eminent guidance and the highest gift."—T.A.B. p. 568; and He continues, "there are many who are invited, but those souls who are signalized with grace and favor of guidance are but very rare."—T.A.B. p.372.

Only those who rise to serve before the great tribulation are sealed in their foreheads as a special bounty and gift of God! For example, much as we may desire to be one of the disciples or apostles of Christ or of any of the Prophets of God, that is impossible. That is a special bounty given to the chosen ones in each dispensation. It is the bounty of God given to the chosen ones in this Day who with loving consecration arise in the service of Bahá'u'lláh *before* the great tribulation comes to try all the world.

Then the promise is given that "he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."—v.15. That is, He will appear in the physical world in a human body to teach the laws of life for the new cycle. Then the glorious day will dawn when they will neither hunger nor thirst, nor weep any more, for the Lamb, the Báb, shall lead them to the "living fountains of water", which is the Word of God as poured forth and revealed by Bahá'u'lláh. God is calling you and has chosen those who are worthy and ready for this great bounty and service. Christ declared, "many are called but few are chosen". —Matt. 20:16.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "Verily God has chosen you for His love and knowledge; God has chosen you for the worthy service of unifying mankind; God has chosen you for the purpose of investigating reality and promulgating international peace; God has chosen you for the progress and development of humanity, for spreading and proclaiming pure education, for the expression of love toward your fellow-creatures and the removal of prejudice; God has chosen you to blend together human hearts and give light to the human world. The doors of His generosity are wide, wide open to us but we must be attentive, alert and mindful, occupied with service to all mankind, appreciating the bestowals of God and ever conforming to His will." —P.U.P. p. 329.

CHAPTER VIII

SEVEN TRUMPETS

The Twelve Imams

"We have put enmity and hatred between them that shall last until the Day of Resurrection. Oft as they kindle a beacon fire for war shall God quench it."—Qur'an, Surih 69.

The drama unfolds

Throughout Sacred Writings, angels are usually referred to as messengers of God, such were the angels, who came to Daniel in the lion's den; to Jacob in his moment of fear; to Abraham as a warning of the destruction of Sodom; to Lot warning him and his family to leave that corrupt city; to Peter when he was released from prison; and such also were the Heavenly Hosts who proclaimed the birth of the Christ Child.

When the seventh seal was opened, John saw "seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets."—v. 2. A "trumpet indicates the heralding of a message; or a call to prayer. The Christians of that period used a clapper to proclaim, the Jews used trumpets, and the Zoroastrians, bonfires. Bahá'u'lláh has stated: "By 'angels' is meant those who, reinforced by the power of the spirit, have consumed with the fire of the love of God, all human traits and limitations, and have clothed themselves with the attributes of the most exalted Beings and of the Cherubim."—*Iqan*, pp. 78, 79. Christ foretold in this Revelation that, when each one of these angels would appear upon the earth and blow his trumpet, disturbing things would happen which would clear away the debris of corruption in order that the Day of God might dawn. "Consider the days of Jesus, when there was only a small body of people, and then observe the great tree which grew from that seed and what an abundant fruit it produced. This day is greater than that, forasmuch as it is the calling of the Lord of Hosts and the Voice of

the Trumpet of the Living God ... Verily this great cycle (dispensation) will encompass all horizons and ultimately all the nations will gather together under this standard."—T.AB. pp. 10, 11.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."—v. 7-11. Could this be a symbolic warning that a third of things that had life would die spiritually because they drank of the waters that were made bitter and there would be great destruction? Was this fulfilled during the period of the Muhammadan Dispensation, as shown, for instance in "Mahomet and His Successors," by Washington Irving?

There are a number of prophecies in both the Old and New Testaments which proclaim the advent of Muhammad. "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up in Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law for them."—Deut. 33:2. Paran is a mountain in Arabia, and all Bible reference to it denote Islam; Sinai refers to Moses, and Seir, a mountain in Galilee, alludes to Jesus. Bahá'u'lláh, the Lord of Hosts, with the right hand of power, brings a fiery law to unite all in this great new cycle. Mt. Carmel refers to Bahá'u'lláh, from where the new law went forth. Habakkuk 3:3 speaks of the "Holy One from Mount Paran." "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget and I will make him a great nation."—Gen. 17:20. Muhammad descended from Abraham through Ishmael, and the twelve "princes" are the twelve Imams.

Many in the world still recognize Christ as only a spirit.

According to the Bible that idea or realization is the anti-Christ. The Revelator always comes in the flesh to reveal the Law of God and the Word of God. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world."—I John 4:2,3. Again, Qur'an 61:6 says: "And remember that Jesus the Son of Mary said, 'O children of Israel! Of a truth I am God's apostle to you to confirm the law which was given before, and to announce an apostle that shall come after me, Whose name shall be Ahmad!'" (The Muslims state the "Comforter" in John 16:7, 14:6, and 15:26 as the Paraclete, or Illustrious, which is the meaning of "Ahmad") Muhammad said, according to an indubitable Hadith (tradition): "I have five names: I am Muhammad; and Ahmad; and Effacing, by means of which God effaces infidelity; and Gatherer, Who will gather people; and Final, that is to say, the Last of the Prophets." (for the Adamic Cycle).—Ali Tabari, op. cit., p. 42.

Bahá'u'lláh calls Muhammad "God's Well-beloved."—WOB p. 106. And the Báb states that had the Christian divines of a former age recognized the truth of Muhammad's mission, they would have been followed by the mass of their co-religionists. G.P.B. p. 26.

Let us consider the period of history to which Christ was referring. In each dispensation there have been twelve holy souls or disciples, who have established and promoted the faith of the Founder. Jacob had twelve sons; there were twelve chiefs who followed Moses; and Christ called His twelve disciples. Muhammad had twelve successors known as Imams, who were of the lineal descent of the Prophet, except for Ali, His first Disciple, who was both His cousin and His son-in-law. Some knowledge about these is important to understand this Revelation by Christ.

We will now consider the twelve Imams or Disciples, the Holy Ones, of Muhammad, each of whom was murdered through the machinations of ambitious Caliphs (Khalifih). "The Khalifih of the Sunnis is merely the outward and visible Defender of the Faith: the Imam of the Shi'ahs is the divinely ordained successor of the Prophet, one who is endowed with all perfections and

Christ
prophecies
Muhammad

spiritual gifts, one whom all the faithful must obey, whose decision is absolute and final, whose wisdom is superhuman, and whose words are authoritative.—D.B. p. ii.

Dr. E.G. Browne says: "In a word, the Caliphs of the Sunnis is merely the outward and visible Defender of the Faith; the Imam of the Shi'ahs is the divinely-ordained successor of the Prophet."—B.W. Vol. III, p. 394.

Muhammad had unmistakably appointed His successor, but nothing had been written down. The Qur'an, so detailed in other matters, does not name the successor of Muhammad in a definite statement. However, the Prophet many times indicated that Ali, who was called the "Hand of God," who was His cousin, His adopted son and His son-in-law was His appointed successor. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states "Muhammad was the root, and Ali the branch, like Moses and Joshua"—S.A.Q. p. 57.

When the Prophet was returning from His farewell pilgrimage to Mecca, He had the caravan halt; He told the concourse of people to gather in the shade of some thorn trees, and had them build a pulpit of saddles, near the pool of Khumm. Then He raised 'Ali up and said, "Whoso hath Me as his Master, hath 'Ali as his Master ... I have been summoned to the gate of God, and I shall soon depart ... to be concealed from you." Then He spoke of two Treasures He would leave with them: "The greatest treasure is the Book of God ... Hold fast to it and do not lose it and do not change it. The other treasure is the line of My descendants,"—"Six Lessons on Islam", by Marzieh Gail. Muhammad's wife, Khadijih was the first to believe in Him, and the first non-related person was an Ethiopian slave.

The twelve Imams, or genealogical successors of Muhammad, have been listed as follows by the Cambridge Scholar, Edward G. Browne:

1. 'Ali-ibn-i-Abi-Talib, the cousin and first disciple of the Prophet, assassinated...at Kufih, (A.H. 40) A.D. 661.
2. Hasan, son of 'Ali and Fatimih, poisoned ... (A.H. 50) A.D. 670.
3. Husayn, son of 'Ali and Fatimih, born (A.H. 4) killed at Karbila (A.H. 61) Oct. 10, A.D. 680.
4. 'Ali, son of Husayn and Shahribanu (daughter of Yazdigird, the last Sasanian king), generally called Imam Zaynu'l-Abidin, also poisoned.—(A.H. 94).

condemned by the Shi'ah clergy because she claimed these two

5. Muhammad-Baqir, son of Imam Zaynu'l-Abidin and his cousin Umme-'Abdu'llah, the daughter of Imam Hasan, poisoned.—(A.H.113)
6. Ja'far-i-Sadiq, son of Imam Muhammad-Baqir, poisoned.—(A.H.148)
7. Musa-Kazim, son of Imam Ja'far-i-Sadiq, born (A.H.129) poisoned (A.H.183)
8. 'Ali-ibn-i-Musa'r-Rida, generally Imam Rida, (Ali III), born (A.H.153) poisoned (A.H.203) and buried at Mashad, which derived its name and its sanctity from him.
9. Muhammad-Taqi, son of Imam Rida, born (A.H.195) poisoned at Baghdad, (A.H.220)
10. 'Ali-Naqi (Ali IV), son of Imam Muhammad-Taqi, born (A.H. 213) poisoned at Surra-man-Ra'a, (A.H.254).
11. Hasan-i-'Askari, son of Imam 'Ali-Naqi, born (A.H. 232) poisoned (A.H.260).
12. Muhammad, son of Imam Hasan-i-'Askari, born (A.H.255) and succeeded his father in the Imamate, in (A.H. 260), called by the Shi'ahs 'Imam-Mihdi', 'Hujjatu'llah' (the Proof of God), 'Baqiyyatu'llah' (the Remnant of God), and 'Qaim-i-Al-i-Muhammad' (He who shall arise of the family of Muhammad).—From listing quoted in the "Dawn Breakers,"—p. iii.

The twelfth Imam bore not only the same name but the same kunyah (title) Abu'l-Qasim as the Prophet, and according to the Shi'ahs it is not lawful for any other to bear this name and this kunyah together ... The Shi'ahs hold that he did not die, but disappeared almost immediately after his father's death in an underground passage in Surra-man-Ra'a, A.H. 260; that he still lives surrounded by a chosen band of his followers, in one of the mysterious cities, Jabulqa and Jabulsa, and that when the fullness of time is come, when the earth is filled with injustice, and the faithful are plunged in despair, he will come forth, heralded by Jesus Christ, overthrow the infidels, establish universal peace and justice and he will inaugurate a millenium of blessedness...After assuming the functions of Imam and presiding at the burial of his father and predecessor, the Imam Hassan-i-'Askari, he disappeared from the sight of all save a chosen few, who, one after the other, continued to act as channels of communication between

* p. LIII DB Siyyid Kazim said that the Promised One "would appear neither from Jabulqa nor from Jabulsa." p 25 DB Tahirih was condemned by the Shi'ah clergy because she claimed these two cities never existed. See fn. 1 p 622 DB.

him and his followers. These persons were known as "Gates."
—D.B. pp. iii-iv.

Muhammad, the Prophet of God, born in Arabia, is called "God's Well-beloved" —W.O.B. p.106.; the "Faithful", and the "Seal of the Prophets." He appeared in 622 A.D. in one of the darkest countries, in the midst of illiterate, cruel and barbarous tribes; and by the purity of His heart and the Spirit which flowed through Him, He lifted those barbarous tribes into a great civilization. His Revelation was included in a Book, the Qur'an, which became the cause of enlightenment; He gave basic knowledge which became the foundation of new fields of science, and also gave the Divine Laws for a new Dispensation. The twelve Imams carried on His Message and kept it pure, but the ecclesiastical rulers changed and perverted His Message and spread the twisted teachings instead of the pure teachings of the divine Truth.

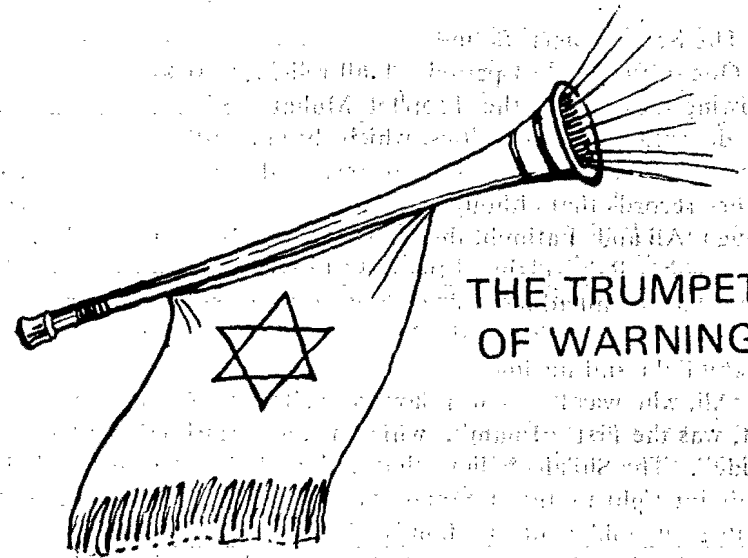
When each Imam gave forth His message, the persecutions by ambitious opposers began; and during the period of the first seven Imams, the illiteracy and the impurity of heart were so great that the people were unable to comprehend the difference between that which was true and that which was distorted. Being incapable of withstanding the cruel, revolting persecutions, a third of the people drank of the "waters" (which means spiritual knowledge) that had been made "bitter" by distortions, "and many men died (spiritually) of the waters, because they were made bitter." —v.11.

The entire eighth chapter tells the history of the first four Imams, closing with the verse which foretells of "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" —v.13. The western world has failed to understand Muhammad and His Mission. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says, "Muhammad never fought against the Christians; on the contrary, he treated them kindly and gave them perfect freedom. ...In the edicts which he promulgated it is clearly stated that the lives, properties, and laws of the Christians and Jews are under the protection of God ... —S.A.Q. pp. 25,26.

The English writer Bishop Ken states well a searching truth in these few words :

"The older error is, it is the worse,
Continuation may provoke a curse;

If the Dark Age obscured our fathers' sight,
Must their sons shut their eyes against the Light?"



CHAPTER IX

THE SEVEN ANGELS
Locusts Like Scorpions

God says in the Qur'an: "Take ye hold of the Cord of God, all of you, and become ye not disunited." B.W.F. p. 419

The Seven Angels Sound.

One of the saddest periods of all religious history is the one following the death of the Prophet Muhammad—a period filled with deception and calamities, which began with a schism forty days after His body was laid to rest and His Spirit ascended. History records that although the line of succession clearly went through 'Ali and Fatimih, the daughter of Muhammad, the ambitious 'Abu Bakr claimed the right to be His successor simply because Muhammad had asked him, during His last illness, to lead in prayers one day in the Mosque. The Sunnis are followers of 'Abu Bakr and his line.

'Ali, who was the son-in-law as well as a cousin of the Prophet, was the first "Imam", which means "spiritual leader" or "guide". The Shi'ahs believe that 'Ali and His descendants held the divine right to the Imamate or Seat of Succession. Shi'ah signifies "upholders of the family of the Prophet". There were continual strifes between the followers of both sides. Horrible wars and massacres were bitter and revolting. The Imams were all murdered, as were most of their followers who remained steadfast and tried to maintain the purity of Muhammad's message.

In the Book of Revelation, we learn that Christ foretold some of the events that would take place at this time in the history of Islam. Chapter IX pictures some of these events. "And the fifth angel sounded and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were

darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."—v.1-4.

Emerson, in one of his essays, says: "There is nothing more bottomless than the pit of ignorance." In many of the Sacred Writings, as well as in classical literature, the "bottomless pit" is called the pit of ignorance, from which the smoke of evil and the beast pour forth. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains Rev. 11:7 about the beast in "Some Answered Questions", p. 60, as follows: "The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them, this beast means the Bani-Umayya (Umayyad Dynasty of Caliphs), who attacked them from the pit of error, and who rose against the religion of Muhammad and against the reality of 'Ali—in other words, the love of God." 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that the Bani-Umayya, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, subverting the spiritual life spread by the Imams, destroyed the divine laws and teachings of Muhammad, and substituted human rituals and forms. Thus the religious system became like an empty vessel or a beautiful lamp without a light. Obviously, in the Islamic World also there are many called but few who are chosen.

The locusts are symbols of hordes of armies with deadly stings, like venomous scorpions that continue the persecutions for "five months." "And to them it was given that they should not kill them but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when it striketh a man."—v. 5. The key to "time" is given by Ezekiel 4:6; "I have appointed thee each day for a year." Counting thirty days to a month, five months resolves to one hundred and fifty years, which was the period of the most horrible massacres in Islamic history. Christ even foretold the battle against Muhammad at Uhud, near Medina, with men wearing helmets of brass, "like gold", but not gold, and the idolatrous women going to battle with their archers, beating their timbrels. When the Prophet was wounded in the mouth by an arrow of the archer of His chief enemy 'Abu Sufyan, a disciple asked Him to curse the enemy. Muhammad replied, "I have not been sent as a curse to man-

kind, but as an inviter to good, and as a mercy.”—“Six Lessons on Islam”, by Marzieh Gail, p. 9. Savage persecutions by His enemies continued throughout the entire Dispensation of Muhammad, and even to this day. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains the Bani-Umayya as the beast who attacked Muhammad and ‘Ali and their teachings from the pit of error and destroyed their virtues of truthfulness, justice, purity, love, humility, sanctity, leaving only prayer and fasting—the body without the spirit. They killed many of Muhammad’s descendants, who might be rightly esteemed. This condition lasted for 1260 years until the Declaration of the Báb.—S.A.Q. pp. 60-63.

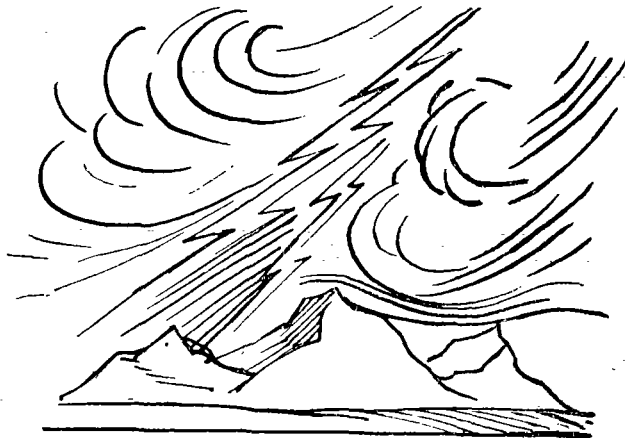
An examination of Islamic history will verify that the period of the power of the Bani-Umayya, lasted 150 years. The founder of the Umayyad dynasty was ‘Abu Sufyan, grandson of Umayya, for whom the dynasty was named, though ‘Abu Sufyan was not a Caliph. The Umayya were related to the Prophet’s Quraysh clan, sometimes called Korish Tribe, in which Muhammad’s father, Abdullah, was born. For years, ever since the beginning of the Islamic Era in 622 A.D., according to the Moslem historians Hitti and Ameer Ali, ‘Abu Sufyan had been the heart of the opposition of the Quraysh to Muhammad, persecuting Him until His death in 632 A.D. The Umayyad Dynasty lasted from 661 to 749 A.D., although ‘Uthman, Caliph from 644 to 656, was also one of the Umayyads. During the period from 632 to 644, and from 656 to 661, the Bani-Umayya were persecuting the true believers, the followers of the Imams, and scheming to usurp the Caliphate. When the Umayyad dynasty ended in 749, the Abbasids “proceeded against the fallen dynasty with unheard of savagery. Throughout Syria the Umayyads were hunted down and extirpated like wild beasts.” “History of the Islamic Peoples.”—Brockelmann, —p. 105. This process lasted several years, and one of the Umayyads escaped to Spain where he became Emir of Cordova in 756 A.D. Another three years of conflict in Syria ensued, before peace was attained which makes 150 years from 610 to 760, inclusive, truly an accurate fulfillment of Christ’s prophecy.—S.A.Q. pp. 60-63, 79-80. During the Inquisition in Spain two million Jews were forced to choose between joining the Church and death. Many were martyred. Many became “Muslims” but escaped to Jerusalem in 1839-1840.

“One Woe is past, and behold, there come two woes more

hereafter.” —v. 12. It is strange that one should think of the coming of the Prophet of God as a woe, but it is indeed “the great and terrible Day of the Lord,” when the Prophet brings the Law of God, which people resist and denounce with terrible consequences and which to them is woe. Here two more woes are foretold, that will come after Muhammad, and they are the Ones bringing the New Age of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá writes: “The first woe is the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad the son of ‘Abdu’llah—peace be upon Him! The second woe is that of the Báb—to Him be glory and praise! The third woe is the great day of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts and the radiance of the Beauty of the Promised One”...Bahá’u’lláh—S.A.Q. pp. 65-66.

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.”—v. 13-16. In Chapter VII it is stated that there were four angels that were about to loose the four winds that were to destroy everything upon the earth, and a great or mighty angel said, “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” v. 7:3. And now the sixth angel is told to “loose the four angels...for to slay the third part of men.”—v. 14, 15. Then John describes the fire and smoke and brimstone which came from the mouths of the horses, and it was by these three that the third part of men was to be killed. This signifies that the fire and smoke of error would destroy the spiritual life of the people to the extent that “the light of the virtues of the world of humanity, which is the result of the love and knowledge of God, is extinguished, and the darkness of tyranny, oppression, satanic passions and desires, has become victorious.”—S.A.Q. p. 62. “Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”—v. 21. Never had there been such a prolonged period of devastating darkness and evil and despair. Christ, looking across the unrolling scroll of history, gave clear and definite warnings of this night of spiritual, mental and moral darkness that “must

come to pass" before the dawn of the New Day. He admonished, "But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come." — Rev. 2:25.



**WARNING OF
STORMS TO COME**

CHAPTER X

A LITTLE BOOK OPENED

A New Dimension of Time

"Thus hath the Tongue of Revelation spoken that which God hath made the ornament of the book of creation." —B.W.F. p. 62.

Time and space move to a new dimension. Now the scene of the great drama changes. Darkness, ignorance, prejudice, pretense, evil and despair had spread over most of the world. There was scarcely any progress and so false had civilization become that even the consciousness of its falsity had vanished.

It is recounted in the preceding chapter that the Books of God had been sealed with seven seals until the day when each seal was opened by the Lamb Who stood beside the Throne. Now Christ pictures another mighty angel in these words: "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." —v. 1. Could it be that every Prophet of God has come in a "cloud" of man's doubts, unbeliefs and fears? One of the proofs of His station as a Prophet is that He shines through the clouds and causes them to melt away and vanish. This mighty angel came in this kind of a "cloud" and a "rainbow was upon his head."

Even as the seven prismatic colors, when blended, form a ray of pure white light, so the light of the seven great religious systems, symbolically, each having its own individual spiritual color, when blended, becomes the pure white light of unity and truth. This mighty angel had the rainbow of light of all the seven Revelators upon His head, opening the way for the Promised One to blend them all and uplift them into the pure white light of truth for the New Day; and His face shone like the sun.

"And he had in his hand a little book open." —v.2. What

a mighty and portentous statement! Never before in all human history, never before in all the Sacred Writings, never even in the consciousness of man had there been such a powerful, sweeping statement regarding the Book! For the first time in the Bible it states that the Book is open.

The Book, already established, is the Word of God as revealed by all of His Chosen Messengers, not just by one of Them. One would then imagine it to be a huge book. This, however, is a little book, since the actual words of all the Revelators put together, excluding all the history, the admonitions of man and his conceptions, all of human origin, would make only a small book. Now, at last, this wondrous Book, the Word of God, is opened! The One upon the Throne, Bahá'u'lláh, had given the Lamb, the Báb, the little Book sealed with the seven seals, to open. At last, praise be to God, after all the slowly unfolding centuries, the Book is open! The Báb set His right foot on the sea, symbolic of no more separation, and His left foot upon the earth, symbolic of the world-wide establishment of His Revelation. According to Shoghi Effendi, this was "a Revelation destined to blossom forth, in a later period into the flourishing institutions of a world-wide administrative System, and to ripen, in the Golden Age as yet unborn, into mighty agencies functioning in consonance with the principles of a world-unifying, world-redeeming Order." —G.P.B. pp. 59-60.

The Báb announced His Mission during His persecutions, in 1848, when He was brought to Tabriz for trial before a solemn assembly of ecclesiastical dignitaries for His so-called heresy. The Báb, having seated Himself in the seat reserved for the heir to the throne, gave His historic and breathtaking answer to the question put to Him by the leaders of that assembly. In firm and ringing tones He stated, "I am, I am, I am the Promised One! I am the One Whose name you have for a thousand years invoked, at whose mention you have risen, Whose advent you have longed to witness, and the hour of Whose Revelation you have prayed to God to hasten. Verily, I say it is incumbent upon the peoples of both the East and the West to obey My word, and to pledge allegiance to my person." —G.P.B. p. 21. The Báb, then, with great dignity and firmness disbanded the meeting by Himself rising and leaving the room. There was great consternation, humiliation and bitter resentment, on the part of the dignitaries.

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are and the earth, and the things that therein are, the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: —v. 5,6.

Does this mean that there will be no more clocks, watches, calendars, or measurements of time? No. Time here means a period of time, as an Age or a cycle, so then the end of the "time" means the end of the Adamic Cycle.

Ouspensky states that there is a larger meaning to these words than just the end of a cycle. He writes "...in the changes of the time sense, the beginning of the fourth form of consciousness is expressed, the beginning of the transition to *cosmic consciousness*. And the understanding of the fact that the Mystery of Time is the first mystery to be revealed in the first step towards the development of cosmic consciousness, along the intellectual path ... The words are full of splendor and we may accept them as a symbol of remote and inaccessible Truth."—Ouspensky-Tertium Organum. p. 333.

It was in the evening of May 22, 1844, that the Báb raised His hand to Heaven and made the astounding Declaration that the Cycle had ended, that a New Day had dawned, and that He was the Prophet-Herald of One greater than Himself, Who would be made manifest, and Who would be the Originator of a new Universal Cycle. —G.P.B. p. 93.

When a Prophet of God appears, He institutes a new measurement of time, and a new calendar. Among different peoples and at different times, many different methods for the measurement of time and the fixing of dates have been adopted. At least 200 different calendars are in use in the world today. Some of the more familiar ones are the Gregorian calendar in Western Europe and America, the Julian in many countries of Western Europe, the Hebrew among the Jews, and the Moslem calendar. The importance of this new Revelation in this Day is signaled by the fact that the Báb presented the world with a new calendar, which abolishes the lunar and adopts the solar reckoning of time. Bahá'u'lláh took the calendar of the Báb, modified it, established its authority and declared it as the calendar for the great new Bahá'í Cycle.

The Bahá'í year consists of nineteen months of nineteen days each, (i.e.—three hundred and sixty one days) with the addition of certain intercalary days (four in ordinary and five in leap years) between the eighteenth and nineteenth months in order to adjust the calendar to the solar year. The Báb named the months after the attributes of God. The Bahá'í New Year, like the ancient Persian New Year, is astronomically fixed at March 21st, the Vernal Equinox, and the Bahá'í Era commences with the year of the Báb's Declaration, March 21st, 1844, or 1260 A.H.—B.W. Vol. IV. p. 248.

Many countries of the world are now beginning to consider the growing imperative need for a world calendar, and it will soon be necessary for all to agree on a calendar that will be adequate for all and free from the objections and associations of those of the past. There are seven major reasons why the Bahá'í world calendar is the most adequate for the entire world.

1. It is given by two world Revelators, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.
 2. It is astronomically based, beginning at the Spring equinox, March 21.
 3. It begins the new astronomical Grand Cycle of 500,000 years.
 4. It is adapted to larger units of time measurements needed for the New Cycle.
 5. It is best conditioned to all countries of the world, and is therefore conducive to unity.
 6. It is in rhythmic time sequence, most simple and convenient.
 7. The names of the days and months and years are a continuous expression of the attributes of God, the first day of each month being the day of Bahá (Splendor), and the last day of each month the day of 'Ala (Loftiness).
- The new larger units of time measurements needed in the New Cycle are: the Vahid and the Kull-i-Shay'. Each cycle of nineteen years is called a Vahid. Nineteen Vahids form a period called Kull-i-Shay'. The word "Vahid" has a numerical value of nineteen, and means Unity. The numerical value of Kull-i-Shay' is 361 and the word means "For the sake of God." What could

be more unifying and uplifting than the continual mentioning of the attributes of God by our lips and our lives?

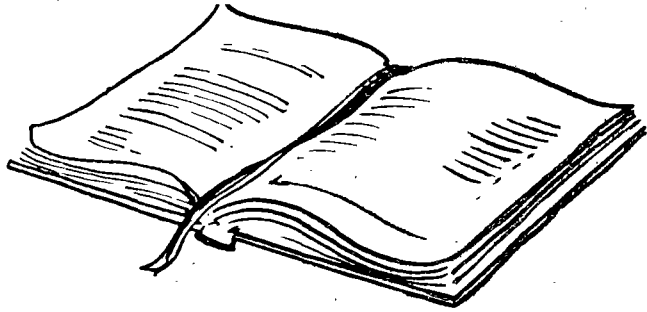
"And the voice which I heard from Heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth! and I went unto the angel and said unto him, 'give me the little book.' And he said unto me; 'Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.' And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter."—v. 8-10.

John was commanded to take the little Book, opened by the Báb, for the first time in all history, and eat it up. Does this mean to "eat up" the Book of Revelation, as many interpret it? Does this mean to "eat up" the Christian Bible? What does it mean? Does it not mean to take the truth as revealed by all the Revelator? Is it not sweet to the taste but difficult and bitter to live it? When it becomes part of our inner being, then it becomes sweet within, and then nobility becomes the accent of our lives.

Bahá'u'lláh explains how to attain the goal of nobility in these words: "...When a true seeker determines to take the step of search in the path leading unto the knowledge of the Ancient of Days, he must, before all else, cleanse and purify his heart, which is the seat of the revelation of the inner mysteries of God, from the obscuring dust of all acquired knowledge, and the illusions of the embodiments of satanic fancy."—Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 192..."At the dawn of every day he should fervently commune with God, and, with all his soul persevere in the quest of his Beloved."—Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 194.

'Abdu'l-Bahá explained the proof of nobility in these soul-stirring words: "The necessity and the particularity of the assured and the believing ones is to be firm in the Cause of God and withstand the hidden and evident tests. Thanks be to God that you are distinguished and made eminent by this blessing. Anybody can be happy in the state of comfort, ease, health, success, pleasure and joy; but if one will be happy and contented in the time of trouble, hardship and prevailing disease, it is the proof of nobility. Thanks be to God that that dear servant of God is extremely patient under the disastrous circumstances, and in the

place of complaining gives thanks."—B.W.F. pp. 363, 364. The expression of the heavenly qualities at all times enables one to manifest nobility as the accent of life.



THE LITTLE BOOK
OPENED

CHAPTER XI

THE TWO WITNESSES

Four and Twenty Elders

God Speaks:

"For never have I left

My Word without a Witness unto Me."

—Song Celestial by Howard Colby Ives, p. 21.

Some scientists say that man is the product of his thinking. William James, 1882-1910, said, "The greatest discovery of my generation is, that people can alter their lives and the world by their thinking." The Christian Bible states: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."—Proverbs 23:7. Does one alter his thinking unaided? No. Agnostics seem to be unable to change their thinking to recognize the station of the Prophets of God Who reveal the laws and principles, and release the power for the next step forward in both the material and spiritual civilizations. The power released by Moses, Zoroaster, Christ and all the other Prophets was, in each case, the cause of the spiritual and material progress of humanity. A typical example of the birth of a new civilization occurred in 622 A.D.

Suddenly in a dark and barbarous country, Arabia, a great Soul arose Who was not like the other Arabs. Muhammad smashed their idols of pictures and images, gave them new laws, and altered their ancient customs. For all this He was persecuted and tortured, as is everyone who smashes idols. Today the idols of man's own imaginations are being smashed. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that these other idols at least had a mineral existence, while mankind's present idols are not even mineral, but are only fancies.—S.A.Q. p. 171. Many people are unaware that there are a number of chapters in the Bible which refer to the Muhammadan Dispensation.

In the very first verse of the first chapter of the Book of Revelation, Christ gives the purpose of the book, "to show unto his

servants things which must shortly come to pass." These events have occurred since 96 A.D. as He foretold.

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that the worship therein." v.1. A reed is a hollow stick, which was used in Biblical times as a measuring rod. The only flawless measuring rod for judging a temple or people is the Manifestation of God, the Prophet and the law which He brings. That is the measuring rod. Here He is commanded to measure the temple and the altar and them that worship closest to the Word of God and to the Law of God. These are the ones who should be measured first.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has likened the reed to the perfect man. . . . "when the interior of a reed is empty and free from all matter, it will produce beautiful melodies; and as the sound and melodies do not come from the reed, but from the flute-player who blows upon it, so the sanctified heart of that blessed being is free and emptied from all save God, . . . and is the companion of the Divine Spirit. Whatever he utters is not from himself, but from the real flute-player, and it is a divine inspiration. That is why he is likened to a reed; and that reed is . . . the rod of the Divine Shepherd by which He guards His flock, and leads them about the pastures of the Kingdom."—S.A.Q. pp. 53, 54.

'Abdu'l-Bahá also said: "The purport is this, that certain souls guided (people) with a rod of the plant, that is, a reed wherewith he shepherded the sheep, like unto the rod of Moses; others trained (the people) with the rod of iron and drove them, as in the time of Muhammad (The sceptre of Muhammad was the sword). In this greatest Day the rod of the plant and the rod of iron are changed into a rod which is of pure gold and is from the endless treasures of the Kingdom of God."—T. AB. Vol. 1, p. 93.

"But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."—v.2. The key is given in Ezekiel 4:6, "I have appointed thee each day for a year." "Forty and two months" then, would be 1260 years, referring to the complete Muhammadan Dispensation. There are many references in the Bible foretelling the 1260 years, which can only be understood historically as the Dispensation of Muham-

mad. The year 1260 A.H. lunar time, corresponds to 1844 A.D. solar time which is when the Báb made His Declaration. The year 1844 is symbolically referred to more often than any other date in the Sacred Writings.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth."—v.3. A thousand two hundred and three score days is, again, 1260 years, which is the complete Muhammadan Dispensation. The two witnesses, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, are Muhammad, the Messenger of God, and 'Ali, son of Abu Talib.—S.A.Q. p.57. Muhammad was the "Sun" of His Dispensation; 'Ali was the "Moon" reflecting His light, being the first one to herald the station of Muhammad.

"These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before God of the earth."—v.4. "These" are also referred to in Ezekiel and in Daniel, who are the same "two witnesses", who are Muhammad and 'Ali. All lamps were, at that time, lighted by olive oil, and the candlestick is the abode of the light, and from it the light shines forth. In the same way the light of guidance would shine and radiate from these illumined souls.—S.A.Q. p. 58

"And if any man will hurt them, fire procedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."—v.5-7.

That they are "standing before the God of the earth", signifies that they are standing in the service of God and educating the creatures of God, such as the wild, barbarous tribes of Arabia, who were educated in such a way that they reached the highest degree of knowledge known in those days, and their fame became world wide.

These Witnesses brought the Law of God. If one failed to observe that Law, or belittled it, that very Law would become the means of his destruction. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said that in this prophecy, "rain" means bounty. The Law and Teachings of Muhammad

and of 'Ali are the bounties which They can either give or withhold. "The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit," (as before stated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá) means the Bani-Umayya, the dynasty of the Umayyad, who attacked them, the two witnesses, from the pit of error, and who rose against the religion of Muhammad and against the reality of 'Ali—in other words, against the love of God.—S.A.Q. p.60. This means that the beast would destroy the love of God in the spiritual life of the people, treading under foot the true Message of Muhammad until only a lifeless body would remain, in the hands of the official 'Ulama.

"And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on earth."—v.8-10.

"Sodom and Egypt, the place where also our Lord was crucified," 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, "is the region of Syria, and especially Jerusalem, where the Bani-Umayya then had their dominions...and it was here that the Religion of God and the divine teaching first disappeared, and a dead body without spirit remained."—S.A.Q. p.61. The Holy Books symbolize the "three days and a half" as three years and a half, or forty-two months, which is equal to 1260 days or years or the entire Dispensation of Muhammad. The body was not completely destroyed, as the outward form including prayer and fasting was still preserved, but the spiritual teachings of morals, conduct and knowledge of the divine mysteries had disappeared. Tyranny, oppression and satanic passions became victorious over the Law of God, until truthfulness, justice, love, purity, detachment, sanctity and nobility disappeared and gross darkness covered the land. In the study of this period of darkness and corruption, pretence and immorality that marked Islamic lands, we see how a people, who had attained the summit of power, became degraded and down-trodden because they had "killed" the Law of God. "It was like the darkest hour before the dawn, when the few lamps and candles that remain alight do little more than make the darkness visible."—B.N.E. p. 17.

"And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud: and their enemies beheld them."—v. 11, 12.

After the three and one half days, twelve hundred and sixty years, Christ here foretells that the Law of God revealed by Muhammad and taught by 'Ali would again have life and bounty from heaven, and would illumine the darkness. Now the scene changes. In fulfillment of this animating prophecy, a Morning Star named the Báb appeared in Persia, in 1844, Whose Light began to push back the blinding clouds of darkness. The Light of Truth shone forth, the Holy Breezes were diffused, the Morn of Guidance dawned, and the Life-giving Spring gushed out, bringing joy, gladness and progress for a New Age.

What significance in those words, "Come up hither!"—v. 12. It was as though God was calling His Chosen Messenger, the Báb, and Quddus, the Báb's beloved disciple. The Báb also like Christ raised the Call of God, delivered His Message, revealed His Law, and like His Holiness Christ, would attain the sublime station of Martyrdom. Quddus likewise was destined to be martyred.

Like the crucifixion of Christ, the martyrdom of the Báb is one of the most soul-stirring dramas of all human history. It was on July 9, 1850, that the Báb, Who was then in His thirty first year, became a victim of the fanatical fury of His persecutors. Along with a devoted young follower, 'Aqa Muhammad Ali, who had begged to be allowed to share His Martyrdom, the Báb was led to the execution post in the public square of Tabriz. The high born youth, in spite of the pleas and entreaties of his family and friends, was overjoyed on being permitted to die with his beloved Lord. Thousands of excited spectators gathered on the roofs and in the streets and open spaces, eager to watch the public execution. It was two hours before noon. The two young men were suspended by ropes to the execution post. The young disciple begged to have his body placed so as to shield his Master's, and so they were bound and suspended, the head of the boy resting on the breast of the Prophet.

A regiment of Armenian soldiers was drawn up and received the order to fire. Seven hundred and fifty rifles discharged their

bullets at the blessed Target. So dense was the smoke that the sky was darkened. When the smoke cleared away, the petrified and astonished multitude of ten thousand beheld an electrifying scene they could scarcely believe. The Báb had vanished from their sight; the youth stood alive and unharmed beside the wall where they had been suspended. The ropes by which they had been hung alone were severed. 'The Siyyid-i-Báb has gone from our sight!' exclaimed the bewildered spectators.—G.P.B. p. 53.

Later they found the Báb giving His last message to His amanuensis, inside the prison, where He had earlier said to His captors: "Not until I have said all those things that I wish to say can any earthly power silence Me. Though all the world be armed against Me yet shall it be powerless to deter Me from fulfilling, to the last word, My intention." When The Báb had finished His dictation, He turned to the chief gaoler and said: "I have finished My conversation with Siyyid Husayn. Now you may proceed to fulfil your intention."—G.P.B. p. 52. The Colonel of the Armenian regiment, shaken by what had happened, ordered his men to leave the barracks immediately and swore never again to resume that task, even if it cost his own life.

A Muslim colonel volunteered to replace him and another regiment was assembled. The Báb and the youth were again suspended on the same wall. The Báb gazed at the bloodthirsty multitude and addressed them in these awe-inspiring words: "O wayward generation! Had you believed in Me, every one of you would have followed the example of this youth, who stood in the rank above most of you, and would have willingly sacrificed himself in My path. The day will come when you will have recognized Me, that day I shall have ceased to be with you." Seven hundred and fifty bullets riddled the two bodies which were thrown outside the city wall into the desolate moat beyond.

The faces of the Báb and 'Aqa Muhammad 'Ali were miraculously spared. And more than this, Shoghi Effendi states, at the very moment the shots were fired, a violent gale swept the city, obscuring the light of the sun and blinding the eyes of the people. In Shiraz, an earthquake as foretold in v. 13 of this chapter, occurred after The Báb's execution in Tabriz, threw the whole city into turmoil and wrought havoc among its people—a havoc greatly aggravated by cholera, famine and other afflictions!—G.P.B. p. 53.

This was similar to the earthquake at the time of the martyrdom of Christ, when the veil of the temple was rent.

By this foul deed, the prison square of Tabriz became a second Calvary. The enemies of The Báb enjoyed a guilty thrill of triumph, thinking they had severed the root of the Bábi Faith. But their triumph was shortlived; they did not realize that the Tree of Truth can not be severed by material acts, nor can the creative organic processes set in motion by Divine Revelation be thwarted.

"And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."—v. 13.

When this earthquake took place in Shiraz in the province of Fars, it is said by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that "all the remnant lamented and cried day and night, and were occupied in glorifying and praying to God. They were so troubled and affrighted that they had no sleep nor rest at night."—S.A.Q. p. 65.

"The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly."—v. 14. The first woe refers to the Dispensation of Muhammad; the second woe to that of the Báb; the third woe to the great Day of the Manifestation of the Lord of Hosts, Bahá'u'lláh, which came only nineteen years after that of the Báb. Each Dispensation is a woe to the unbelievers, the doubters, and to those who are disobedient to the Laws of God.

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wert, and are to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."—v. 15-17.

The seventh angel is a human being endowed with heavenly attributes who will proclaim the Manifestation of the Lord of Hosts and the Kingdom of God upon the earth. "Such is the Day of God. For all the days which have come and gone were the days of Abraham, Moses and Christ, or of the other Prophets; but this day is the Day of God, for the Sun of Reality will arise in it with the utmost warmth and splendor."—S.A.Q. p. 67.

The four and twenty elders are the disciples or holy souls. "Jacob had twelve sons; in the time of Moses there were twelve heads or chiefs of the tribes; in the time of Christ there were twelve disciples; and in the time of Muhammad there were twelve Imams. But in this glorious dispensation there are twenty four, double the number of all the others, for the greatness of this Manifestation requires it."—S.A.Q. p. 67. They bowed before the One upon the Throne in gratitude and thanksgiving, and in recognition of the greatness of His Mission to establish peace and unity upon the earth.

"And He shall reign forever and ever."—v.15. Many people think that the word "forever" is synonymous with the word "eternal". But it does not mean "eternal": it is translated from an Aramaic word meaning "for a great cycle." So the Light of Bahá'u'lláh will interpenetrate for a very long time, "for a great cycle."

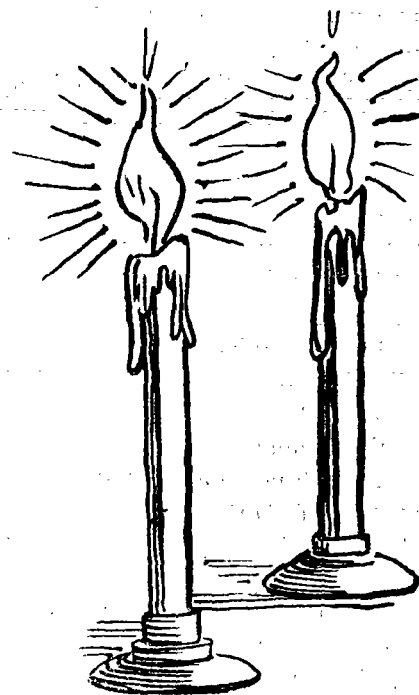
"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings and voices and thunderrings and an earthquake and great hail."—v. 18,19.

The nations were angry, for the disturbing teachings of the Prophet oppose the iniquities and corruptions of their affairs and of their lives. "The time of the dead that they should be judged" refers to the Judgment Day, when all things are measured and tested and tried, and when the spiritually deaf, dumb and blind are deprived and the destroyers are measured and destroyed.

A beautiful statement is that the "temple of God was opened in heaven" and the "ark of His Testament" became visible. The "ark of His Testament" refers here to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, son of Bahá'u'lláh, and the Center of His Covenant.—G.P.B. p. 239. 'Abdu'l-Bahá is extolled by the Revealer of the Apocalypse (Jesus Christ) as "the Ark of His (God's) Testament;"...glorified by Bahá'u'lláh in certain passages of His Writings, as the "Ark of Salvation" and as "The Cord stretched betwixt the earth and the Abhá Kingdom." G.P.B. p. 239. "The temple of God was opened in heaven" means also that by the diffusion of the divine teachings, the appearance

of these heavenly mysteries,...the doors of success and prosperity will be opened in all directions, and the signs of goodness and heavenly benedictions will become manifest."—v.19.—S.A.Q. p.70.

"And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake and great hail',—v.19.—meaning that after the appearance of the Book of the Testament there will be a great storm, and the lightnings of the anger and the wrath of God will flash, the noise of the thunder of the violation of the Covenant will resound, the earthquake of doubts will take place, the hail of torments will beat upon the violators of the Covenant, and even those who profess belief will fall into trials and temptations."—S.A.Q. p. 71. How much must man quaff of the cup of suffering and be deprived, ere he turns his heart to God? Christ proclaimed, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."



THE LIGHT OF
TWO WITNESSES

CHAPTER XII

THE WOMAN—THE GREAT RED DRAGON

"This Woman is the Law of God"—'Abdu'l-Bahá. S.A.Q. p.80

Times, Times and Half a Time Fulfilled.

The amazing scene in the world drama changes, and a great red dragon appears. The twelfth chapter is very interesting, and has given rise to many different interpretations, some of which are so remote that they are confusing and amazing and they do not bring any enlightenment. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, however, has given us a number of Keys to this chapter which are most illuminating.

The first verse describes a great wonder; "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."—v.1, 2.

Figuratively, the woman symbolizes the Law of God. In the heaven of religion. Christ refers to a woman as the Law of God in Rev. 21:2; "Coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The woman in this chapter is that bride, the Law of God, revealed by Muhammad. She was clothed with the light of the "Sun of Reality" from the Prophet in the day and age in which He appeared.

Symbolically the "sun" and the "moon" refer to the two Islamic nations, Persia and Turkey, which use the symbols. The emblem of Persia is the sun, and that of Turkey is the crescent moon, the two most powerful nations of Islam. "Upon her head a crown of twelve stars" is the symbol, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, of the twelve Imams who were the promulgators of the Law of Muhammad and the educators of the people, thus shining like stars in the heaven of guidance. Thus we see that the twelve successive Imams are "the stars in her crown," as foretold by Christ.

"And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born."—v.2-4.

History records that the Law of Muhammad fell into the greatest difficulties and endured great afflictions until a perfect offspring was produced through Fatimih and the twelve Imams. That means the Promised One of the Law of Muhammad was reared in the bosom of this Law which mothered Him. This "Child" is recognized as His Holiness the Báb, lineal descendant of Muhammad, the Primal Point, Who was born of the Law of Muhammad, was nurtured by that Law, and Who became manifest on earth 1260 years after that Law was promulgated, thus fulfilling the prophecies of Christ and Muhammad.

The second great wonder in heaven was "a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars in heaven, and did cast them to the earth." 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that these signs allude to the dynasty of the Umayyads who dominated the Moslem religion. The seven heads and seven crowns mean the seven dominions over which the Bani-Umayya had power—S.A.Q. p. 79. These countries, controlled by the fanatical ecclesiastical power of the Bani-Umayya, were the Roman dominion around Damascus, and the Persian, Arabian, and Egyptian dominions, together with the dominion of Africa, that is to say Tunis, Morocco, and Algeria, the dominion of Andalusia which is now Spain, and the dominions of Turkestan and Transoxania—S.A.Q. pp. 79-80. These ten countries comprised Islam, but only seven of them had rulers, the others being provinces, or mandates.

The "Ten Horns" denote, without repetition the ten different names of the Umayyad rulers, as follows:

1. 'Abu Sufayn, who opposed Muhammad from 610 to 632 A.D. (Who was not a Caliph.)
2. 'Uthman, third Caliph, 644 to 656 A.D.
3. Mu'aviyyih I, sixth Caliph, 661-680 A.D. and Mu'aviyyih II, 683 A.D., eighth Caliph.

4. Yazid I, seventh Caliph, 680 to 683 A.D., Yazid II, fourteenth Caliph, 720 to 724 A.D. and Yazid III, seventeenth Caliph, 744 A.D.
 5. Marwan I, ninth Caliph, 683 to 685 A.D., Marwan II, eighteenth Caliph, 744 to 750 A.D.
 6. 'Abd'-al-kalik, tenth Caliph, 685 to 705 A.D.
 7. Walid I, eleventh Caliph, 705 to 715 A.D. and Walid II, sixteenth Caliph, 743 to 744 A.D.
 8. Sulayman, twelfth Caliph, 715 to 717 A.D.
 9. 'Umar II, thirteenth Caliph, 717 to 730 A.D.
 10. Hisham, fifteenth Caliph, 724 to 743 A.D.
- Marwan II, 744 to 750 A.D. was the last of the Umayyad Caliphs.

These symbolize the tail of the ecclesiastical system which destroyed the third part of the saintly and holy people of the lineage of Muhammad who were like "the stars of heaven." Washington Irving—"Mohamet and His Successors" and Philip K. Hitti—"History of the Arabs."

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days."—v.5, 6.

The dragon stood before the woman, which is the Law of God as revealed by Muhammad and expressed through the genealogical line of Fatimih and the twelve Imams. The child was the promised Manifestation, the off-spring of the Law of Muhammad and for Whom the Bani-Umayya were always looking that they might destroy Him, fearing the loss of their power, as Herod feared the loss of his power at the time of Christ, when he had all new-born male infants killed. In like manner the Bani-Umayya sought to kill any one of Muhammad's descendants who was highly esteemed, and who might be the Promised One. This man child, this Son that was born of the Law of God, on October 20, 1819 in Shiraz, Persia, was the Báb, Who would rule, not with a sword, but with a "rod of iron", which is the symbol of His spiritual power and might. It means that, with the power of the Word of God, He would spiritually protect all the nations of the earth and take them to Bahá'u'lláh Who would lead them like a shepherd into the great New Cycle of Unity and Peace.

This child appeared in the midst of the "most decadent race in the civilized world, grossly ignorant, savage, cruel, steeped in prejudice, servile in their submission to an almost deified hierarchy, recalling in their abjectness the Israelites of Egypt in the days of Moses, in their fanaticism the Jews in the Days of Jesus, and in their perversity the idolaters of Arabia in the days of Muhammad."—G.P.B. p.4. Into such a world this child was born, Who became noted for His great personal beauty and charm, love of mankind, nobility of character and great spiritual wisdom and power.

It is interesting to note the many Bible references to 1260 years, the length of the Muhammadan Dispensation. In Daniel it is expressed as "a time, times, and half a time" which is three and a half years, or forty two months, which equals twelve hundred and sixty days. In Ezekiel, 4-6, we learn that a day is a year in the sight of the Lord, and this is the Key to the prophecies. The woman, the personification of the Law of God, fled to the wilderness, meaning the vast desert of Hijaz, and the Arabian Peninsula, which became the abode and dwelling-place of the Law of God for 1260 years, at the end of which time the Promised One, the fruit of that Law, appeared in the person of His Holiness the Báb.

It was on May 23, 1844, (1260 A. H.) unheeded by the world's leaders, that the Báb made one of the greatest pronouncements of all time, when He stated that, "Behold the Cycle of Adam hath ended! A New Day hath dawned! And He Whom God hath made manifest is come!" It was the end of the Muhammadan Dispensation, and the fulfillment of the twelve hundred and sixty year period, and the end of the 6000 year Adamic cycle.

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.'" v. 7-10.

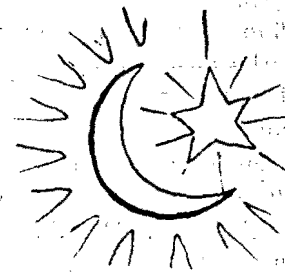
The great emphasis here is that at last there is the glad an-

nouncement that the time of salvation and the dawn of a New Day have come. The transforming spiritual power of the Báb has closed the old Cycle, opened a new, and has brought the regenerating Spirit of the Word of God again to mankind.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."—v. 11-17.

This clearly explains that the woman, that is, the Law of God, was protected throughout the Muhammadan Dispensation, until the coming of the Báb, in 1844. She was nourished in her place in the wilderness of Arabia, for a time, and times, and half a time. In those days, a "time" was recognized as the number of degrees in a circle, that is, three hundred and sixty degrees. "Times" would be twice that or seven hundred and twenty degrees. "Half a time" would be one hundred and eighty degrees. Adding all together, the whole period would be twelve hundred and sixty years, the length of the Muhammadan Dispensation, the lunar years. This was from A.D. 622 to A.D. 1844, when translated to solar years, A. H. 1260 corresponds to A.D. 1844. The Bible, with unfailling persistence from beginning to end, has again given that date, 1844, as the initiation of the great new Bahá'í Cycle, signaled by the Declaration of the Báb and His momentous pronouncement, heralding One greater than Himself. The serpent, or dragon, failed to sweep away the Law

of Muhammad by the flood of false teachings, and His true teachings could not be destroyed since Muhammad was the Manifestation of reality. "His Holiness Moses, His Holiness Christ, and His Holiness Muhammad, were the Manifestations of reality. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh was the glory of reality." P.U.P. p. 397.



THE LIGHT OF THE STAR AND THE CRESCENT

CHAPTER XIII

TWO STRANGE BEASTS 666

The Letters of the Living

"Were it not for tests, genuine gold could not be distinguished from the counterfeit...But for tribulations, how could the assured be distinguished from the doubters among Thy servants?"—D.A.L. pp. 91-92

The amazing panorama of this chapter presents what might be called a three dimensional glimpse of history. It is important to know more of the dramatic story of Islam, in order to better understand ensuing events.

When we review the conditions existing in the East prior to the rise of the Prophet of Arabia, we find that throughout the Arabian Peninsula intense spiritual darkness and utmost ignorance prevailed among the inhabitants. Those tribal peoples were constantly engaged in war, killing, burning, pillaging, and living in conditions of the most extreme debasement and immorality. Some were even lower and more brutal than the wild animals. To such people God sent Muhammad as a Prophet. He educated those barbarous tribes, lifted them out of their ignorance and savagery, began to establish agreement and reconciliation among them, and taught them to look upon each other as brothers. He forbade the practice of burying girl babies alive, and all other inhuman acts. Through His education they reached such a high degree of civilization that they governed nations, continents, and peoples. What a great civilization was established in Spain by the Muslims! What marvelous culture radiated from Baghdad as a center, penetrating even to darkened Europe in the form of new arts and sciences!

Islam gave algebra to the world; it spread the Arabic system of ten numerals, plane and spherical trigonometry, and invented the trigonometric functions,—sine, cosine, tangent, cotangent, secant and cosecant. In physics, Muslim scientists invented the

pendulum and produced works on optics. They made great progress in the science of astronomy. They built observatories and constructed many astronomical instruments which are still in use. They calculated the angle of the ecliptic and the procession of the equinoxes. At the time when the practice of medicine was forbidden in Europe by the church, the Arabs had developed a real science of medicine. They made great advances over the Greeks, and many of their methods of treatment of disease are still in use today. In chemistry they discovered many new substances, such as potash, nitrate of silver, sulphuric acid, alcohol, etc. They knew how to produce new varieties of fruits and flowers. Their fine art of papermaking was one of their greatest contributions to progress. They surpassed the rest of the world in beauty of design and workmanship. In fine textile fabrics, they have scarcely been equalled. Although the Islamic civilization reached a very high peak and contributed much to the progress of the world, yet because of the intrigues, political and religious corruptions, wars and fanatical atrocities, its spiritual downfall began about 750 A.D. Its fame and renown, however, had spread throughout the world, proving that Muhammad was, in truth, the Prophet and Messenger of God.

"And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."

"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, 'Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?'"

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two month."—Rev. 13:2,3,4,5.

Cruel and ambitious leaders failed to live according to the teachings of Muhammad after His passing, and through their lust for power wars and dissensions arose. From 661 A.D. to 760 A.D., this leadership was focalized in the Umayyad dynasty of Caliphs whose seat of government was Damascus. This dynasty, or Bani-Umayya, held sway over ten countries, and represents the

“red dragon” which gave power to the two beasts.—v.4.

The first “beast” mentioned in this chapter of the Book of Revelation, is according to Shoghi Effendi, Mu’aviyyih, sixth Caliph and first of the corrupt line of the Umayyad rulers. Shoghi Effendi explained this to the author and to the members of the International Council in Haifa. Mu’aviyyih seized the Caliphate by force from Hasan, the son of ‘Ali, paid him 5,000,000 dirhems for abdicating, and promised that Hasan would be restored to the position at his own death. However, he made the Caliphate hereditary by appointing his dissolute son Yazid as his successor. Washington Irving, in “Mahomet and His Successors”, explains the corruption and intrigue of those days. Muhammad had several times designated the pure-hearted ‘Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, as His successor, to be followed by his lineal descendants, but had not put it in writing. Mu’aviyyih was appointed governor of Syria by his kinsman ‘Uthman, the third Caliph. When ‘Ali was selected as fourth Caliph, Mu’aviyyih rose in rebellion against him, and plunged the Islamic Empire into fratricidal civil war. After losing Egypt to Amru, ‘Ali planned another assault on Syria to quell the rebellion of Mu’aviyyih. About this time, in 650 A.D., three fanatical zealots met as pilgrims in the Mosque at Mecca, and fell to lamenting over the dissensions and dismemberment of the Muslim Empire, all of which they attributed to the so-called ambitions of ‘Ali, Mu’aviyyih and Amru. In their infuriate zeal they determined that the only way to restore peace and unity to Islam was for each of them to assassinate one of these three leaders. Barak repaired to Damascus, mingled in the retinue of Mu’aviyyih as he was officiating in the Mosque as pontiff, and gave Mu’aviyyih what he considered a fatal blow. The wound was desperate, but Mu’aviyyih’s life was saved by drastic remedies. “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded unto death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast.” v.3.

The assassin who went after Amru killed another man by mistake. The only one who succeeded in his mission was ‘Abda’l-Rahman, who struck ‘Ali a mortal blow as he entered the Mosque at Cufa. ‘Ali died three days later and was succeeded by his son Hasan, who was soon forced to resign in favor of Mu’aviyyih. Such was the bitter hatred engendered by Mu’aviyyih against ‘Ali that his name was never mentioned in the Mosques

without curses and execrations, and this continued throughout the rule of the Umayyad Caliphs and for centuries after. The noble and generous character of ‘Ali was exemplified in the recorded circumstances of his life. He derived his religious spirit from his association with Muhammad Himself, and followed to the last the simplicity and nobility of His example. His signet ring bore the inscription: “The kingdom belongs to God.” One of his sayings shows the little value he set upon the transitory glories of this world. “Life is but the shadow of a cloud; the dream of a sleeper.”—Chapter 40.—“Mahomet and his Successors,” by Washington Irving. ‘Ali is said to have been born at the Kaaba, or Holy Temple of Mecca, where his mother, while praying, was suddenly taken in labor. ‘Ali was the only person of such distinguished birth.

Mu’aviyyih was crafty, treacherous like a leopard, ambitious, unjust, deceitful and scandalously greedy. He was guilty of intrigues, duplicity, murders and atrocities in his wars against ‘Ali and his adherents. He used money freely in buying off his opponents.

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.”

“And he exerciseth all power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” — Rev. 13:11, 12.

The second “beast” in this chapter is personified by Yazid, eldest son of Mu’aviyyih, who was evil-minded, licentious, cruel, ambitious, crafty and treacherous. He is accused by Arabian historians of having instigated the murder of the pure-hearted Hasan, who was to resume the Caliphate on the death of Mu’aviyyih. It was the intention of Mu’aviyyih to name his son, Yazid, as his successor without the customary election. Yazid knew that Hasan was strong in the affections of the people, and to remove such a dangerous rival from his path, it is said that Yazid prevailed upon one of Hasan’s wives to poison him, promising to marry her as a reward for her treason. In Hasan’s last agonies, his brother Husayn asked who had poisoned him, that he might avenge his death, but Hasan held his tongue. “This world,” said he, “is only a long night; leave him alone until he and I shall meet in open daylight, in the presence of the

Most High." The Báb was a descendant of Husayn and His disciple Quddus was a descendant of Hasan, the two sons of Fatimih.

The Caliph Yazid reigned only three years and a half, being cut down in the flower of his days, say the Muslim historians, because of his godless impiety in ordering the sacking of Medina, the burial place of the Prophet; for the latter had predicted, "Whoever injureth Medina, shall melt away even as salt melteth in water."—See Mahomet and His Successors.

There are many accounts of the internecine slaughter, the rapine and revolting atrocities during the Caliphates of Mu'aviyyih and Yazid, the two "beasts." The Shi'ah sect of Islam holds their memory in abhorrence, charging Yazid with the deaths of the Imams Hasan and Husayn, and accompanies his name with the imprecation, "May he be accursed of God!" The Sunni Sect, on the other hand, has throughout the centuries held the name of 'Ali and his descendants in execration, and has eulogized Mu'aviyyih and Yazid.

"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." —Rev. 13:18.

There are many strange interpretations of the "Beast with the number 666." However, according to Shoghi Effendi, it was Mu'aviyyih who desecrated the Shrine at the birthplace of Muhammad in Mecca and ordered the sacking of Medina, the burial place of the Prophet. He tried to make Damascus the Kaaba of the Muslim world. This dastardly event, foretold by Christ more than 500 years before, occurred in 666 A.D.

"And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Rev. 13:15.

The "image of the beast" occurred at the time of the martyrdom of the Báb in 1850.

These tragedies and conquests that raged around Damascus, Egypt and the deserts of Arabia, foretold and given as warnings in the Book of Revelation by the Lord Jesus Christ in 96 A.D., had a great influence in foreshadowing the religious history of the world. The "image of the beast" lived on in the bigoted ecclesiastical system of Islam, and its recrudescence was witnessed in the

persecutions and martyrdoms of the Báb and His followers more than eleven centuries later.

The Báb was loved most devotedly by all, as long as He was only a merchant and ordinary citizen, but when He made the Declaration of His great Mission, the heartless persecutions began. When He declared to Mulla Husayn, His first disciple, that he was the Báb, the Gate of God; "the Promised One";—when He made a similar declaration to Mirza Muhit in Mecca and delivered the Message of God to the Sherif of Mecca, calling him to embrace the Cause of God; when in the presence of the heir to the Persian throne and the assembled dignitaries of Tabriz, He publically proclaimed, "I am the Promised One! I am the One Whose name you have for a thousand years invoked..." G.P.B., p.21;— when He wrote to Muhammad Shah, "I am the Primal Point from which have been generated all created things... I am the countenance of God, Whose splendor can never be obscured, the light of God Whose radiance can never fade..." G.P.B. p.4.—W.O.B. p.126; when with speeding pen He poured forth epistles, commentaries and dissertations with such profusion that it amounted to the superhuman accomplishment of 500,000 verses;—when He had sent forth His Disciples, the Letters of the Living, His chosen messengers, to "prepare the way of the Lord";—when multitudes turned to Him and were stirred, to new life by His Spirit;—when He began to manifest such activities as these,—the envious hirelings and sycophants of Persia, the Church-State leaders, ordered the most cruel atrocities and oppressions to extinguish the Flame lighted by the new Prophet, though the proofs of His Station of Prophethood were clearly established.

Never before in all recorded history have there been such revolting, unspeakably cruel tortures and vicious persecutions as those wreaked upon the followers of the Báb by His arch-enemies, the notoriously degraded and corrupt Shi'ah priesthood. "The willing tools who prostituted their high office for the accomplishment of the enemy's designs were no less than the sovereigns of the Qajar dynasty, (than ruling in Persia)...The arch-villains who joined hands with the prime movers of so wicked a conspiracy were the two grand vizirs, Haji Mirza Aqasi, the idolized tutor of Muhammad Shah, a vulgar, false-hearted and fickle-minded schemer, and the arbitrary, bloodthirsty, reckless Amir Nizam, Mirza Taqi Khan... Their accomplice in these and other heinous crimes

was a government bolstered up by a flock of idle, parasitical princelings and governors, corrupt, incompetent, tenaciously holding to their ill-gotten privileges...G.P.B. p.4.

"And power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." —v.5. As we have seen before, forty and two months signifies twelve hundred and sixty years, the length of the Muhammadan Dispensation, which ended in 1844 with the Declaration of the Báb. The Báb's martyrdom and the revolting blood bath of His followers may be considered as the continuing power of the red dragon, the ecclesiastical system of Islam, which gave power unto the "beasts." v.14-18. Christ, in 96 A.D., looking into the as yet unrevealed vistas of the future, in this remarkable Book of Revelation, has disclosed consecutive events of interrelated history and symbols, foretelling "things that would come to pass hereafter." Today we can look back on their fulfillment in the Christian and Muhammadan dispensations, and forward toward the continued unfoldment of the New Cycle of human progress inaugurated by His Holiness the Báb.

The names of the "beasts" have become symbols of ignominy and degradation, whereas thousands honor and have testified to the sincerity of their love and devotion to the Báb, by the sacrifice of their lives and their all in His service, Kings and rulers might well envy His quickening and regenerating power over the lives and hearts of men. His eighteen disciples, the illustrious Letters of the living, unhesitatingly laid down their lives for Him, and one and all quaffed the cup of martyrdom.

They were fired with "a spirit exalted, unquenchable, and awe-inspiring, a knowledge surprisingly profound, an eloquence sweeping in its force, a piety unexcelled in its fervor, a courage leonine in its fierceness, a self-abnegation saintly in its purity, a resolve granite-like in its firmness, a vision stupendous in its range, a veneration for the Prophet and His Imams disconcerting to their adversaries... a standard of faith and a code of conduct that challenged and revolutionized the lives of their countrymen." —G.P.B. p.5.

CHAPTER XIV

THE TIME OF HARVEST The Angels and the Sickles

"Thus the Day of Resurrection is also the Day of Judgment, in which corruptions and imitations of the truth are discarded...and energies long frozen and pent up are released to flood and renovate the world."

B.N.E. p. 18,

The astonishing scene changes again. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." v. 1.

Chapter VII gives the description of the sealing of the hundred and forty and four thousand who, as it states, are those only who are "The servants of God," that is, those who rise to serve Him "before" the great tribulations force them to turn to God. Those who have gained the "Universal or Nine Consciousness" in the recognition of all the prophets of God, are the "Chosen Ones" of God. If one denies any one of the nine Divine Revelators, how can he have gained the "Unified or Nine Consciousness?" This is clearly explained in Chapter VII.

In the seventh chapter it was also explained that the "servants of God" were sealed with the "Seal of the living God." Here is a further explanation—that they are sealed with the "Father's name in their foreheads."

References in all the Holy Books to "The Father" have two different connotations, which have not been clearly understood. One refers to the Father as Infinite Essence. The other considers the Father prophetically as the Great One to come into the world at the end of the Cycle in the station of Fatherhood. Christ stated that the Kingdom of the Father is to be established upon the earth, as well as in heaven. He taught us to pray: "Our Father Who art in heaven...Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be

done in earth as it is in heaven..."—Matt. 6:9,10. Christians have invoked God by this prayer for nearly two thousand years. Christ told His disciples: "But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me."—John 15:26.

The Aramaic language, which Christ spoke, has no neuter gender. When Christ referred to Infinite Essence, or Spirit or Breath of God, "Neumah," He used the pronoun "Shin." When He alluded to the One to come in the station of the Father, He used the pronoun "Wo." In the above verse and in many others in the Gospels, He spoke prophetically of the Divine One to come in masculine human form, bearing witness of Christ. In the Tablet addressed especially to the Christians, Bahá'u'lláh states: "Surely the Father hath come and hath fulfilled that which you were promised in the Kingdom of God. This is the Word which the Son, (Christ) veiled when He said to those around Him that at that time they could not bear it. But when the stated time was ended, and the Hour arrived, the Word shone forth from the Horizon of the Will. Beware, O Concurrence of the Son! Cast it not behind you, but hold thereunto. It is better for you than all that which is before you!... Verily, the Spirit of Truth is come, to guide you into all Truth. Verily, He speaketh not from Himself, nay, but rather from the All-Knowing and Wise. He is the One Whom the Son hath glorified..."—B.N.E. p.134.

Again, in His Tablet to the Pope (Pius IX), written in 1867, Bahá'u'lláh writes: "The Word which the Son concealed is made manifest. It hath been sent down in the form of the human temple in this day. Blessed be the Lord Who is the Father! He, verily, is come unto the nations in His most great majesty... This is the day whereon the Rock (Peter) crieth out and shouteth, and celebrateth the praise of its Lord, the All Possessing, the Most High, saying: 'Lo! the father is come, and that which ye were promised in the Kingdom is fulfilled!'" B.W.F. p. 62.

The "Son" is the symbol of the age of immaturity of mankind, and the "Father" is the symbol of the age of maturity. The Father does not take the place of the Son, but is a more mature external expression of the same Holy Spirit. In the same way, the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father. They are one. The Father brings further unfoldment to accelerate our pro-

gress in the path toward God. Christ reveals that those who are "sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God," are sealed with the Father's name. v. 1. Bahá'u'lláh emphatically reiterates that as it is impossible to recognize the Son without the recognition of the Father, so it is impossible to recognize the Father of this day without the recognition of the Son! For They are One in Spirit. Therefore, the "servants of God" with the "nine or unified consciousness" only are sealed with the Father's name in their foreheads.

"And finally, in several passages addressed to the entire body of the followers of Jesus Christ He (Bahá'u'lláh), identifies Himself with the 'Father' spoken of by Isaiah, with the 'Comforter' Whose Covenant He Who is the Spirit (Jesus) had Himself established, and with the 'Spirit of Truth' Who will guide them 'into all truth'; proclaims His Day to be the Day of God; announces the conjunction of the river Jordan with the 'Most Great Ocean'; asserts their heedlessness as well as His own claim to have opened unto them 'the gates of the kingdom'; affirms that the promised 'Temple' has been built 'with the hand of the will, of the Lord, the Mighty, the Bounteous; bids them 'rend the veils asunder', and enter in His name His Kingdom; recalls the saying of Jesus to Peter; and assures them that, if they choose to follow Him, He will make them to become 'quickeners of mankind.'"—G.P.B. p. 210.

"And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."—v. 2,3.

These verses clearly state that the "new song" is the new Revelation, which no one could learn, save those who know and live according to the teachings of the Author of the Revelation of God for this day. These are the servants of God, "redeemed from the earth," redeemed from earthly desires and attachments, and who are "sealed with the Father's name in their foreheads," already serving in His Kingdom, and singing His new song.

"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the lamb whithersoever

He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb."—v.4.

This verse calls to mind the parable of the Ten Virgins. Matt. 25:1-13. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish."—Matt. 25:1,2. When the foolish ones went away to buy oil for their lamps, the Bridegroom came and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins came later, crying, "Lord, open unto us," He replied, "I know you not." This parable is not only a lesson for each soul to live a chaste, ethical, spiritual and saintly life, but it is also prophetic of the coming of the Bridegroom, the Prophet of God for the New Day. "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."—Matt. 25:13. The wise virgins are those who are prepared with the oil of the love of God and the light of understanding gained in the service of God, who are perceptive enough to recognize Him, go forth to meet Him, and enter the Marriage Feast with Him. These "are without fault before the throne of God."—v.5. These are the "Chosen ones."

The next picture that Christ shows to John is one of angels. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—v. 6,7.

This angel came with the everlasting gospel, which is none other than the Word of God, which alone gives everlasting life; and no human conception, formula or philosophy, can ever do so. This angel is warning all mankind to fear God, to turn unto Him, to give glory unto Him, for the Judgment Day has come.

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."—v.8

Babylon is referred to many times in Sacred Writings, and is symbolic of a wicked civilization which is destroyed because of its vices, iniquities and corruptions, which cannot be reformed. This,

too, is a warning to our present civilization. The signs are everywhere.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."—v. 9-12.

The third angel also comes with a warning, that he who becomes selfish and greedy, and is immersed in the spirit of commercialism and materialism, and in any or all of the things which tend to draw men away from the love and worship of God,—he shall be tested and tormented. "Verily, ye shall reap what ye sow and obtain the fruits of what ye plant. This is a pre-ordained fact."—T.A.B. I, p.12. Here is a word of encouragement to those who have kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; it is also an admonition to have patience in the time of testing.

Then John "heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—v.13.

Here again is a warning. We are judged not by what we say, but by what we do and think and by how we live. The choices that we make, the way we follow, those choices, and the way we react to the tests that come to us in this period—by these are we judged. Bahá'u'lláh has emphasized the importance of deeds rather than words. "Guidance hath ever been given by words, and now it is given by deeds. Everyone must show forth deeds that are pure and holy, for words are the property of all alike, whereas such deeds as these belong only to Our loved ones. Strive then with heart and soul to distinguish yourselves by your deeds."—Hidden Words, p.48. No. 76.

The angels mentioned in this chapter, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá,—S.A.Q. are spiritual and merciful powers sent to guide and warn mankind.

"One like unto the Son of man" is now pictured. "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."—v.14. Christ had also foretold this. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels: and then He shall reward every man according to his works."—Matt. 16:27. "So shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity: And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:40-43.

Christ spoke many times of the great Day of Judgment when the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father. In Matt. 13:37-40, Christ compares this Day to the time of harvest, when the tares are burned, and the grain gathered into barns. By the "end of the world" is meant symbolically, the consummation of the Age, or end of the Cycle. Christ teaches that the Kingdom of the Father will be established on the earth as well as in heaven. The "One like unto the Son of man" in verse 14 is Bahá'u'lláh, like unto Christ.

By "clouds" is meant the things which veil the people from recognizing the Chosen Messenger of God. Things which are the cause of egotism, literal interpretations and all the things that prevent us from accepting Him are clouds. Muhammad said, "Ye therefore, whenever a Messenger cometh unto you with that which your souls desire not, ye proudly reject Him and accuse some of imposture and slay others."—Qur'an, Surih 2. As clouds prevent the eyes of men from seeing the phenomenal sun, so these veils hinder the people from recognizing the spiritual Sun or Light-Giver of Truth. Many turn away from the Word of Truth and are clouded by sayings of men. The "crown" is a symbol of authority, and "golden crown", as was before established, signifies spiritual authority. The "sharp sickle" in His hand indicates the time of harvest or reaping.

"And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."—v. 15-16.

"And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."—v.17, 18.

One angel came out of the temple: another came out of the temple which is in heaven, and still another came out from the altar, all proclaiming the time had come for the earth to be reaped.

"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse's bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."—v.19, 20.

At the time of Christ there were many vineyards in Palestine which constituted the only means of livelihood for many people. The grapes were gathered at harvest time; the seeds, vines, twigs and tendrils were all put in a big vat and trampled down together, first by bare feet, then by stompers, and later by oxen. The juice of the grapes filled the barrels, and the refuse was thrown out and burned. The analogy of the winepress gives a very vivid picture of the great day of testing, or the Day of Judgment... "The awfulness of bloodshed that would ensure is dramatically portrayed by pictures of wine vats flowing blood-red with the blood of the grapes."—T.AB, p.92.

The coming of each Prophet of God is a Day of Judgment, and people are judged by the degree in which they turn to, or turn from, the laws and truths which He reveals. All the Sacred Books of the Divinely—Revealed Religious Systems have foretold the great Day of Judgment, which would purge the old world order of its impurities, and usher in the New World Cycle, or Kingdom of God on earth.

As Christ "sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto 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?"—Matt. 24:3. He answered: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand):"—Matt. 24-15.

These prophecies of Christ, as described in chapter 6, of the earthquake, the dark day, and the shower of stars are fulfilled. The sequence of events in that fulfillment, where Christ foretold the coming of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and of events yet to come, are vividly described by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in one of His tablets: "Then the 'Resurrection' appeared, the 'Day of Judgment' became manifest, the 'earth' heaved and shook, the 'mountains' were leveled, the 'seas' boiled, the 'sun' was eclipsed, the 'luminaries' were darkened, the 'stars' scattered, the 'signs' became known, the 'bridge' expanded, the 'conditions' were fulfilled, the 'balance' was set up, the 'fire' burned fiercely and the 'paradise' became begemmed!—wherefore the devoted ones were left to amuse themselves with their own imaginations; the possessors of perception beheld the lights and those whose eyes were weak vanished in gloomy darkness before the appearance of the mid-day Sun!" —T.A.B. II, pp.396-397.

Christ foretold the timeliness of these "days of tribulation": when the angels would thrust in their sickles and reap. The Báb is the sixth angel and the seventh is the Angel of the Throne, Bahá'u'lláh.—G.P.B., 58:94. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."—Matt. 24:21,22.

Bahá'u'lláh describes the divine intervention by which the Lord will terminate the tribulations of those days: "The world is in travail and its agitation waxeth day by day. Its face is turned towards waywardness and unbelief. Such shall 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."—W.O.B. p.33. Hereafter, no one can ever say he was not warned, for today is the great Day of Judgment!



THE FLOWER
OF TRUTH

CHAPTER XV

SEVEN GOLDEN VIALS The Sea of Glass Mingled with Fire

"For there was need, once more, of a Divine Revelation to the torpid, frivolous children of men, if they were not to sink altogether into the ape condition." — Carlyle. "Fredrick the Great." Book 1, Chap. 1.

God ordains the grand designs of the universe long ages before they take shape, as the order of the solar systems, galaxies, island universes, somewhat as a dramatist completes his play before it appears in action upon the stage. Nearly two thousand years ago in 96 A.D., Christ revealed the divine vision which is now being enacted.

We are reminded of these words of Christ: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." —Matt. 16:27. Daniel also foretells: "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." —Dan. 12:1.

Bahá'u'lláh in this Day has also given a very potent warning: "O ye peoples of the world! Know, verily, that an unforeseen calamity is following you, and that grievous retribution awaiteth you. Think not the deeds ye have committed have been blotted from My sight. By My Beauty! All your doings hath My Pen graven with open characters upon tablets of chrysolite." —G1. pp. 209-210.

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angles having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." —v. 1.

When we speak of the "wrath of God" many people immediately become disturbed and say: "Well, God isn't a God of wrath!" No, God is not a God of wrath but a God of love. He

is the Creator of all law; and when we ignore the law, we are punished by the law, for our disobedience; then we call Him a God of wrath! His laws are inexorable and it does not pay to try to break them. "The seven angels with the seven last plagues are symbolic of the punishments which come to us for having broken the laws of God.

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire : and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." —v.2-4.

In Chapter 4:6 we read about the "sea of glass", and there we learned the Key to it. The "sea of glass" is the "ocean" of truth given by the Prophet of God for this Day. All the Prophets of God have brought truth, but in the past, because of the immaturity of mankind, the Prophets gave only little rivulets, or small streams, of truth. Christ gave a river of truth, and He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth:..." John 16:12,13.

In this Day, Bahá'u'lláh has come and has given us not only a river of truth, but a sea of truth, an ocean of truth; as Christ foretold. Those who had gotten the victory over the beast and his image and over the other temptations, were the ones who were standing on this Sea of Truth. This Sea of Truth, however, is mingled with fire. We recall the first mention of the sea of glass. (Chap.4). It did not say it was mingled with fire; that it was without flaw or blemish, clear as crystal, pure and clear. How the words ring out, that it is a sea of glass mingled with fire. This means the fire of purging, the fire of burning, the fire of cleansing and wiping out, through trials, calamities and tribulations, of all that does not belong in the New Order of Bahá'u'lláh. This fire, in which the sea of glass is mingled, is also the fire of the Love of God which will result because of the purging. Only those who are purified and found worthy, and who know the song of this New Day, are the

ones who have overcome all obstacles and are standing on the "sea of glass". They sing the Song of Moses, re-emphasizing the Revelation of Moses. The "Lamb" in this case refers to Jesus Christ and His Message. Christ said, "Had ye known Moses, ye would have known Me." Bahá'u'lláh said, "Had ye known Moses and Jesus, ye would have known Me."

He who really lives in his heart and mind according to those messages, and makes that Truth a part of his inmost being is the one who sings the great song: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy." —v.3,4.

"And after I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened : and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles." —v.5,6.

It is apparent that those who brought the plagues were not devils as they have been often pictured, but were the true Messengers of God, carrying out His will. They are adorned with pure and white linen, signifying the garments of righteousness and a stainless character; and their breasts are girded with golden girdles, again indicating the superlative degree of their spiritual qualities and perfections and of their Mission.

"And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, Who liveth for ever and ever." —v.7.

These vials were also "golden", indicating a spiritual destiny that these angels were to bring to fulfillment in this Day, during the harvest period. They were to empty the vials of the Will of God, the Law of God, upon the people. To those who have broken the Laws, it is punishment. To those who have learned to obey the Laws of God, it is reward and blessing.

"And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." —v.6.

The very words, "Glory of God", spoken in Persian, mean the one word Bahá'u'lláh. Could it be the meaning of this verse is that no man was able to enter into the temple, the (Bahá'í

World Commonwealth), until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled, that is, until after the Judgment Day?

Dr. Howard Colby Ives again expresses it beautifully in these lines :

THY JUDGMENT DAY

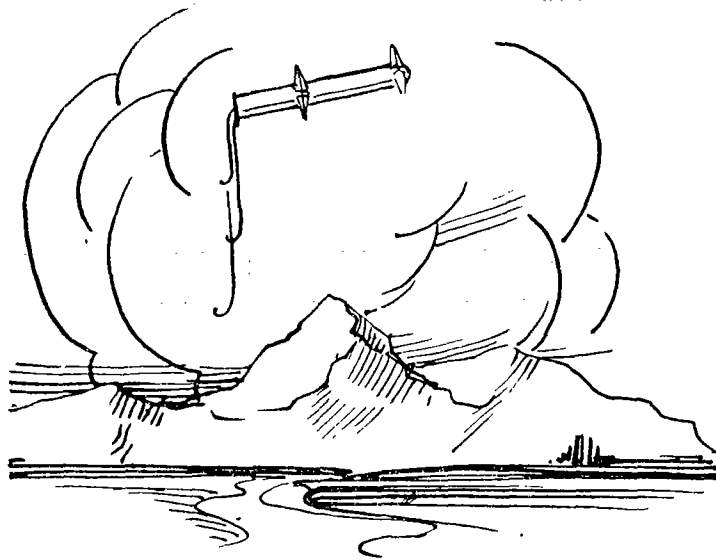
Man Speaks :

Anon I heard Thy heavenly accents say;
Blest are the souls who rise amidst the dead
Attaining to Thy Union : but I've read
That this can happen on Thy Judgment Day.
Alone. Enlighten my dense darkness, pray!

God Speaks :

Each day is Judgment Day : but comes a Day
of Days when I myself in Power rise
Amongst the dead and open ready eyes
Unto My Glory!

—“THE SONG CELESTIAL.”



THE GOLDEN VIAL

CHAPTER XVI

ARMAGEDDON

The Great Earthquake

“The time fore-ordained 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.”—B. W. F. p.11.

Is this the Judgment Day?

The Battle of Armageddon is an epic written by the finger of God before the scenes of today's world drama opened. Now we are watching its challenging unfoldment with eager searching eyes. In the Bible there are many significant prophetic warnings concerning this climactic world drama. Three soul-stirring warnings are: (1) Christ foretold this day of reckoning.—Matthew 13:40-42, “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world, the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity shall cast them in a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” “The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous.” (2) Also in Matthew 7:21, we read the words of Christ: “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.” (3) The Prophet Zechariah also wrote: “And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.”—Zech. 13:9.

These are very ominous statements, especially as we study their fulfillment in the succeeding chapters of the Book of Revelation.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave the Keys to this strange chapter to one of the early believers in Akká, in 1909, when He said that the seven

angels mentioned refer to seven powers. He also said that the darkness of the night of error will surround the world, then the sun will shine in the plenitude of its glory.

John wrote: "And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the man which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." Ch. 16—v. 1,2.

These seven plagues are similar to those visited upon the Egyptians when Moses was leading the Children of Israel out of bondage. One of those plagues was of locusts, one of rivers running with blood, and the last plague was when "the Lord smote all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon..."—Exodus 12:29. Then only did Pharaoh consent to the departure of Moses and the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt. These plagues are considered by many people to have happened in the literal sense only, but their great and symbolic spiritual meaning is of the greatest importance.

The first angel is a power which pours forth its vial upon the earth symbolizing corrupt and tyrannical rulers, like the early caliphs of Sunni Islam. The vials really mean the influence exerted by these rulers. Through that influence, some who were apparently good, but who were inwardly bad, were deprived of the Light, or spiritually destroyed. Their characters were like those of animals, therefore the "mark of the beast" here signifies the character of the beast.

"And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea."—v. 3. The second angel or power poured out his cup upon the sea, which in this symbolizes the corrupt religious and political leaders of the Islamic hierarchy, like the 'Ulamas, who were much like Caiphas in the Jewish Hierarchy, at the time of Christ. The second angel poured upon them the cup of the wrath of God, so that they and all those under their authority were deprived of the water of life.

"And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood."—v.4. (See also verses 5 and 6.) In this verse, the "rivers and fountains" signify less

influential men than the 'Ulamas, such as the Mujtahids and the Mullas, who were deprived of the true teachings. They corrupted the pure teachings of God, which then became as dead blood instead of the cause of life to the people.

In the fifth verse, the "angel of the waters", which is the power of knowledge, is addressing God, and praising Him for judging the people justly. The saints and the prophets were given to drink of the living pure water of eternal life, since they were worthy and had kept the divine teachings pure.

"And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."—v.7. This confirms the statement of the "angel of the waters" in the fifth verse, that God is just and righteous to have judged the people who had corrupted His Word.

"And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory."—v. 8,9.

The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the "sun," which here refers to Sultan 'Abdu'l-Aziz of Turkey, "the self-styled vicar of the Prophet of Islam and the absolute ruler of the mighty empire. So potent, so august a personage was the first among the sovereigns of the world to receive the Divine Summons, and the first among the sovereigns of the world to sustain the impact of God's retributive justice."—G.P.B. p. 158.

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."—v. 10,11.

The "seat of the beast" alludes to the Shah of Persia, seated upon his throne, upon whom the cup of the fifth angel was poured but neither he nor his subjects were admonished by the burning fierceness of his rule not by the calamities which befell them.

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."—v. 12.

The Euphrates River, upon which the sixth angel poured his vial, symbolizes the area of Syria, Iraq and the Turkish Empire.

The drying up of the water indicates that learning and science were abolished and that ignorance prevailed over the entire region, making way for the loss of its power and influence.

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."—v.13, 14.

The red dragon introduced in Chapter 13, herein is symbolic of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the Umayyad dynasty of Caliphs, or Bani-Umayya, who held away over ten Islamic countries in the seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era. In that same chapter it is explained that the "image" of the beast lived on in the bigoted ecclesiastical system of Islam, and its recrudescence was witnessed in the persecutions and martyrdom of the Báb and His followers more than eleven centuries later.

In this chapter, then, we may say that the red dragon is symbolizing the venal, corrupt and bigoted ecclesiastical and political systems of Persia. In "God Passes By", page 4, Shoghi Effendi, gives a vivid picture of these conditions in the time of His Holiness the Báb.

"The people among whom He (The Báb) appeared were the most decadent race in the civilized world, grossly ignorant, savage, cruel, steeped in prejudice, servile in their submission to an almost deified hierarchy, recalling in their abjectness the Israelites of Egypt in the days of Moses, in their fanaticism the Jews in the days of Jesus, and in their perversity, the idolaters of Arabia in the days of Muhammad. The arch-enemy who repudiated His claim, challenged His authority, persecuted His Cause, succeeded in almost quenching His light, and who eventually became disintegrated under the impact of His Revelation was the Shi'ah priesthood... The willing tools who prostituted their high office for the accomplishment of the enemy's designs were no less than the sovereigns of the Qajar dynasty, (as stated in Chapter 13) first, the bigoted, the sickly, the vacillating Muhammad Shah, who at the last moment cancelled the Báb's imminent visit to the capital, and, second, the youthful and inexperienced Nasiri'd-Din Shah, who gave his ready assent to the sentence of his Captive's death. The arch villains who joined hands with the prime movers of so

wicked a conspiracy were the two grand vizirs, Haji Mirza Aqasi, the idolized tutor of Muhammad Shah, a vulgar, false-hearted and fickle-minded schemer, and the arbitrary, bloodthirsty, reckless Amir-Nizam, Mirza Taqi Khan—the first of whom exiled the Báb to the mountain fastnesses of Adhirbayjan, and the latter decreed His death in Tabriz."—G.P.B. p. 4.

The two rulers played their part at different times, Muhammad Shah as the "mouth of the dragon", giving power to the "mouth of the beast", the grand vizir Haji Mirza Aqasi, and Nasiri'd-Din Shah as the "mouth of the dragon", giving power to the "mouth of the false prophet", the Amir-Nizam, Mirza Taqi Khan, one of the greatest of the 'Ulamas. The latter claimed to be the voice of God, and to have all power, and often said, "My words are revealed from on High." He was the one most responsible for the execution of the Báb and thousands of His followers, among whom were some of the most erudite and learned people of that day.

The three spirits like frogs, which came out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet, were the false, fanatical and twisted teachings with which they tried to turn the people of Persia against the Cause of God and to stamp it out. There was great confusion, distress, ignorance, cruelty and even violent savagery during this period of diabolical corruption which marked the reign of the red dragon.

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."—v. 15.

It is the "great voice", as He is called at the beginning of this chapter, that is speaking. It was foretold that Christ would come as a thief in the night. He foretold that the Lord of Hosts would also come as a thief, while the whole world is asleep and unaware. See II Peter 3:10. Blessed is he that is awake, is watching, and is clothed with the garments of spiritual qualities and attributes, for he will recognize the Promised One when He comes. This is the last impressive warning before the announcement of the Battle of Armageddon.

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."—v.16.

Christ prophesies: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom shall rise against kingdom: and there shall be famines,

and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."—Matt. 24:7, 8.

That day is also pictured vividly by the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah: "For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have no understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. The whole city shall flee for the notice of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein."—Jer.4:22, 27, 29.

Christ said: "In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."—Luke 21:19,20. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21:25,28.

Matthew reported Christ's vision of the Judgment Day as follows "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:21,22. "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."—Matt. 13:49,50.

Armageddon is considered to be in Roumelia and Macedonia, where many battles were fought and also in the Megiddon Desert in the centre of what was once called Palestine. Some believe it to refer symbolically to the final battle between the forces of good and evil. It is also symbolic of the last battle to eliminate all war. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated in tablets, that the Battle of Armageddon would begin in 1914, with World War I, that it will be finished and peace established during the twentieth century. In 1912 and 1913, 'Abdu'l-Bahá travelled over America and Europe warning

people of the imminent world conflict that would set fire to the world in 1914, and with burning fervor entreated mankind to turn to God and establish unity upon the earth.

The battle of Armageddon as stated by scholars can be divided into seven phases or struggles.

1. **The Battle of Nations.** Since 1914 the World Wars have been fierce, horrible and unrewarding. The ensuing "cold war" has burdened the nations with a mad munitions race and foreign aid programs which bid fair to cause the collapse of their national, financial and moral structures. There can be no victory with modern weapons like the H Bomb and intercontinental guided missiles. There can be only mass destruction of millions, yet the insane race goes on to its destined climax.

2. **The Economic Battle,** including the battle between Capital and Labor. This ever grows more bitter as the struggle for food, shelter and clothing gravely affects the world industrial system by strikes and by retarding production, distribution and consumption. All things are affected by this struggle.

3. **The Political Battle,** or the battle of opposing ideologies. At the time of the Civil War, President Lincoln said, "We can no longer live half slave and half free; we must be all slave or all free." President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, during the zero hour of World War II: "The world has now come to the time when it can no longer live half slave and half free; we must be all slave or all free, as we are all one." As the struggle between the different ideologies becomes more intense, more people are swept into the ranks of the opposing forces. In His Tablet to the Kings, Bahá'u'lláh warned the rulers to take measures for the maintenance of political peace, the reduction of armaments, and the removal of insecurity and injustice, as failure to do so would inevitably result in the collapse of the present civilization.

4. **The Battle of Disease.** The whole tree of humanity is sick and struggling for life as the result of the fierce competition, conflict, fear, oppression, injustice, uncleanness and ungodliness, which 'Abdu'l-Bahá said are the causes of mental, moral, and physical disease. Every leaf of the tree of humanity shares in the same general sickness and is struggling for life.

5. **The Battle of the Forces of Nature.** The unparalleled destruction by hurricanes, floods, tornados, avalanches, insects and earthquakes since 1914 seems to be increasing each year, and

is due both directly and indirectly to man's disobedience of the Laws of God. It follows that deliverance from these calamities can be obtained only by obedience to the laws of God. There is no chance or uncertainty about it. Turning away from God inevitably brings disaster, and turning to God inevitably brings blessings.

6. **The Battle of the Races.** Racial prejudices continually flare up in some part of the world, due to the denial of basic human rights to one race by another. Some races, believing themselves to be superior to others, exploit the weaker races to maintain their own positions of dominance. In the brewing melting pot of the many races of mankind, some of the blackest pages in the world's history are the result of the horrible iniquity of racial prejudice. Does not the Bible teach this unifying message? "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" Mal. 2:10. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "God created us all of one race."—W.A.B. p.137. "The lovers of mankind, these are the superior men, of whatever nation, creed or colour they may be."—B.N.E. p. 167. Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. p.137.

7. **The Battle of Religions.** Of all the battles, dreadful as they are, the most cruel, bitter, devastating, and senseless is the Battle of Religions. There is nothing more fanatical, godless and soul-destroying than for man to kill his brother in the name of religion. The animosity and conflict has always been due, not to true religion, but to the lack of it; it has been caused by the emphasis on human traditions, suppositions and forms, rather than on the Word of God as revealed by His latest Manifestation, or Revelator. The results of the so-called "Holy Wars" have been ashes of destruction and desolation, oceans of turbulence and centuries of hatred. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that "If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division it would be better to be without it...Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion."—B.N.E. p. 165.

Shoghi Effendi has written: "The whole of mankind is groaning, is dying to be led to unity, and so terminate its age-long martyrdom. And yet it stubbornly refuses to embrace the light and acknowledge the sovereign authority of the one Power that can extricate it from its entanglements, and avert the woeful calamity that threatens to engulf it."—W.O.B. p. 201. See "Candles of Unity." pp. 38-39.

The Battle of Armageddon is, therefore, the gathering of all the peoples of the world into a great time of crisis, when every individual soul, every system, institution, method, form, tradition, ceremony, ideology and idea, is being measured and tested. And everything that is corrupt and not in harmony with the Divine Laws as revealed by Bahá'u'lláh for this Day, will be swept away.

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, it is done. And there were voices, thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great."—v.17,18.

This was a vision of the great earthquake, foretold in so many of the Sacred Writings: In the Old Testament it is foretold:

"The earth shall remove out of her place."—Isaiah 13:13.

"The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard."—Isaiah 24:20.

"Yea, it shall be at an instant, suddenly."—Isaiah 29:5.

"Thou shalt 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."—Isaiah 29:5,6.

"Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down."—Isaiah 38:8. In the New Testament it is foretold: "And there shall be famines and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places."—Matt.24:7. "And sea and the waves roaring and the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke 21:25,26.

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginning of sorrows."—Mark 13:8.

And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."—Luke 21:11.

The scientists, during the Geophysical Year, learned that cracks, shifts, creases, distortions must occur in the earth's surface to keep the balance, to build a better form, and to be the means of progress in creation. When the waves of energy reach a crest in

the earth's surface, a shift occurs in weaker areas and man calls it an earthquake. Large areas are so affected as to stagger the imagination.

Another startling fact discovered is that all fault lines or belts are connected in a vast network of world-wide scope, that huge fault lines mean huge changes or shifts, and that means huge earthquakes!

There are many warnings in sacred writings of the great earthquake and change. Isaiah warns of that day when the Lord "shall shake terribly the earth" because of man's godlessness and disobedience to His laws:—Isaiah 2:17-18. Christ warned that among other terrible and destructive events, "earthquakes would occur in divers places."—Matt. 24:7. "And seas and the waves roaring and the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke 21:25,26.

A member of the Coast Geodetic Survey in California reports that the major and minor earthquakes are increasing in number and intensity. They now number about a million a year. Another member of that same survey states that any place on earth is considered as a possible earthquake zone and that the force of one major earthquake is more than that of 25,000 atomic bombs.

The divine Prophets of God, in addition to the scientists, have all warned man to turn to God and obey His Laws, and that unless man knows in advance and heeds the warnings, he will go down with the destructive force. Some groups look for the great earthquake as a sign, after which the Lord will appear, as the Second Coming of Christ. Some believe that He will come in the midst of the calamities to warn them, and that is their sign.

Did Noah come after the flood to warn the people? Did Noah come in the midst of the calamities to warn the people? What is the justice in that?

It is contrary to the teachings of every Prophet of God. Each Prophet is the Noah for His Day. Does He not come as the Voice of God and warn before the calamities begin, that all may have the opportunity to know and heed His warning and abide by His Law?

It is clearly established that Bahá'u'lláh since 1863, before the world-wide calamities, has given more staggering warnings, signs, admonitions and promises than ever before had been given. We are living today in the midst of their fulfillment, when not "a

jot or tittle shall remain unfulfilled."

"The day is approaching when...He shall cleanse the earth of the defilement of their corruption, and shall give it for an heritage unto such of His servants as are nigh unto Him." "Soon will the cry, 'Yea, yea, here am I, here am I' be heard from every land. For they hath never before, nor can there ever be, any other refuge to fly to for any one."

"Beware, O people of Bahá, lest the strong ones of the earth rob you of your strength, or they who rule the world fill you with fear. Put your trust in God, and commit your affairs to His keeping. He verily, will, through the power of truth, render you victorious...Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious will be unveiled to your eyes. You are destined by Him in this world and hereafter, to partake of their benefits, to share in their joys, and to obtain a portion of their sustaining grace. To each and every one of them you will, no doubt, attain."—A.D.J. pp. 68, 69.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in 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.

There are many predictions of the events of the latter days in all the Holy Books: but in them also the assertion that, by the decree of God, no one will be able to unravel the meaning of these prophecies until the coming of the Lord of Hosts and even then the right interpretation will be known only by those who turn to His latest Revelation.

"Then said, I, Lord, how long? And He answered, until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land."—Isaiah 6:11,12.

Bahá'u'lláh has written:

"The promised day is come, the day when tormenting trials will have surged above your heads, and beneath your feet, saying: 'Taste what your hands have wrought!' "The time for the destruction of the world and its people hath arrived. He who is the Pre-Existent is come, that He may bestow everlasting life, and grant eternal preservation, and confer that which is conducive to true living."—A.D.J. p. 68. More than a century ago, Bahá'u'lláh warned "Earthquakes have broken loose, and the tribes have lam-

ented, for fear of God, the Lord of Strength, the All-Compelling'. Say: 'The stunning trumpet-blast hath been loudly raised'...; 'Hath the Catastrophe come to pass?' Say: 'Yea, by the Lord of Lords!' ...'Have the tree-stumps been uprooted?' 'Yea, more; the mountains have been scattered in dust; by Him the Lord of attributes!'—E.S.W. p.132.

"The hour is approaching when the most great convulsion will have appeared...(civilization's) flame will devour the cities ..know, verily, that an unforeseen calamity is following you, and that grievous retribution awaiteth you ..the revelations of My grace and bounty have permeated every atom of the universe."... "For there hath never been, nor can there ever be, any other refuge to fly to for any one." "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."—A.D.J. pp. 68,69.

"Disasters overtaking Europe and America, more effective than any tribulations yet suffered in either continent, may yet attend still more majestic revelations" ... "The champion builders of the Bahá'í rising World Order must scale nobler heights of heroism as humanity plunges into greater depths of despair, degradation, dissension and distress. Let them forge ahead into the future, serenely confident that the hour of their mightiest exertions and the supreme opportunity for their greatest exploits must coincide with the "apocalyptic upheaval" marking the lowest ebb in mankind's fast declining fortunes."—Shoghi Effendi, Nov. 3, 1949. "Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and...proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumb-founded."—A.D.J. p.70. "A few days the earth will roll on its axis and these fleeting visions will be completely forgotten."—'Abdu'l-Bahá, in Egypt in 1913. "He shall cleanse the earth from the defilement of their corruption and shall give it for an heritage unto such of His servants as are nigh unto Him."... "This judgment of God...is both a retributory calamity and an act of holy and supreme discipline. It is at once a visitation from God and a cleansing process for all mankind. Its fires punish the perversity of the human race and weld its component parts into one organic, indivisible, world-embracing com-

munity...Bestir yourselves, O people,...for the Promised Hour is now come..."

"We have fixed a time for you, O people! If ye fail, at the appointed hour, to turn toward God, He, verily, will lay violent hold on you, and will cause grievous afflictions to assail you from every direction...O ye peoples of the world! Know verily that an unforeseen calamity is following you and that grievous retribution awaiteth you...The whole earth...is now in a state of pregnancy. The day is approaching when it will have yielded its noblest fruits ...The time is approaching when every created thing will have cast its burden."—P.D.C. pp.3-4.

In the New York Herald-Tribune, Rafaele Bendani, noted seismologist, who predicted several major earthquakes, gave as his studied opinion that earthquakes throughout the world in 1940 and on, would be but a prelude to a great event in which the core of the earth would be displaced.—Dec.31, 1939. The very words stated in a Tablet by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, written in Egypt in 1913.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1912 said to a group of people in America, that ere long a great earthquake will change the world. Then in the stream of time will the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh become firmly established. There are many other references that might be quoted from the words of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, warning and exhorting people to prepare spiritually for the Great Change.

A rigid traditionalism and frozen fear has cramped the souls of men, so that they have been veiled from understanding the true meaning of scriptural prophecies. Daniel also foretold this condition: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased...And he said, go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Daniel 12: 4,9,10.

Had the Shah of Persia and the Sultan of Turkey, with their ministers, recognized the clear prophetic signs and evidences given by their Prophet Muhammad of the advent of the promised Qa'im who would be a blood-descendant of Muhammad, had they heeded the admonitions of Muhammad and recognized the Qa'im in

the person of the new High-Prophet, His Holiness the Báb, and had they not been guilty of a long period of heinous crimes and horrible tortures—then, many believe, the picture would not have been so dark, and the world outlook so menacing today.

“And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”—v. 19-21.

The islands and mountains that fled away, are those things that people thought would remain forever, unchanged, i.e. the kingdoms, governments, sects and denominations, institutions, etc. The great hail symbolizes weapons of destruction of all kinds that shall rain down from the skies upon men, whether in the form of lethal gases, deadly disease germs, radioactive lethal fallout from atomic explosions, guided missiles, or bombs, “weighing about a talent.” This weight is figurative, not necessarily exact, but the weight of an Attic talent was about 58 pounds. “And the people blasphemed God because of the plagues and turned not to God to glorify Him.” “O ye of little faith!”

“Must humanity, tormented as she now is, be afflicted with still severer tribulations ere their purifying influence can prepare her to enter the heavenly Kingdom destined to be established upon earth? Must the inauguration of so vast, so unique, so illumined an era in human history be ushered in by so great a catastrophe in human affairs as to recall, nay surpass, the appalling collapse of Roman civilization in the first centuries of the Christian era? Must a series of profound convulsions stir and rock the human race ere Bahá'u'lláh can be enthroned in the hearts and consciences of the masses, ere His undisputed ascendancy is universally recognized, and the noble edifice of His World Order is reared and established?”—W.O.B. pp. 201-202.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá assures us that, in spite of the trials and tribulations through which humanity must still pass, this century of light will bring about the unity of mankind.

“Behold how its light is now dawning upon the world’s darkened horizon. The first candle is unity in the political realm, the

early glimmerings of which can now be discerned. The second candle is unity of thought in world undertakings, the consummation of which will ere long be witnessed. The third candle is unity in freedom which will surely come to pass. The fourth candle is unity in religion which is the corner-stone of the foundation itself, and which, by the power of God, will be revealed in all its splendor. The fifth candle is the unity of nations—a unity which in this century will be securely established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as citizens of one common fatherland. The sixth candle is unity of races, making of all that dwell on earth peoples and kindreds of one race. The seventh candle is unity of language, i.e., the choice of a universal tongue in which all peoples will be instructed and converse. Each and every one of these will inevitably come to pass, inasmuch as the power of the Kingdom of God will aid and assist in their realization.”—W.O.B. p.39.

In the Psalms of David the words of this promise cheer the heart. “Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”—Psalm 91: v. 9,10, 11.

Bahá'u'lláh proclaims in these powerful and glorious words: “Blessed are the people of Bahá! God beareth Me witness! They are the solace of the eye of creation. Through them the universes have been adorned, and the Preserved Tablet embellished. They are the ones who have sailed on the ark of complete independence, with their faces set towards the Day-Spring of Beauty. How great is their blessedness that they have attained unto what their Lord, the Omniscient, the All-Wise, hath willed. Through their light the heavens have been adorned, and the faces of those that have drawn nigh unto Him made to shine...How great is the Cause, how staggering the weight of its Message!”—A.D.J. p. 64.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SIREN
Babylon the Great

"O people! The darkness of greed and envy obscures the light of the soul as the cloud prevents the penetration of the sun's rays."—Bahá'u'lláh.—Tablet to some Iranian Zoroastrians.

The vivid drama of the Judgment Day pictured by Isaiah now brings the Revelation of Christ into clearer focus.

"Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof...The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word...The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left."—Isaiah 24: 1,3-6.

Bahá'u'lláh also gives clearer warnings for this day. "Soon", He states, "will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead. Verily, thy Lord speaketh the truth, and is the Knower of things unseen."—Gl. p.77. "The world's equilibrium," He asserts, "hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System—the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed."—Gl. p. 136. "The signs of impending convulsions and chaos," He warns the peoples of the world, "can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing Order appeareth to be lamentably defective."—W.O.B. p. 162.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven

vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." v. 1-6.

There are many interpretations of this beautiful woman, this siren bedecked with gold and precious stones, who is called: "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." Count Tolstoy, in his classic prophecy of this day, published in Germany, France, Egypt and America, impressively describes this woman as a siren, a super-Venus, whose voice clinked like gold. She had in her hand three torches; one with which she set flame to the nations of the world; one with which she set flame to the family relations, which became disrupted and chaotic; and the third torch, with which she set flame to the churches and to those before the altars. Tolstoy, in his prophecy, further describing this super-Venus, tells how, when the world was inflamed, he looked and saw upon her forehead her name written in letters of scarlet, "COMMERCIALISM"! 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned."—B.N.E. p. 144. The spirit of commercialism has entered into everything, causing these frightening conditions. It has destroyed homes, set flame to nations, and even entered into the sacred institutions. She was drunken with the blood of saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When John looked at her, he wondered about her with great admiration. Has not the entire world been enticed by the spirit of greed and commercialism? The Bible refers to her also as Jezebel, the great and beautiful woman

who enticed the kings and rulers and even the poor and lowly. Shoghi Effendi describes the world today as "spiritually destitute, morally bankrupt, politically disrupted, socially convulsed, economically paralyzed, writhing, bleeding and breaking up beneath the avenging rod of God." P.D.C. p. 15.

"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."—v.7,8.

This indicates that the power of the beast had existed, that it continued for a time, then seemed to lose its power for a time, then continued on, and is still very strong in the minds, hearts and attitudes of many of the peoples of the world.

The scarlet-colored beast with seven heads and ten horns, which carried the WOMAN, again refers to early Islamic history. The two beasts as explained by Shoghi Effendi, are the Bani-Umayya, "who were and were not" are Mu'aviyyih and Yazid, sixth and seventh caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty, whose capital was Damascus, in Syria. The Bani-Umayya, and the ecclesiastical system that followed, were always trying to find and destroy the Promised One, who was to be one of the descendants of Muhammad, somewhat as did Herod at the time of Christ. In Rev. 13:5, it is stated that power was given unto the beasts to continue for 42 months, or 1260 years by the Muhammadan calendar which ended in 1844, the time of the Manifestation of the Báb. For eleven centuries this power had appeared to lie dormant, but broke out anew with the terrible persecutions and bloody martyrdoms of the Báb and many of His followers. These heinous crimes were instigated by the two "arch-villains", Haji Mirza Aqasi and Mirza Taqi Khan, symbolic successors in infamy of Mu'aviyyih and Yazid, the beasts that "were, and are not, and yet are."—S.A.Q. pp. 56,60,80—G.P.B. p.4.

"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast."—v. 9-13.

This refers again to the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Islam, which became so corrupt and powerful throughout those ten countries. The spirit of commercialism and greed and fanaticism had spread over all those countries. The eighth or image of the beast had not yet come, which alludes to the time of the end when that same spirit of commercialism and fanaticism under the corrupt ecclesiastical power, would spread to a still greater degree over the entire world.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called and chosen, and faithful."—v. 14.

This Lamb refers to the Báb. Christ is giving the message to John of the things that must come to pass hereafter. The spirit of greed, commercialism and fanaticism did make war with the Lamb and His followers at the time of the martyrdom of the 20,000 in Iran. "He is Lord of Lords and King of kings." Christ foretold His coming and gave His Name, which in the Persian language is Bahá'u'lláh. "He (the Báb) Whom Bahá'u'lláh has acclaimed... as that promised Qa'im Who has manifested no less than twenty-five out of the twenty-seven letters which all the Prophets were destined to reveal—so great a Revealer has Himself testified to the pre-eminence of that superior Revelation that was soon to supersede His own."—W.O.B. pp. 100,101. There is only one previous record in all recorded history of two major Prophets (Melchizedek and Abraham) living contemporaneously upon the earth, and each establishing the station of the other. The spirit of Bahá'u'lláh was in the Báb as the flower is in the bud. The Báb declared concerning His own Book; "The Bayan deriveth all its glory from 'Him Whom God shall make manifest'."—W.O.B. pp. 100, 101.

"And they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Those who recognize the Manifestation, see His truth, and arise to serve Him in this day, these are they who are called,

and chosen, and faithful.

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues; And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." —v. 14,15-17. Therefore, until the Word of God vitalizes the hearts of the people, the beast will continue to exercise his great power, that is, the WOMAN, or spirit of COMMERCIALISM, will continue to seduce mankind for "one hour" —v. 12.

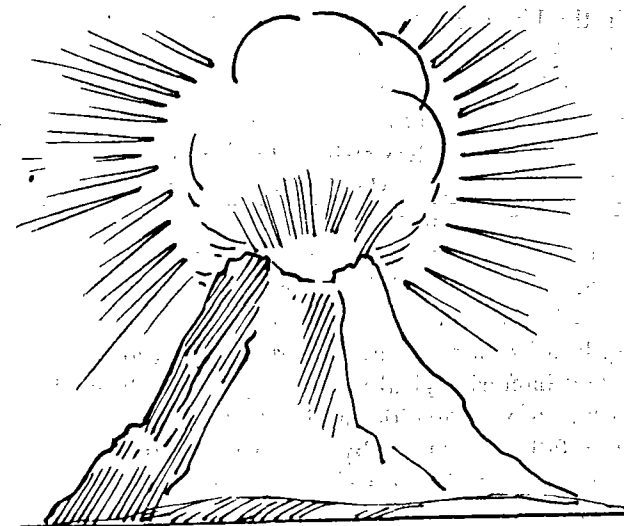
"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." —v. 18. "City" here signifies corrupt civilization, which however, will last only "one hour," as stated in verse 12, which figure has a symbolic meaning. "We have a fixed time for you, O peoples! If ye fail, at the appointed hour, to turn toward God, He, verily, will lay violent hold on you, and will cause grievous afflictions to assail you from every direction." —B.N.E. p. 144.

Count Tolstoy states in his remarkable prophecy, which he wrote in 1908, "I see, floating upon the surface of the Sea of Human Fate, a huge silhouette of a nude woman. She is, with her beauty, poise, her smile, her jewels, a Super-Venus. Nations rush madly after her, each eager to attract her especially. But she, like an eternal Courtesan flirts with all. In her crown of diamonds and rubies is engraved her name, "Commercialism." As alluring and bewitching as she seems, much destruction and agony follow in her wake. Her breath reeking of sordid transactions, her voice of metallic character like gold, and her look of greed are so much poison to the nations who fall easy victims to her charms...."

"There will come a time when the world will have no use for armies, hypocritical religions, and degenerate art. Life is evolution, and evolution is development from the simple to the sublimer forms of mind and body. I see the passing show of the World-Drama in its present form, as it fades like the glow of evening upon the mountains. One motion of the hand of Commercialism and a New History Begins!" —Tolstoy's World prophecy.

Shoghi Effendi wrote: "Never indeed have there been such widespread and basic upheavals, whether in the social, economic or political spheres of human activity as those now going on in different parts of the world. Never have there been so many and varied sources of danger as those that now threaten the structure of society. The following words of Bahá'u'lláh are indeed significant . . . 'How long will humanity persist in its waywardness? How long will injustice continue? How long is chaos and confusion to reign amongst men? How long will discord agitate the face of society?'" —W.O.B. p. 32.

"The whole earth," He also writes, "is now in a state of pregnancy. The day is approaching when it will have yielded its noblest fruits, when from it will have sprung forth the loftiest trees, the most enchanting blossoms, the most heavenly blessings. Immeasurably exalted is the breeze that wafteth from the garment of thy Lord, the Glorified! For lo, it hath breathed its fragrance and made all things new! Well is it with them that comprehend." —W.O.B. p. 169.



THE EARTH QUAKES

CHAPTER XVIII

NO MORE AT ALL
Earth Shall Shine With His Glory

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Matt. 6:21

Thus shall the Great Babylon go down!

The curtain rises on the next scene of the shocking and unfolding world drama. "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."—Matt. 13:40-43.

Bahá'u'lláh has stated that there may be terrible events and unparalleled calamities yet awhile on the earth, but He assures us that "ere long these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall cease, and The Most Great Peace shall come."—B.N.E. p.53. War and strife have become so intolerable in their destructiveness that mankind must find deliverance from them or perish. The fullness of time has come and with it the promised Deliverer. It seems that never before the present time, with the use of atomic fission and fusion bombs, long range guided missiles, and other deadly chemical and bacteriological weapons, could such quick and horrible destruction of large cities and industrial centers take place. Radio-active fall-out carried by air currents after atomic explosions is now recognized by responsible scientists as a threat to all life on our planet, should enough explosions be set off. It seems that destruction will continue until all humanity awakens to the fact that "the earth is one country and mankind its citizens"; that

the Father's Kingdom is ready and waiting for His children to unite and establish it.

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."—v.1-3.

What a picture of the world as it was in the time of ancient Babylon! Civilization was destroyed as the Old Testament had foretold because of the ungodliness and corruption and foulness of everything in that day. Christ recalls the same picture as he forewarns of conditions existing in the world today. The great civilization, which man has so proudly built, is today tottering and disintegrating under the disruptive influence of godlessness, materialism, commercialism and other chronic ills which beset it on every hand.

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."—v. 4,5. How soul-stirring are these words! The Spirit of God, Christ, is here calling mankind to come out of this corrupt, materialistic, commercialized and godless civilization, and to turn to God and remember Him in all the affairs of life.

"Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double."—v.6. It seems that in this period of transition into the new cycle, everything is being doubled whether it be good or evil, and this will continue until the Day of Reckoning. Those things that are not in harmony with the Word of God and cannot be raised to conform with the lofty standards of the New World Order, will catastrophically disappear.

"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, 'I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.' Therefore, she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord

God Who judgeth her."—v.7,8. The spirit of commercialism, or the super-Venus that has seduced almost everyone, is now being judged.

"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come!"—v.9,10.

This pictures the great judgment of the civilizations of the world as we know them today.

"And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood far off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."—v. 11-20. This pictures more vividly the Day of Judgment, the Day of Reward and punishment. Those who have turned toward God and His Manifestation for this Day, have nothing to fear, but should rejoice when these things come to pass, for the glorious Day of

Peace is dawning.

"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, 'Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all!'"—v.21.

Many people believe that the natural processes of evolution are sufficient to bring about the changes that are coming in the world. We have observed these evolutionary changes, and they have been far-reaching. In fact, there is little left today that existed a century ago. But evolution alone is not enough. Christ, appearing to John, foretold that the great city, Babylon, would be thrown down "with violence", suddenly, like a great millstone, cast into the sea. Would the mill stone, under these circumstances, roll down gently into the sea? No. It would be cast down suddenly and with great force and a great splash, to be "found no more at all." Thus the great corrupt civilization, symbolized by Babylon, disappears in the twinkling of an eye. That is to say, the old forms, the old systems, the old methods, the old ideologies—all of those things which belong to the old order, and which are not worthy to be lifted up into the new order—will disappear.

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee."—v.22.

Undoubtedly you have heard these impressive words sung in Handel's Messiah, that marvelous oratorio. This verse is in one of the choruses where the sopranos, the tenors, the altos, the baritones and the basses take up the words one after the other, singing it over and over again in crescendo, furnishing a most vivid picture of these cataclysmic events.

"And the light of a candle shall shine 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 great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."—v.23,24.

What a dramatic picture of the destruction, not only of the ancient Babylon, but of the old order today, with all that has be-

come ourworn, obsolete, corrupt and evil! When it occurs, we should not weep or wail, but rather rejoice, for it means the beginning of a marvelous new civilization that shall lift mankind to a higher level of scientific and spiritual attainment than has ever before been possible. Thus shall great Babylon go down!

“My servants shall sing for joy of heart,...For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”—Isaiah 65:14, 17.

“The Call of God,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has written, “when raised, breathed a new life into the body of mankind, and infused a new spirit into the whole creation. It is for this reason that the world hath been moved to its depths, and the hearts and consciences of men have been quickened. Erelong the evidences of this regeneration will be revealed, and the fast asleep will be awakened.”—W.O.B. p.169.

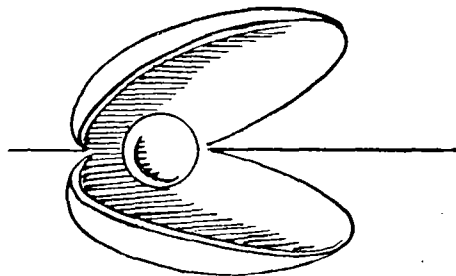
Also, “Rejoice, then, O ye beloved of the Lord and His chosen ones, and ye the children of God and His people, raise your voice and laud and magnify the Lord, the Most High; for His light hath beamed forth, His signs have appeared, and the billows of His rising ocean have scattered on every shore many a precious pearl.”—B.W.F. p.351. When man finds, “The Pearl of Great Price,” then all other pearls become as naught, as stated in these lovely lines by Howard Colby Ives.

God Speaks:

Look how the merchant seeks year after year
For goodly pearls. The pearl of greatest price
Once having found, all lesser pearls are naught.
For every joy, and with that joy distraught,
He hastens to the market-place and sells
All that he hath that he may buy that pearl.

—Song Celestial. Page 9.

THE PEARL OF
GREAT PRICE



CHAPTER XIX

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD KING OF KINGS—LORD OF LORDS

“I bear witness, O friends! that the favour is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established.”—Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh.

“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”—Matt.8:5. God draws the curtain. A gleam of light glows in the darkness.

“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined...For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.”—Isaiah 9:2,6,7.

We know that Christ is the Light of the World and the Saviour of mankind, but for nearly 2,000 years since His appearance, the great majority of the people of the world have been walking in darkness, and have continued to groan under the pressure of economic slavery, crime and injustice. In this day, God has again spoken to mankind through His Messenger, Who has revealed the basic laws, principles and patterns for world government, world justice and world peace. The government was not upon the shoulders of Christ. There has never been a Christian government nor a world government. The western world was not discovered until centuries after Jesus was upon earth. All that Christ said about government was: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be

God's."—Luke 20:25. Bahá'u'lláh alone has revealed laws for world government.

"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."—v.1-6.

The four and twenty elders, who are the disciples of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh for this Day, and the four beasts, meaning the rulers, who will spread the Message of Bahá'u'lláh rapidly over the world, bowed down before the One that sat upon the throne. The One that sat upon the throne is the Divine Mirror reflecting the glory of God—Bahá'u'lláh.—S.A.Q. One translation of the word "Amen" is "Praise ye the Lord", or "Be it so." The "voice of many waters" means the outpouring of much spiritual knowledge, and the "voice of mighty thunderings" signifies the greatness of the volume of the chorus of the multitudes, singing, "Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

The picture now changes. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, "These are the true sayings of God."—v.6-9.

Many in the Christian world have considered the "marriage supper of the Lamb" as referring to the marriage of Christ and the Church, which is helpful in a limited way. Christ was one Lamb, according to the Bible, and the Báb was the other Lamb, both ordained for slaughter from "the foundation of the world."

This refers to the Lamb for this Day. "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints" indicates that this marriage is not to be taken literally, but symbolically, and spiritually.

"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb," has a very great significance. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has explained how the Báb fulfilled, after 1260 years, all the prophecies of Muhammad regarding the One Who has to come from the lineage of Muhammad. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, also depicted the Báb's fiery zeal, His lofty standards of conduct that challenged and revolutionized the lives of His followers, and established a loyalty unrivalled in religious history. The Báb declared that He was but the Herald of One greater than Himself, Whom God would make manifest, and that "a thousand perusals of the Bayan (His Book) cannot equal the perusal of a single verse to be revealed by Him Whom God shall make manifest." He also stated that "the Bayan deriveth all its glory from Him Whom God shall make manifest."—G.P.B. p.30.

Before His martyrdom, the Báb called His devoted followers to turn to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, which was soon to supersede His own. Those of the Báb's followers who truly recognized the station of the Báb, did turn to Bahá'u'lláh. Because of their instant, exact and complete obedience and of their great spiritual capacity, they recognized Bahá'u'lláh. These are they who partook of the marriage supper of the Lamb! Those who said, "The Báb is sufficient unto us," were veiled spiritually from recognizing Bahá'u'lláh, therefore could not enter and partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb," "and the door was shut." Matt. 25:10.

The same is true in this Day. The followers of every Faith are looking for the coming of One called by the name of the Prophet of their Faith, or by another name, or title, which they believe was designated by Him. Thus the Christians are looking for the return of Jesus; the Buddhists expect the Fifth Buddha, "a Buddha named Maitreya, the Buddha of universal fellowship," the Hindus are awaiting the One foretold in the Bhagavad-Gita as the "Tenth Avatar", the "Immaculate Manifestation of Krishna," the Jews are looking for the coming of their "Messiah," the Zoroastrians are looking for the advent of the World-Saviour, "Shah-Bahram," Shi'ah Muslims are expecting the return of the "Imam Husayn," and the Sunni Muslims look for the descent of the "Spirit of God."—G.P.B. pp. 94,95.

Christ is calling the whole world to awaken to the recognition of the "Spirit of Truth" promised in John 16 : 13, Who would guide all people "into all truth." In fulfilment of this promise that "spirit of Truth" has been sent to mankind, not only to one religion, but to all religions, in the form of the Messenger of God for this day, Him Whom God hath made manifest, Bahá'u'lláh. Those that do truly believe in Christ and who love Him devotedly, turn unto and obey that same Christ Spirit returned in Bahá'u'lláh. These are the ones who will partake of the "marriage supper of the Lamb." This great truth applies likewise to the followers of other great religious systems. However, there are many people today who do not recognize the station of Christ nor that of the One Whom Christ foretold would come in this Day, and these are the ones who are deprived of partaking of the "marriage supper of the Lamb." "And the door was shut."— Matt, 25:10. What more could Christ say in warning the world ?

John was so impressed by what the angel had shown him that he "fell at his feet to worship him," but the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God : for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." —v.10. In other words this angel said : "Do not worship me, as I am only a human being in the human orbit of evolution, as are you; turn to God and worship Him, and recognize the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy." Here Christ is saying that He is bearing witness of the One He prophesied who would come after Him. His Teaching, as the Saviour, the Light of the World, in His Dispensation, was limited because of man's immaturity. However, He foretells that a greater Light is to come in the New Cycle. He is prophesying about something to come later, when mankind will have become more mature, with greater spiritual capacity. Added light is needed in the world from age to age. Christ had all light, all power, all knowledge, all truth. There is nothing greater than all. But there was no ear to hear, nor heart to understand more than He gave in His Day. So He foretold the One to come in this Day, Who would reveal truth in accordance with the greater need and maturity of mankind.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." —v.11. In the sixth chapter, we

learned about the coming of the Four Horsemen, one on a white horse, one on a red horse, one on a black horse and one on a pale horse. Many think the white horse of this chapter is the same white horse of chapter six, but obviously this is a different one. The impressive symbol here is the "horse" riding forth, coming into manifestation, and the "white horse" signifies riding forth with pure and heavenly qualities and attributes. The white horse in the sixth chapter had a rider with a bow but no arrow, and with a crown, but not a golden crown. That white horse symbolizes theology, which rides forth in the semblance of religion "conquering and to conquer", but in the end it does not conquer. The white horse in this chapter is obviously another white horse. It has a rider whose name is called Faithful and True, "And in righteousness He doth judge and make war." —v. 11. "The beautiful and glorious person riding upon the white horse is the Greatest Name and the white horse means also His glorious body." —T.AB. III, p. 681.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God." —v. 12,13. The symbol, "eyes as a flame of fire," is the symbol given by Christ of the One "Like unto the Son of man." Christ was the gentle Nazarene, and the other Prophets were marked by certain attributes, while Bahá'u'lláh is symbolized as having "eyes as a flame of fire". The one photograph of Bahá'u'lláh in existence verifies this fact.

"On His Head were many crowns": it has been established that "crown" symbolizes authority, and "golden crown" denotes spiritual authority. His many crowns were golden, since His name was called "The Word of God," for what greater spiritual authority could anyone have than being called "The Word of God"? All the Prophets "brought" the Word of God, but Christ and Bahá'u'lláh, only, are "called" "The Word of God." Therefore, to the whole Christian world, Behold! Bahá'u'lláh is the Second Coming of "The Word of God!"

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." Many Christian groups teach that we must be washed in the blood of Jesus and interpret this blood to be literal. It has a far greater meaning, however. It has a meaning of much "spiritual life force." The vesture of the rider of the white horse was dipped

in this spiritual life force, the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us....” —John 1:14. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with great clarity states: “The perfections of Christ are called the Word, because all the beings are in the condition of letters, and one letter has not a complete meaning; whilst the perfections of Christ have the power of the Word, because a complete meaning can be inferred from a word. As the Reality of Christ was the Manifestation of the divine perfections, therefore it was like the Word. Why? Because He is the sum of perfect meanings. This is why He is called “the Word”.—S.A.Q. p. 241.

He Whom Christ foretold, Bahá'u'lláh, is also called “The Word of God”. Emphatically, all the Prophets “brought” the Word, while Christ and Bahá'u'lláh were “called” “The Word of God.” Thus, the Second Coming of “The Word of God”, is already manifest in Bahá'u'lláh.

“And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”—v.14. These armies which followed Him “upon white horses”, are those who have turned towards and recognized the Light and the Truth in the patterns for World Order and Spiritual progress as given by Bahá'u'lláh for this new Day. These armies are already marching in every land throughout the world to establish the Law of God. These armies carry no destructive weapons, but their hosts and helpers “are such righteous deeds, such conduct and character, as are acceptable in His sight.” G1. p.287.

“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”—v.15. The “sharp sword,” it will be remembered, is the sword of Truth, which is none other than the Word of God: the “rod of iron” is the Law of God, strong, firm and just, which God has revealed through Bahá'u'lláh for this new cycle. The “winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” symbolizes the great Day of Judgment at the end of the old cycle, when the wine of the love of God is being pressed out and preserved.

“And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”—v.16. The same spirit of Christ is returned in the Lord of Lords! All the

Prophets of the past have foretold the One to come in this Day. In the Sacred Writings of the world, many prophecies occur, which have been fulfilled in the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. Some of these are clearly set forth in “God Passes By”, by Shoghi Effendi.

He Who in such dramatic circumstances was made to sustain the over-powering weight of so glorious a Mission was none other than the One Whom posterity will acclaim, and Whom innumerable followers already recognize, as the Judge, the Lawgiver and Redeemer of all mankind, as the Organizer of the entire planet, as the Unifier of the children of men, as the Inaugurator of the long-awaited millennium, as the Originator of a new ‘Universal Cycle’, as the Establisher of the Most Great Peace, as the Fountain of the Most Great Justice, as the Proclaimer of the coming of age of the entire human race, as the Creator of a new World Order, and as the inspirer and Founder of a world civilization.—See G.P.B. pp. 93,94.

In the name He bore He combined those of the Imam Husayn the most illustrious of the successors of the Apostle of God — the brightest “star” shining in the “crown” mentioned in the Revelation of St. John and of the Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, the second of the two “witnesses” extolled in that same Book. He was formally designated Bahá'u'lláh, an appellation specifically recorded in the Persian Bayan, signifying at once the glory, the light and the splendor of God, and was styled the “Lord of Lords”, the “Most Great Name”, the “Ancient Beauty”, the “Pen of the Most High”, the “Hidden Name”, “the Preserved Treasure”, “He Whom God will make manifest”, the “Most Great Light”, the “all-Highest Horizon”, the “Most Great Ocean”, “the Supreme Heaven”, the “Pre-existent Root”, the “Self-Subsistent”, the “Day-Star of the Universe”, the “Great Announcement”, the “Speaker on Sinai”, the “Sifter of Men”, the “Wronged One of the World”, the “Desire of the Nations”, the “Lord of the Covenant”, the “Tree beyond which there is no passing”. He derived His descent, on the one hand, from Abraham (the Father of the Faithful) through His wife Katurah, and on the other from Zoroaster, as well as from Yazdigird, the last king of the Sasanian dynasty. He was moreover a descendant of Jesse, belonged, through His father, Mirza Abbas, better known as Mirza Buzurg — a nobleman closely associated with the ministerial circles of the Court of Fath-Ali Shah — to one of the most

ancient and renowned families of Mazindaran. —see G.P.B. p. 94.

To Him Isaiah, the greatest of the Jewish prophets, had alluded as the “Glory of the Lord”, the “Everlasting Father”, the “Prince of Peace”, the “Wonderful”, the “Counsellor”, the “Rod come forth out of the stem of Jesse”, and the “Branch grown out of His roots”, Who “shall judge among the nations”, Who “shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips slay the wicked”, and Who “shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth”. Of Him David had sung in His Psalms, acclaiming Him as the “Lord of Hosts” and the “King of Glory”. To Him Haggai had referred as the “Desire of all nations”, and Zechariah as the “Branch” Who “Shall grow up out of His place”, and “shall build the Temple of the Lord”. Ezekiel had extolled Him as the “Lord” Who “shall be king over all the earth”, while to His day Joel and Zephaniah had both referred as the “day of Jehovah”, the latter describing it as “a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.” His Day, Ezekiel and Daniel had, moreover, both acclaimed as the “day of the Lord”, and Malachi described as “the great and dreadful day of the Lord” when the “The Sun of Righteousness” will “arise, with healing in His wings”, whilst Daniel had pronounced His advent as signaling the end of the “abomination that maketh desolate”...G.P.B. p. 95.

To Him Jesus Christ had referred as the “Prince of this world”, as the “Comforter” Who will “reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”, as the “Spirit of Truth” Who “will guide you into all truth”, Who “shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak”, as the “Lord of the Vineyards”, and as the “son of Man” Who “shall come in the glory of His Father”, “in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”, with “all the holy angels” about Him, and “all nations” gathered before His throne. To him the Author of the Apocalypse had alluded as the “Glory of God”, as “Alpha and Omega”, “the Beginning and the End”, “the First and the Last”.—G.P.B p. 95.

To Him Muhammad, the Apostle of God, had alluded in His Book as the “Great Announcement”, and declared His Day to be ...the “Great Day”, the “Last Day”, the “Day of God”, the “Day of Judgment”, the “Day of Reckoning”, the “Day of Mutual Deceit”...the Day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the world”,...the Day when “all that are in the heavens and all that are on the earth shall be terror-stricken, save him whom God pleaseth to deliver...” —G.P.B. p. 96.

The Báb had no less significantly extolled Him as the “Essence of Being”, as the “Remnant of God”, as the “Omnipotent Master”, as the “Crimson, all-encompassing Light”, as “Lord of the visible and invisible”, as the “sole Object of all previous Revelations, including The Revelation of the Qa’im Himself...” He had, moreover, declared that He was the “first servant to believe in Him”, that He bore Him allegiance “before all things were created”, that “the year-old germ that holdeth within itself the potentialities of the Revelation that is to come is endowed with a potency superior to the combined forces of the whole of the Bayan...”—G.P.B. pp. 97, 98.

“He around Whom the Point of the Bayan (Báb) hath revolved is come” is Bahá’u’lláh’s confirmatory testimony to the inconceivable greatness and pre-eminent character of His own Revelation...” “This”, He furthermore declares, “is the king of days”, the “Day of God Himself”, the “Day which shall never be followed by night”, the “Spring-time which autumn will never overtake”, “the eye to past ages and centuries”, for which “the soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted”, for which “all the divers kindreds of the earth have yearned”, through which “God hath proved the hearts of the entire company of his Messengers and Prophets, and beyond them those that stand guard over His sacred and inviolable Sanctuary, the inmates of the Celestial Pavilion and dwellers of the Tabernacle of Glory”. “In this most mighty Revelation”, He moreover, states, “all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest, their final consummation...” G.P.B. pp. 98, 99.

And last but not least is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s own tribute to the transcendent character of the Revelation identified with His Father...” “The mere contemplation of the Dispensation inaugurated by the Blessed Beauty...would have sufficed to overwhelm the saints of bygone ages—saints who longed to partake for one moment

of its great glory..."—G.P.B. pp. 98, 99.

The process whereby the effulgence of so dazzling a Revelation was unfolded to the eyes of man was of necessity slow and gradual. The first intimation which its Bearer received did not synchronize with, nor was it followed immediately by, a disclosure of its character to either His own companions or His kindred. A period of no less than ten years had to elapse ere its far-reaching implications could be directly divulged to even those who had been intimately associated with Him...All He did, in the course of this pre-ordained interval, was to hint, in veiled and allegorical language, in epistles, commentaries, prayers and treatises, which He was moved to reveal, that the Bab's promise had already been fulfilled, and that He Himself was the One Who had been chosen to redeem it. See G.P.B. p. 103.

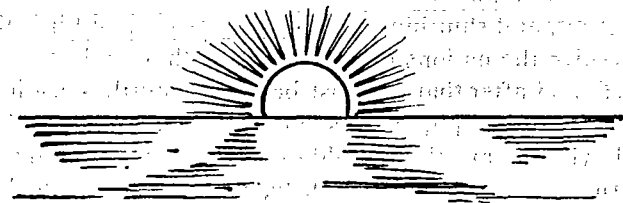
Christ foretold this dramatic event, the climax toward which prophetically the whole Bible moves from beginning to end, when he said: "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS".—v. 16. All the Prophets and Seers of the past foretold the Promised One, and Bahá'u'lláh has fulfilled all these prophetic signs. "Hear ye O My people!" What could be more convincing than their monumental confirmations!

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."—v. 17-21.

The "lake of fire" is remoteness from God, and the remorse that comes as a result of straying further and further from God, is

the greatest hell—the "lake of fire burning with brimstone". The meaning of the last sentence is that the last vestige of the old world order will rapidly be destroyed by the sword of Truth which is the Word of God for this Day.

Then, ere long, the whole world will joyfully sing of the fulfillment of these prophetic words of the Psalmist: "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 : 9, 10.



THE RISING SUN OF THE NEW DAY

CHAPTER XX

A NEW DIMENSION
The Thousand Years

"The Promised One of all the peoples of the world hath appeared. All peoples and communities have been expecting a Revelation, and He Bahá'u'lláh, is the foremost teacher and educator of all mankind."
—B.N.E. p. 15

The scene opens in a new dimension.

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."—20. v. 1-3. Bottomless pit, as was before stated, is the pit of ignorance and evil. The angel laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which terms are used synonymously, and are personified as the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.

'Abdu'l-Bahá explains "the one thousand years...signifieth the beginning of this Manifestation until the end of its predominance throughout the contingent world; because this Cause is great, its powers are growing and its signs are dazzling. It shall continue in elevation, exaltation, growth, promulgation and promotion until it shall reach the apex of its glory in one thousand years—as the day of this Manifestation is one thousand years".—T.A.B. 659, 660. In addition, 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that,—the Revelation proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh ushers in "a cycle that must extend over a period of at least five hundred thousand years".—W.O.B. p. 102. This is an astronomical cycle. The Adamic Cycle lasted six thousand years—the Bahá'í Grand Cycle will last five hundred thousand years.

"I testify before God," proclaims Bahá'u'lláh, "to the greatness, the inconceivable greatness of this Revelation. Again and again have We in most of Our Tablets borne witness to this truth, that mankind may be roused from its heedlessness." "In this most mighty Revelation", He unequivocally announces, "all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest, their final consummation." "That which hath been made manifest in this preeminent, this most exalted Revelation, stands unparalleled in the annals of the past, nor will future ages witness its like."—W.O.B. pp. 102-103.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—v. 4. John saw those who were martyred for Jesus, as well as those who were martyred for the Báb and for Bahá'u'lláh in this new Day. Those were the ones who had not received the mark of the image on their foreheads or in their hands, nor had they worshipped the beast. "And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" means that the eternal Christ Spirit as revealed through Bahá'u'lláh in this Day, will predominate for the entire Bahá'í Cycle, which will last an astronomical cycle of five hundred thousand years.—W.O.B. p. 102.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."—v. 5. There are many, many verses in the Bible and also in the Bahá'í Sacred Writings, about the first resurrection. Many people think that "resurrection" refers to the physical body. However, resurrection refers to the spirit. Each physical body must die; each body disintegrates or decomposes, because it came into existence by the laws of composition. Everything that comes into existence by the laws of composition must by the same laws decompose, and all things that exist that *did not* come into existence by the law of composition, can never become decomposed. The spirit referred to here, is the human spirit which remains in a condition of deadness, or unawareness, and consequent non-progress. After the thousand years are finished, those who have remained in "deadness" and who refused to turn to the light, will again be

given the opportunity to awaken and to become filled with spiritual Light and Life. All the Sacred Books of the world teach this.—See B.N.E. pp. 34, 193-199. S.A.Q. p. 119.

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”—v. 6.

“According to the Bahá’i teaching the Resurrection has nothing to do with the gross physical body. That body, once dead, is done with. It becomes decomposed and its atoms will never be recomposed into the same body.”—B.N.E. p. 225.

“Resurrection is the birth of the individual to spiritual life, through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed through the Manifestation of God. The grave from which he arises is the grave of ignorance and negligence of God. The sleep from which he awakens is the dormant spiritual condition in which many await the dawn of the Day of God. This dawn illumines all who have lived on the face of the earth, whether they are in the body or out of the body, but those who are spiritually blind cannot perceive it. The Day of Resurrection is not a day of twenty-four hours, but an era which has now begun and will last as long as the present world-cycle continues. It will continue when all traces of the present civilization will have been wiped off the surface of the globe.”—B.N.E. pp. 225-226.

Those who have died of the first death, those who are in darkness when the second awakening comes, remain in darkness, but those who have turned toward Christ and have recognized the Light that He brought into the world, are born of the “first birth” as Christ, Himself, has stated; “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”—John 3:3. In other words, to be born of the “first birth” is not sufficient for this great new cycle, but “Ye *must* be born again.” Those who are truly born of the “first birth” will naturally have the capacity and power to recognise the light of the “second birth” and to attain unto it. To them is given the glorious promise in the sixth verse: “On such the second death hath no power.” They will live on in progressive unfoldment of spiritual light and illumination in this great new cycle of Bahá’u’lláh, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” It must be remembered that these verses are prophecies given by Christ, referring to “Things that must come to pass here-

after” that is, after 96 A.D.

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of His prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”—v. 7-9.

At the end of every cycle, there is an elimination of those things in it which do not belong in the new. As before stated, each Prophet of God foretold the One to come after Him, and each has given the signs by which He may be recognized when He comes. We do not recognize the signs, however, until the day of fulfillment; then we do recognize those signs and know them. Christ foretold in the Bible the coming of the “Comforter” in this day, and all the Prophet-Founders of religious systems have foretold One to come in the “Latter days,” Who would unite all mankind and establish Universal Peace. Bahá’u’lláh is the fulfillment of all the Prophet-Founders, and He in turn, after proving His Station of Prophethood and giving His Message for this Day, has foretold Others Who will come after Him. Shoghi Effendi has stated “that no one else except the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh can ever lay claim to such a station before the expiration of a full thousand years—are verities which lie embeded in the specific utterances of both the Founder of our Faith and the Interpreter of His Teachings.”—W.O.B. p.132.

“Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God...ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying imposter.”—W.O.B. p. 132. Bahá’u’lláh also foretells that after the full thousand year period is past, other Manifestations will successively come during the five hundred thousand year cycle, which is under the Light of Bahá’u’lláh. Then at the end of this major cycle, another Manifestation, of very great Universal Station and Mission will come. Bahá’u’lláh has declared also that He has come to establish Unity in its highest degree of perfection upon the earth during this five thousand century Bahá’i Cycle. He has also foretold that the great Universal Manifestation Who is to inaugurate the next major cycle, although His signs cannot be recognized until He appears, will be One with a far greater Univer-

sal Message of Power and Light and Love and Truth than it would be possible to reveal today. That One, when He comes, will establish Unity within and throughout the entire universe. How clearly this shows that the Divine Plan, which Bahá'u'lláh has revealed to us for this day, is very great, universal and sublime!—A Tablet by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to a Persian believer.

The eighth verse seems to indicate great confusion in the solar system that might cause the advent of the great Universal Manifestation in that far off time—the Noah of that day. As Noah came before the Flood, so each Prophet always comes before the catastrophe to warn mankind. There are many interpretations of the words Gog and Magog, and none of them should be belittled. Three of the most fitting interpretations, which various groups believe, are: first the historical, which refers to those countries that have persecuted the dispersed Jewish people, and who at the final battle of Armageddon will be defeated “by divine intervention” in the form of natural events; the second interpretation is the religious, which alludes to the struggle between the believers in the new Manifestation and the non-believers, during which the believers will be tested and tried, and will finally emerge victorious; the third interpretation refers to and is symbolic of the greater struggle between believing and non-believing interplanetary forces at the end of the five thousand century cycle, when a new Universal Manifestation shall come to unify the entire universe.

“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”—v. 9. This verse is again the symbol of the fire of the love of God, and the purging that always comes whenever a Prophet of God appears, especially at the dawn of a great new Universal Cycle.

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.”—v. 10. As has been stated before, “forever and ever” signifies “for a great cycle”; it is derived from an Aramaic word which is not synonymous with the word “eternity”. The devil was cast in the condition of darkness and despair, “where the beast and the false prophet are,” that no longer might they deceive the nations and the people.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from

whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.”—v. 11. Again the “great white throne” is the station of Manifestation, and He that sat upon it is the Manifestation of God, “from Whose face the earth and the heaven fled away.” In other words, the corruptions of the old cycle disappeared. According to Dr. Lamsa, the Oriental scholar, the word “world” in Aramaic, the language Christ spoke, means “whirl,” so that “end of the world” means end of a complete whirl or revolution or cycle. From now on there is no longer any place for the old cycle or old order, because all things are made new.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”—v. 12.

“The dead, small and great” are all those who have remained in darkness, those who have not caught a glimpse of the Glory of God in this new Day nor turned toward His Light. The “Books” mean the Word of God as given by the Messenger of God in every age, in every religious system. There was also another Book opened,—“The Book of Life”. Many different terms are applied in describing the Book of Life, such as the Akashic Records, the Cosmic Record, the Record, and many others. It is well known that sound and light travel in waves, and some scientists state that every sound uttered in the past is recorded somewhere. The waves make definite records that cannot be erased. It is claimed that some scientists are working on highly sensitive instruments by which they are trying to recall those sound and light waves that have created words and images in the so-called “ether bank”. If successful, they hope to recall sounds and events of the past, even the words and image of Jesus Christ and other great Teachers Who have uplifted mankind. The point to emphasize, however, is not the development of such instruments, but rather the careful consideration of the effects of our words and thoughts, to mirror forth the Will of God and the Love of God today, in order that we may make better and nobler records in the Book of Life. In this atomic and space age we can no longer do iron age thinking. It must be electronic, space age, spiritual thinking and result in action. Scientifically we have entered the realm beyond matter. Bahá'u'lláh writes, “Think not the deeds ye have com-

mitted have been blotted from My sight. By My Beauty! All your doings hath My Pen graven with open characters upon Tablets of chrysolite."—G1. p. 210.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."—v. 13. Not according to their words, not according to what they would like, but according to their works. Bahá'u'lláh states: "The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds; he whose words exceed his deeds, know verily his death is better than his life."—B.W.F. p. 141.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."—v. 13. "Death" here connotes spiritual deadness, and "hell" is remoteness from God.

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—v. 15. "The herald who proclaimed the written names is 'Abdu'l-Bahá who announceth the names of those who deserve salvation and are firm in the Covenant of God".—T.AB. III, p. 681. Those who are far from God, and spiritually dead, will not have their names written in the Book of Life, and will be unable to enter the new Golden Age of the great new Bahá'í Cycle that has just dawned, Christ is emphasizing here to John, that all must turn to the Spirit of God released for this Day, with great humility, love, sincerity and understanding, and "do the works of the Lord," that their names may be recorded in the Book of Life, and that their lives may shine with heavenly attributes even as radiant stars.

"Resurrection is the birth of the individual to spiritual life, through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed through the Manifestation of God."—B.N.E. p. 225.

An intermediary is needed to bring two extremes into relation with each other as sun and earth, heat and cold, riches and poverty, light and darkness, the Creator and His creation. Without an intermediary power there could be no relation between these.

The spirit of man is not illumined and quickened through material sources. It is not resuscitated by investigating phenomena of the world of matter. "The spirit of man is in need of protection of the Holy Spirit."—P.U.P. p. 282.

"The Holy Spirit it is, which, through the mediation of the

Prophets of God, teaches spiritual virtues to man and enables him to attain eternal life."—W.AB. p. 53.

The Holy Spirit transmitted through each one of the Prophets of God brings life to mankind. It is the only power that can bring resurrection to man! If one does not plug the electric cord into the current he remains in darkness. If one does not plug into the power of the Holy Spirit he remains in spiritual darkness or deadness. How does one "plug in?" It is by sincere desire for spiritual knowledge and love of God, purity of heart, steadfastness and loving and faithful service in His Kingdom.

In these powerful words, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has given us this soul-stirring promise: "I now assure thee, O servant of God, that if thy mind become empty and pure from every mention and thought and thy heart attracted wholly to the Kingdom of God, forget all else besides God and come in communion with the Spirit of God, then the Holy Spirit will assist thee with a power which will enable thee to penetrate all things, and a Dazzling Spark which enlightens all sides, a Brilliant Flame in the zenith of the heavens, will teach thee that which thou dost not know of the facts of the universe and of the divine doctrine. Verily, I say unto thee, every soul which ariseth today to guide others to the path of safety and infuse in them the Spirit of Life, the Holy Spirit will inspire that soul with evidences, proofs and facts and the lights will shine upon it from the Kingdom of God. Do not forget what I have conveyed unto thee from the breath of the Spirit. Verily, it is the shining morning and the rosy dawn which will impart unto thee the lights, reveal the mysteries and make thee competent in science, and through it the pictures of the Supreme World will be printed in thy heart and the facts of the secrets of the Kingdom of God will shine before thee."—B.W.F. p. 369.

Bahá'u'lláh, in the "Hidden Words," is calling to all to record their names in the Book of Life, and He reveals three ways of doing it: "O Son of Man! Write all that We have revealed unto thee with the ink of light upon the tablet of thy spirit. Should this not be in thy power, then make thine ink of the essence of thy heart. If this thou canst not do, then write with that crimson ink that hath been shed in My path. Sweeter indeed is this to Me than all else, that its light may endure forever."—H.W. 71. (Arabic)

CHAPTER XXI

THE CITY OF GOD
Twelve Foundation Stones

God Speaks:

"For when My Messengers to any age
 Bring My new Laws, They cancel every page
 Writ by the past except the page of Love,
 For this is writ on Tablets firm as rock
 Unchanging, ageless: and Their hands unlock
 With love the door that to My Kingdom leads,
 Blest is the soul who Their injunction heeds.

—Song Celestial, by Howard Colby Ives. Page 23.

God raises the curtain on the new heaven and the new earth.

The awe-inspiring City of Certitude is clearly explained by Bahá'u'lláh in these soul-stirring words. "When the channel of the human soul is cleansed of all worldly and impeding attachments, it will unfailingly perceive the breath of the Beloved across immeasurable distances, and will, led by its perfume, attain and enter the City of Certitude. Therein he will discern the wonders of His ancient Wisdom, and will perceive all the hidden teachings from the rustling leaves of the Tree that flourisheth in that City. With both his inner and outer ear he will hear from its dust the hymns of glory and praise ascending unto the Lord of Lords, and with his inner eye will he discover the mysteries of 'return' and 'revival'... That City is none other than the Word of God revealed in every age and dispensation. In the days of Moses it was the Pentateuch; in the days of Jesus, the Gospel, in the days of Muhammad, the Messenger of God, the Qur'an; in this day, the Bayan; and in the Dispensation of Him Whom God will make manifest, His own Book unto which all the Books of former Dispensations must needs be referred, the Book that standeth amongst them all transcendent and supreme." — B. W. F. pp. 108,109. These words revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, foreshadowing

His own Revelation, give the Key to the New World Order—the great City of Certitude—the Holy City, foretold by Christ in the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Revelation.

The first seven verses of this chapter are very hallowed. We have heard them many times, we have sung them, many poems have been written about them, and we love the words. Great truths should be analyzed in order to gain deeper understanding of them, even though something of the spirit is often lost in the analysis. After the analysis, the verses should be perused again for the spirit. These words seem wrapped in an aura of majesty.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."—v.1. The "new heaven and a new earth" signifies the new Revelation and New World Order, the laws of which Bahá'u'lláh has given to mankind for the New Age. "The first heaven and the first earth were passed away" means that the old religious system and the old world order had prophetically passed away. The last clause of the verse, "and there was no more sea", is symbolic of anything that divides or separates. Therefore, this denotes that there would be no more division, separation and strife, but that there would be unity, harmony and a drawing together of all the peoples of the world.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—v. 2. The Holy City, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, is the word of God, the Law of God, as revealed by the Messenger of God for this Day. It is the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." How is the bride adorned? Isn't she beautiful with everything new and clean and pure and white? That is a vivid symbol of the New World Order, with its basic manifest principles, its lofty shining ideals, its soul-stirring, enriching creative Truth.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."—v.3. The Tabernacle of God here refers to that which houses the Divine Spirit of God when "He dwells with men." It is none other than the Manifestation of God when he

enters the human Kingdom. He comes to mankind to reveal the Divine Laws and the Divine Plan, and to teach man again the forgotten path to God. Each Messenger of God does "dwell with men" for a time, just as Jesus did, just as all the Prophets of God have done. Since God in His essence is unknowable to men, the Manifestation of God brings to mankind their only possible knowledge of God, by reflecting as a pure mirror the qualities and attributes of God. Thus mankind is extricated from the web of confusion into which he has become entangled by his own idle fancies and vain imaginings. Man is liberated and enlightened by the Word of God through His Manifestation, Who is the Divine Spirit of God, the Sublime Reflection of God, the Sun of Reality.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: For the former things are passed away."—v.4. Does this mean tear ducts will become atrophied, that there will be no more burying of dead bodies and no more pain? No, it means, figuratively rather, that the causes of sorrow and pain will pass away through the love of God and there will be better spiritual understanding; that in the great new World Order which Bahá'u'lláh has revealed from God, there will be joy and peace and light and harmony and unity and illumination. Spiritual death, the death of unbelief and materialism, will be overcome.

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: For these words are true and faithful."—v.5 Again and again we find in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh the equivalent of the statement, "Behold, I make all things new." Since the advent of Bahá'u'lláh, Who was born in Tihiran, Persia (Iran), in 1817, what things can we find in the world today as they were then? What vast changes have taken place! All things are being made new. A new age of scientific progress, unprecedented in its scope and rapidity, is apparent. More progress has been made since 1817 than in all previous centuries of recorded human history.

"And He said unto me, It is done. 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."—v.6. The old cycle is ended, and a new "Alpha and Omega", "the beginning and the end", has once more appeared at the dawning of the new Cycle with the same Divine Spirit of God that appeared in Christ. The

"fountain of the water of life" is always the Revelator, revealing the life-giving Word of God. The Word of God is the "water of life". Here Christ is giving a preview of the new Cycle, with the new Messenger of God or "fountain" gushing forth the "water of life" or Word of God, the Love of God, giving it freely unto all who will partake of it in this Day.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."—v.7. "Overcometh" what? Does it not mean the godlessness that is in his heart, the ego that still abides within him and motivates him in many ways to cause his unrighteousness? He that "overcometh" all these susceptibilities shall inherit all goodly things. We remember that Christ stated: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. 6:33. As we overcome these imperfections, the promise is fulfilled, "I will be his God and he shall be my son."—v.7.

The eighth verse contains a very grave warning. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."—v.8. The people who are warned here will have a part in the "second death", unless they turn away from these things. Liars seem to be the worst of the evil doers, for lying is the besetting sin of mankind today and the origin of all evil. According to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "Truthfulness is the foundation of all the virtues of the world of humanity. Without truthfulness, progress and success in all of the worlds of God are impossible for a soul. When this holy attribute is established in man, all the divine qualities will also become realized."—B.W.F. p. 384. Bahá'u'lláh admonishes us: Beautify your tongues, O people, with truthfulness, and adorn your souls with the ornament of honesty". —B.W.F. p. 124. "Know thou of a certainty that whoso disbelieveth in God is neither trustworthy nor truthful."—B.W.F. p. 43. Christ gave this grave warning in the Book of Revelation to save mankind from the "second death".

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descend-

ing out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystals."—v.9-11. This "great city, the holy Jerusalem", is the great City of Certitude, the great new World Order, the laws and principles of which have been brought from God to mankind for this New Day. This new Jerusalem has the "Glory of God", which in Persian is one word, Bahá'u'lláh. He it is Who has brought these laws and principles, Whose light is "like unto a stone most Precious, even like a Jasper stone, clear as crystal."

"And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates."—v. 12, 13. In a previous chapter we learned that the "children of Israel" are those who are the servants of God, who are sealed in their foreheads with the Father's name. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in a most thought-provoking and moving Tablet, explained the meaning of the "holy Jerusalem" and the "twelve gates" to the city. "Accordingly, St. John, the divine, declared in his vision regarding the twelve doors and the twelve foundations. By the great and holy city of Jerusalem, which is descended from heaven, is meant the sacred law of God. This subject has been repeatedly explained in many Tablets and in the Scriptures of the ancient Prophets. For example, it is said in one place, 'I behold Jerusalem marching on to the wilderness'. The purport is that this Heavenly Jerusalem has twelve doors through which the advancing souls enter into the City of God. These doors are the souls who are the stars of guidance and doors unto bounty and knowledge. 'At the gates twelve angels stood'. By 'angel' is meant the power of the confirmation of God; that the candle of the power of the divine confirmation shines forth and is illumined in those souls. That is to say, that each one of those souls will be confirmed by the mightiest power. Those twelve gates surround the whole universe. This signifies that all existence is under the shadow of those souls; also, that these doors are the foundation of the city of God, the Divine Jerusalem; that upon each of these foundations the name of one of the Apostles of His Holiness the Spirit (Christ) is written, That is to say, the manifestation of the perfections, glad-tidings, virtues and high attributes of that holy soul." —T. AB. pp. 92,93.

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."—v. 14-16. Several faiths have founded their doctrines on this verse. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has given the greater universal meaning of this symbol as the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. He explains about the "reed" as follows: "In brief, it is said that: 'And he that talked with me had a golden rod to measure the city and the gates thereof.' The purport is this, that certain souls guided (the people) with a rod of the plant, that is, a reed wherewith he shepherded the sheep, like unto the rod of Moses; others trained (the people) with a rod of iron and drove them, as in the time of Muhammad. (The scepter of Muhammad was the sword). In this Greatest Day the rod of the plant and the rod of iron are changed into a rod which is of pure gold and is from the endless treasuries of the Kingdom of God."—T.AB. p. 93.

"And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel."—v.17. The sum of the digits in 144, or in 144,000, is nine. Christ revealed this symbol earlier in the number of those who were sealed "in their foreheads." 'Abdu'l-Bahá has given the Key to this symbol of completeness, in that those who have gained the nine, or universal consciousness are those who recognize the light and truth as revealed by every Prophet of God. This includes the One through Whom God is speaking to mankind in this Day, and those who arise to serve Him. These are they who form the scope of the walls of the Great City, "according to the measure of a perfect man, that is, of the angel." That measure is attained in the Christ-like life and lofty station of those who have followed the laws and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, and have thus gained the universal consciousness.

"And the building of the wall of it was of Jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."—v. 18. This City of Certitude would have to be like unto pure gold, spiritual, clear as glass and transparent without flaw or blemish.

"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished

with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, a chryso-prasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, and amethyst."—v.19, 20. There are many interesting interpretations of these stones. In ancient times the priest wore a breastplate of precious stones when he entered into the inner tabernacle, or Holy of Holies. The Key to the meaning of these stones is given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in an address in New York City, in 1912, and in a Tablet to an early believer. They refer to the twelve principles of the new World Order as revealed by Bahá'u'lláh. It is very interesting and very significant that Christ in giving the Revelation of this particular chapter should have used these symbols as the foundation of the wall of the City, and the new World Order.

We are now living in the Day of fulfillment of the Day of St. John's Book of Revelation and the Divine Laws of the New Day have been revealed to man through God's latest Manifestation. His new Book of Laws (Kitab-i-Aqdas) is the Law of God of the new Jerusalem which is being built upon the sure foundation of the Word of God...The Kitab-i-Aqdas, the principal repository of that Law which the Prophet Isaiah had anticipated, and which the writer of the Apocalypse had described as the "new heaven and the new earth", as "the Tabernacle of God", as the "Holy City", as the "Bride", the "New Jerusalem coming down from God", this "Most Holy Book", whose provisions must remain inviolate for no less than a thousand years, and whose system will embrace the entire planet, may well be regarded as the brightest emanation of the mind of Bahá'u'lláh, as the Mother Book of His Dispensation, and the Charter of His New World Order. See G.P.B. p. 213.

"The Law of God is also described as the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. It is evident that the New Jerusalem which descends from heaven is not a city of stone, mortar, bricks, earth and wood. It is the Law of God which descends from heaven and is called new; for it is clear that the Jerusalem which is of stone and earth does not descend from heaven, and that it is not renewed; but that which is renewed is the Law of God."—'Abdu'l-Bahá —S.A.Q. p. 79.

There are twelve basic principles upon which this New Jeru-

salem rests, and which are most remarkably correlated to the twelve precious foundation stones of that Holy City of St. John's vision as regards their significance and their colors. They are spiritual symbols and not material stones, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said. "The divine words are not to be taken according to their outer sense. They are symbolical and contain realities of spiritual meaning."—P.U.P. p. 455. Let us consider them in the order given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which sequence the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, wished maintained. See P.U.P. pp. 449-451. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explained the significance of these Foundation Stones in a Tablet to Shanaz Waite.

The first Baha'i basic principle is the "Oneness of Mankind". As a popular song notes, "Hands may be black, white, yellow, or brown, but the hue of the heart is one". "God does not behold differences of hue and complexion; He looks at the hearts."—B.W.F. p. 267. The first foundation stone, is the jasper; it is clear, like the hue of the heart. "The hue of the heart is one." In ancient times it was called the bloodstone.

The second basic principle is, "The Independent Investigation of Truth". Each must be free to seek out the truth in his own way. The second foundation stone, the sapphire, is a clear blue, "true blue", and the color of faith, inspiration, loyalty and truth. Man must be free to soar in this dome of heaven's blue truth, and see it with his own eyes.

The third basic principle is "the Foundation of all Religions is One." Each Divine Messenger has revealed the same means of attaining the "new heaven and new earth", but man the corrupted and misrepresented these Divine Laws. In reality they are all one. The third foundation stone, the chalcedony, is pure white, of which 'Abdu'l-Bahá said: That while white is apparent, yet in it are hidden and concealed the seven colors. In white all colors are brothers and sisters. White is the symbol of purity, and in its origin each religion is pure, and a brother to every other religion. Truth can never be antagonistic to itself, nor self-contradictory, for all Truth is one.

The fourth basic principle is "Religion must be the Cause of Unity." If it is not, its non-being would be better than its being. The fourth foundation stone, the emerald, is green. Green is the color of harmony and unity. There is no color known with which green will not harmonize, as the green foliage blends with every

color of flower. Green is the color of immortality as well as of humility.

The fifth basic principle is "Religion must be in accord with Science and Reason." Neither must deny the other. They must travel this united highway and together build a better world. The fifth foundation stone, the sardonyx, is red and brown, in layers or usually flecked with white, according to the way it is held. So it is with science and religion; they are, in essence one, but differ in color or manifestation. Today they are coming closer together in building a better world for all mankind.

The sixth basic principle is "The Equality of Men and Women". They must be as the two wings of a bird, each equally developed. This was *not* taught by the prophets of the past. The sixth foundation stone, the sardius, is a stone usually in two layers one white and one red, symbolical of the two in one, who unitedly further the progress of mankind.

The seventh basic principle is "Removal of all Prejudice", Religious, Racial, National, Political, etc. The seventh foundation stone, the pure Chrysolite, is exquisitely clear, translucent, slightly tinted green. We find references to the Chrysolite Tablet in the ancient writings. Bahá'u'lláh revealed the Chrysolite Tablet in which He emphasizes the abolition of all prejudice... Chrysolite is the symbol of absolute sincerity and truthfulness, purity and selflessness. Only when our hearts become pure and are free from every form of prejudice, can they become the chrysolite tablets whereon may be engraved our loftiest thoughts, attitudes and motives.

The eighth basic principle is "Universal Peace". The eighth foundation stone, the beryl, is light greenish blue, somewhat like the crest of the ocean wave, as it mounts toward its summit. It is the blue of faith and loyalty to our brother man, the green of unity and humility, blending harmoniously into one whole, like a beautiful bouquet of delicate flowers. This inner peace established in the hearts of man, will also establish Universal Peace.

The ninth basic principle is "Universal Education". The ninth foundation stone, the topaz, the glory of the sun, is symbolical of the light of knowledge and the glory of wisdom which universal education will establish in the world, when the golden topaz, the light of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, is understood and lived. The illumination of education must become the foundation

of the New World Order.

The tenth basic principle is "The spiritual solution of the economic problem." The tenth foundation stone, the chrysoprasus, is like opaque chrysolite, a greenish shade which denotes truthfulness, justice, sincerity and purity of heart; these are the prerequisites necessary for establishing the means for the solution of all economic problems. They are embodied in the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you" and in the *new* Golden Rule "Thou shalt love thy neighbor more than thyself."

The eleventh basic principle is "A Universal Language". The eleventh foundation stone, the jacinth, is somewhat like the jasper, or blood stone, and is rose red, the color of the heart. Thus the hue of the heart and of the lips is one. A race can understand the heart of another race only when it can speak the same language. An international body shall select a suitable language to be used as an auxiliary language by all the peoples of the world.

The twelfth basic principle is "An International Tribunal, a Universal House of Justice or Parliament of Man." The twelfth foundation stone, the amethyst, is violet. It symbolizes spiritual light, healing, serenity, justice and reverence. This international tribunal must be as the ultra-violet rays for the "healing of the nations". And it must seek spiritual light and guidance in all reverence from the Supreme Being, that it may fulfill its high destiny of establishing security, justice and serenity to the nations of the world and to the hearts of all mankind.—See P.U.P. pp. 449-451, T.A.B. pp. 92-94. The Universal House of Justice was first established in 1963 and is destined to become the last remaining citadel in a tottering world. When its fragrance has been sufficiently diffused it will bring about peace, justice, agreements among peoples of the world.

Upon this safe and sure foundation the "New Jerusalem" will be built. There is not a need of man; physical, mental or spiritual, that has not been met in the new laws revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, and when they become fully established in the world then, indeed, will the nations rejoice. Then will appear that Holy City, wherein "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: For the former things are passed

away...And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: For there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."—v. 4,25,26.

In each heart, individually, must this Holy City first be built, that in turn each heart may become one of the precious stones of which the Universal City of the New Heaven and the New Earth will be constructed. The structure itself will rest upon the foundation of these basic principles. "Abdu'l-Bahá has said that the principles of Bahá'u'lláh must be studied one by one until they are understood and realized in mind and heart until we acquire built-in-nobleness of character; then will we become strong followers of the Light, truly spiritual, heavenly soldiers of God, acquiring true civilization and spreading it throughout the world. This will be the Paradise which is to come on earth, wherein all mankind will gather together under the Sacred Tent in the Kingdom of Glory.

We must have the sublime faith that inspired an Australian Soldier who was found dead in Flanders Field with his blood-stained manuscript in his coat pocket.

"Ye who have faith to look with fearless eyes,
Beyond the tragedy of a world at strife,
And know that out of death and darkness
Shall arise, the dawn of ampler life.
Rejoice! whatever anguish rend the heart,
That God has given you this priceless dower;
To live in these great days
And have your part in Freedom's growing hour;
That you may tell your sons
Who see the light high in the heavens,
Their heritage to take.
I saw the powers of darkness put to flight!
I saw the morning break!"

We, too, shall see the "powers of darkness" put to flight and "See the morning break". With the Light of the glad New Day, we shall also see the New Jerusalem that has descended from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, that Holy City which "had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the Glory of God (Bahá'u'lláh) did lighten it, and the Lamb (the Báb) is the light thereof". Upon the solid foundation of the laws of God will it stand for ages and cycles to come. May all mankind

ere long joyously sing the song of the Holy City with heartfelt gratitude!

"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." —v. 21,22.

The twelve gates as before stated, were twelve pearls, or twelve holy souls, one for each gate. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that these holy souls are the Disciples of Christ, symbolizing their high spiritual attributes. —T.A.B. p. 93. In another sense, the twelve gates also refer to the twelve principles of Bahá'u'lláh, which have already been explained. Each one of them, when recognized and followed, becomes the means of entering and of establishing the New World Order. "And the street of the City was of pure gold". "Pure gold" signifies the spiritual laws and values. The whole city was builded upon these spiritual laws, the pure truth, the Divine Law of Love as if it were "transparent glass", that is to say, without flaw or blemish. "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it". In other words the Spirit of Christ is returned in the Manifestation of God for this day, Bahá'u'lláh, and also the Lamb, His Holiness the Báb. They revealed the Laws and Principles upon which the new civilization is being built. "Love is the greatest law in this vast universe of God!" —T.A.B. p. 525.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." —v. 23. Again and again, throughout the Book of Revelation as well as in other Books of the Bible, the "Glory of God" (Bahá'u'lláh, in Arabic) is emphasized in the prophecies regarding the "latter Day".

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there." —v. 24,25. Reference is made here to the nations that shall be gathered together into the new world civilization. The nations shall unite in one great World Commonwealth or Federation of Nations, and the kings and the rulers of the earth will bring "their honour and glory" into it. The gates of that city will remain open for there "shall be no night there" in the New Day, the Day of God. The gates, or

Principles of Bahá'u'lláh, cannot be closed, they will continue to be open, and by means of their pervading influence all the peoples of the world will enter into the new magnificent World Civilization.

"And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it." —v. 26. The finest and most worthy and enlightened of all the nations shall be gathered into it.

"And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life..."—v. 27. Nothing that "Worketh abomination, or maketh a lie", in our old civilization, will be lifted up into the new. Today the world is undergoing a period of purging, of eliminating everything that defiles, or works abomination, or is contrary to truth; and only those souls, those institutions, those forms, those systems which are worthy, will be lifted up into the new World Order. The Lamb's Book of Life contains only the names of those who are worthy, after having been purged and tested and tried and proven worthy, and they are the "called" and the "chosen".

'Abdu'l-Bahá describes the advent of the Kingdom of God upon the earth as follows: "Humanity shall come [within the bounds of security, the prophethood of all the Messengers of God shall be established. Zion shall leap and dance, Jerusalem shall rejoice, the Mosaic flame shall ignite, the Messianic light shall shine, the world will become another world and humanity shall put on another power. This is the greatest divine bestowal; this is the effulgence of the kingdom of God; this is the day of illumination; this is the merciful century." —P. U.P. p. 127.

The soul rejoices in this lovely song by Shanaz Waite.

City of our King

O come, thou New Jerusalem, thou city of the blest !
Therein God's sun shall ever shine and weary hearts find rest;
Where heaven and earth are made anew and passed away the old;
Where Love Divine rules over all, as Shepherd of one Fold.

Thy gates shall ever open be, thy temple doors thrown wide,
And every tear be wiped away, each longing satisfied:
God's promises shall be fulfilled, His Kingdom come on earth,
Tis thou, O fair Jerusalem, the city of New Birth !

Not in celestial realms alone, but here within each heart,
Shall be the New Jerusalem, whose joys will ne'er depart;
Where every voice shall sing God's praise, and loud Hosannas ring;
O come, thou New Jerusalem, thou City of Our King !



THE SONG OF JOY

CHAPTER XXII

POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
New Heaven and New Earth

"Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious, will be unveiled to your eyes."
—A.D.J. p. 69.

God lifts the curtain on this epic in the greatest drama in all history.

"And it shall be said in that day, lo, this is our God, we have waited for him and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isaiah 25:9.

Paul in I Corinthians gives a wonderful prophecy and promise of the future: "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."—I Cor. 2:9.

The prophet Joel also foretells: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."—Joel 2:28, 29.

"And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."—Isaiah 25:7, 8.

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse:

but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither the light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."—v. 1-5.

This is a re-emphasis and summation of the preceding chapter. The pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, is the New Revelation with its laws and principles and the ocean of truth revealed for this New Day, which pours forth from the Word of God as written and recorded by Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. "In the midst of it" signifies in the very heart of this great Revelation "was there the Tree of Life, which bare twelve manner of fruits", or twelve principles which we found in the previous chapter to represent the foundations of the New World Order. They are the gates by which mankind enters into the new civilization. This analogy brings the promise of Universal Peace as one of the fruits of the Tree of Life designed for "the healing of the nations" for there shall "be no more curse" (of war). This truly is a preview of the Kingdom of God on earth. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face and his name shall be on their foreheads. This name is the Name of the Father, the name that God has revealed for man in this Day to be "in their foreheads". It is written in their inner consciousness with the ink of light, which illumines their souls and through them gives light to the whole world.

At long last, mankind has entered the Seventh Day, the great Creational Day of God, in which "there shall be no night," and they shall give glory unto the Lord God Who giveth them light "for ever and ever," which means for the Bahá'í Universal Cycle of five hundred thousand years. Bahá'u'lláh revealed that "this is the Day that shall not be followed by night."—G.P.B. p. 99.

"And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."—v. 6. Then Christ proclaimed, "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the saying of the prophecy of this book."—v. 7.

And John spoke: "And I John saw these things, and heard

them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."—v. 8,9. In other words, the angel belonged to the human orbit of evolution, having progressed spiritually and reached an angelic state. He said to John therefore, "Do not worship me, but worship God only."

"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."—v. 10. This is the day of fulfilment "the time of the end", therefore prophecy is no longer sealed. This recalls the angel's words in the Old Testament. "And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."—Dan. 12:9. The "time of the end", then is now at hand.

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."—v. 11.

In other words we have come to the bottom of a great new step. Humanity today is undergoing that period of cleansing, testing, measuring, when each soul is given the power to choose the next step on the path of his soul: either to remain in a condition of injustice, corruption and filthiness, or to be lifted to a higher plateau of progress and to a state of worthiness, righteousness and holiness.

It is the Great Day of Decision for Every Human Soul!

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be."—v. 12. Here Christ reemphasizes that it isn't what somebody else thinks about us, it isn't what we believe, but it is according to our works that we are judged. This is that day of reward and punishment when the old cycle is rolled up; let us not be rolled up with it because of our inability to make the Great Decision!

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."—v. 13, 14. The tree of life is the tree of immortality but greater than immortality, it is the "tree of eternal life." This is eternal progress.

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."—v. 15.

These will be rolled up with the old order. Truthfulness, trustworthiness, honesty, integrity, kindness and the love of God and of one's fellowman, these are the essentials to become worthy to enter into the New World Order. "Nothing that maketh an abomination or a lie can enter therein." What a period of cleansing there must be! Each soul should sincerely ask himself, "Am I striving to become worthy?"

The Book of Revelation is divided into three general divisions: prologue, revelation and epilogue. This is the epilogue: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."—v. 16.

Christ is stating here that He has given us the Revelation which He foretold in the very first verse of the Book when He said: "This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John!"—Rev. 1:1.

Herein Christ is saying: I have given you this great Revelation to show you things which must come to pass and to testify unto you these things in the churches. Let it be remembered that the "churches" referred to are not only the seven little missions of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, but in a larger sense represent the seven great living religious systems of the Adamic Cycle: Sabeism, Hinduism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, in their origin all divinely ordained.

Christ is also testifying to the essential unity of all the Prophets when He says: "I am the root and offspring of David." John 7:42, Rom. 1:3. Abraham was the root, or ancestor of David, while Christ was the descendent of David, yet He claims to be both. Christ branched from David, through Jesse, who was the ancient forefather of Bahá'u'lláh. See G.P.B. p. 94. This is a marvelous proof given by Christ Himself of the return of the Christ Spirit in Bahá'u'lláh, in the form of another perfect Man of God, and refutes many of the dogmas of Christian theology. The genealogical distinction of Jesus the Christ, that of being a

descendant of Abraham, was shared by Zoroaster, Moses, Muhammad, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh.

Christ states that He is "the bright and morning star." He is saying that He is the harbinger of the Sun of the New Day, just as the morning star of the celestial heavens is the herald of the dawn of the New Day brought by the appearance of the physical sun or our solar system. And the song of the morning star, if you listen and watch when it appears above the horizon, is: "Awake! Awake! It is the time for the Dawn of a New Day! The Sun is about to rise!" So Christ is here telling us to awake, that the spiritual Sun of Truth is about to rise, to usher in the New Day—the New Kingdom of God on earth. He is the Glory of God, Bahá'u'lláh. Who teaches that the Reality of Christ is the embodiment of the divine virtues and attributes of God: that Christ is the focal point of the Holy Spirit, that He is born of the Holy Spirit, He is raised up by the Holy Spirit. The Reality of Christ does not derive from Adam, or any other human ancestor. No! It is born of the Holy Spirit, and Bahá'u'lláh identifies Christ with the "Quickening Spirit."

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—v.17. The Word of God is the "water of life" which Christ brought, and the understanding of which Bahá'u'lláh has renewed and restored, bringing redemption, love, unity, peace and justice to the children of men for this new cycle.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book."—v. 18,19. The Book of Life is the mirror which reflects every thought, word and deed. Bahá'u'lláh declared "The mirror of His knowledge reflecteth, with complete distinctness, precision and fidelity the doings of all men." Gl. p. 204. "Every act ye meditate is as clear to Him as that act which is already accomplished."—Gl. p. 150. Because of these two verses, this Book of Revelation has survived the centuries with fewer changes, perhaps, than any other book of the Christian Bible. Because man has feared to change it, and because he did not have the

Master Keys to interpret it, it has remained, perhaps the purest, and some say, the greatest book of the entire Bible. The Gospel of John is undoubtedly the most spiritual book in the Bible, but it too has probably gone through many changes, translations and interpretations. This total recognition by John of Christ's prophetic words is a sublime expression of the purity of heart and a shining example for every human soul!

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen." John instantly replied, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—v.20.

In conclusion, Christ here is re-emphasizing that after giving this Revelation to John in 96 A.D., He will surely come again. The entire Bahá'í World is proclaiming the glad tidings that the same Christ Spirit, which came in Jesus, has returned again in the Tabernacle of Bahá'u'lláh for the New Day, thus fulfilling all the prophetic signs foretold by Christ! John ends his Revelation adding the early Christian benediction. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."—v. 21.

May our hearts sing out in joyous ecstasy these creative words: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."—Isaiah 60:1,2.

"O thou who art waiting, tarry no longer, for He is come. Behold His Tabernacle and His Glory dwelling therein. It is the Ancient Glory, with a new Manifestation."—Bahá'u'lláh.—B.N.E. p. 37.

"Ere long, these fruitless strifes, this ruinous wars shall cease, and the Most Great Peace shall come."—Bahá'u'lláh—B.N.E. p.60.

"I bear witness, O friends! that the favour is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavors in the path of detachment will reveal. In this wise hath the divine favor been fully vouchsafed unto you and unto them that are in heaven and on earth. All praise to God, the Lords of all Worlds!"—Hidden Words, Persian No. 82.

The Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh

It was April 1863 in the great sprawling city of Baghdad, once

the cultural capital of the world. Here Bahá'u'lláh received the edict from the government of Iran that He and His family were to be sent far, far away to a place of unknown destination. While preparing the caravan for the journey, they are camped for twelve days in the Garden of Ridvan, Garden of Roses, just outside the city. When the news of their departure was noised about, they were besieged by people who came to express their respect and love. All the notables of Baghdad, even the governor himself came to honor the departing prisoner.

Roses were heaped so high in the tent of Bahá'u'lláh that the friends could not see over them, and each departing guest left with a rose as a token of His Love.

One night when the moon was full, the air soft and balmy, and the nightingales singing so loudly one could scarcely hear His words, He walked up and down the moon-flecked path. He was a majestic figure with flowing robes and a tall felt head-piece, the sign of Prophethood. His followers were weeping bitterly for they would see Him no more.

Suddenly He stopped, looked down upon them with indescribable majesty and compassion. The Hour had struck. It seemed as though the nightingales ceased their singing, as though all creation stood still, that they might hear His every word. He announced the glad tidings that He was the One Whose coming had been foretold by the Báb, the "Promised One of all the Prophets", the "Risen Christ", the "Glory of God", the "King of Kings"!

As the power and immensity of His Words reached the souls of these sorrowing ones, suddenly their bitter weeping changed to joy, exultant joy! They pressed their lips to His garments, His shoes, even the ground upon which He stood, and the nightingales began their rapturous singing.

A new flood of the Holy Spirit was released in the world! A new direction came into being! A new symphonic rhythm vibrated forth!

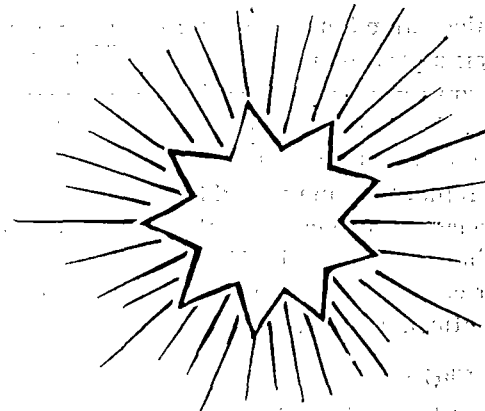
A New Creation Was Born!

May every human soul ere long fervently supplicate in these Prayers of Bahá'u'lláh. "O God teach us Thy Oneness and give us a realization of Thy Unity, that we may see no one save Thee, Thou art the Merciful and the Giver of bounty..."

"O my God!...I yield Thee such thanks as can cause the Nightingale of Glory to pour forth its melody in the highest heaven...I yield Thee such thanks as can fill the heavens and the earth with the signs of Thy transcendent Essence, and assist all created things to enter the Tabernacle of Thy nearness and Thy Presence. I yield Thee such thanks as can make every created thing to be a book that shall speak of Thee, and a scroll that shall unfold Thy praise".—P. M. p. 330.

"The time fore-ordained 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...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 unto His Word, so that ye may, by His grace and mercy, drink your fill from the crystal waters of constancy...This is the Day which the Pen of the Most High hath glorified in all the holy Scriptures...It is incumbent, in this Day, upon every man to place his whole trust in the manifold bounties of God, and arise to disseminate, with the utmost wisdom, the verities of His Cause. Then, and only then, will the whole earth be enveloped with the morning light of His Revelation".—Bahá'u'lláh. B.W.F. pp. 11, 12.

Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds!



THE NINE POINTS OF GLORY

CHAPTER XXIII

PROPHECIES FULFILLED BY THE ADVENT
OF CHRIST

In turning the pages of history we find that there are many prophecies in the Old Testament that have been fulfilled. According to the Talmud, ancient book of Jewish Law, the site where King Solomon's Temple was to be built was a field left by a father to his two sons whom he loved dearly. The two boys plowed, planted, cultivated and harvested together. As each considered his brother's need, each became convinced that his brother should have received more than half of the harvest.

Therefore each, one night, took all the sheaves he could carry from his storehouse and started toward his brother's house. They were surprised to meet each other midway in the field with arms full of sheaves. Each sensing the thought in the mind of the other, the brothers dropped their sheaves and embraced. The Talmud says that on that soil, consecrated by the tears and love of true brotherhood, the foretold Temple of Solomon was erected. Thus that prophecy was fulfilled.

It is not on that same kind of basis that we must build the New World Order; a basis of genuine brotherhood, where, instead of asking, "What do I get?" we ask "Did my brother get what he was entitled to receive?" "What can I do for him?"

There are many prophecies of Solomon, David, Moses and others that were fulfilled during the Old Testament times. There are many prophecies regarding Jesus the Christ foretold in the Old Testament that are fulfilled by New Testament events, which are important for consideration now. The following brief references may inspire further study.

Prophecies about Christ

The Advent of Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies regarding His coming, e.g., His forerunner would be "One

crying in the wilderness".—foretold—Isa. 40:3; fulfilled—John 1:23. "A child born of a virgin";—foretold—Isa. 7:14; fulfilled—Matt. 1:23. Massacre of children by Herod at time of birth of Christ;—foretold—Jer. 31:15; fulfilled—Matt. 2:16-18. The place where the should be born;—foretold—Micah 5:2; fulfilled—Matt. 2:1. The flight into Egypt; foretold—Hosea 11:1; fulfilled—Matt. 2:15. His Mission;—foretold—Isa. 61:1; Num. 24:17-19; fulfilled—Luke 7:22. His special Mission as a "Light to the Gentiles";—foretold—Isa. 49:6-7; fulfilled—Luke 2:32. The miracles He performed;—foretold—Isa. 6:8-10; fulfilled—John 12:37-41. The parables He used;—foretold—Psa. 76:2-3; fulfilled—Matt. 13:35. He was despised, rejected and persecuted by men;—foretold—Psa. 22:7; and Isa. 53:12; fulfilled—Mark 15:28-29. His entrance into Jerusalem sitting on an ass;—foretold—Zech. 9:9; fulfilled—Matt. 21:1-7. His betrayal;—foretold—Zech. 11:12-13—fulfilled—Matt. 26:15 John 13:18-19. His manner of suffering;—foretold—Psa. 22:16 and 69:21; fulfilled—Luke 23:36. A bone of Him shall not be broken;—foretold—Psa. 34:20; fulfilled—John 19:36. His crucifixion;—foretold—Zech. 12:10; fulfilled—John 19:24. He is numbered with transgressors;—foretold—Isa. 53:12; fulfilled—Luke 22:37. The price of His burial;—foretold—Zech. 11:13; fulfilled—Matt. 27:7-9. His resurrection;—foretold—Hosea 6:2; fulfilled—Matt. 28:6-7; His ascension;—foretold—Psa. 110:1; fulfilled—Mark 16:19.

All of these prophetic statements and many more, regarding the coming of Christ have been fulfilled. Therefore those referring to the Promised One to come in this Day, Whom Christ and all the other Prophets foretold, must also most certainly come to pass.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PROMISED ONE
The Second Coming of the Christ Spirit

Does the Bible contain signs which help us to recognize the Promised One? Yes, many. It tells of Christ coming in the Glory of the Father, where the two Manifestations of the latter days will appear, where the teachings will be given, and even the titles by which They shall be known in that Day. For example: Christ clearly foretold, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and there He shall reward every man according to his works."—Matt. 16 : 27. Also—"But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, (Bahá'u'lláh), and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."—Acts. 7: 55. Also "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's and with the holy angels."—Luke 9:26. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."—the same Divine Spirit.—John 14 : 9. "And I will set my throne in Elam."—Jer. 49 : 38. In the Bible, "throne" is often used as the symbol of the "Word of God," or "The Station of Manifestation." So the meaning is that the Word of God, or the promised Manifestation, will appear in Elam. The Báb, who was the Forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh, was born in the city of Shiraz, in that part of Iran which was formerly known as Elam. His proclamation of the coming of the Promised One of the New Day, was made May 23, 1844 in Shiraz. Daniel also refers to the Province of Elam as the place of vision in the latter days.—See Dan. 8 : 2.

In the Gospel of John, in the words of Christ, we read: "But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."—John 15 : 26. "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and show it unto you."—John

16 : 14. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come."—John 16 : 12-13.

In a clear far-reaching statement, Bahá'u'lláh has given both warning and guidance to the Christian World: "Beware, O Concurrence of the Son (i.e. the Christians) ! Cast it not behind you, but hold thereunto. It is better for you than all that which is before you !... Verily, the Spirit of Truth is come, to guide you into all Truth. Verily, He speaketh not from Himself, nay, but rather from the All-Knowing and Wise. He is the One whom the Son hath glorified".—B.N.E. p. 134.

Bahá'u'lláh translated into English means the "Glory of God" and "King of Glory", the title usually given in the Bible to the Manifestation of God for the New Day. Bahá'u'lláh has in Christ's own words "testified of me"—John 15 : 26; "and shall glorify Me."—John 16 : 14, and in His many Books, Bahá'u'lláh has praised and exalted the Divine Station of Christ and explained the essence of His teachings. "Know thou that when the Son of Man yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh capacity was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed in all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee. The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive and resplendent Spirit."—Gl. pp. 85-86.

Christ foretold: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."—John 14 : 26. And again: "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."—John 16 : 7.

Bahá'u'lláh declares, "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...I am the One...Whom the tongue of Isaiah hath extolled, the One with Whose name both the Torah and the Evangel were adorned....The glory of Sinai hath hastened to circle around the Day-Spring of this Revelation, while from the heights of the Kingdom the voice of the Son of God is heard proclaiming: 'Bestir yourselves, ye proud ones of the earth, and hasten towards Him.' Carmel hath in this day hastened in longing adoration to attain His court, whilst from the heart of Zion there cometh the cry: "The promise of all ages is now fulfilled. That which had been announced in the holy writ of God, the Beloved, the Most High, is made manifest!"—W.O.B. pp. 104-105.

The Prophets all foretold the coming of a New Day. Isaiah wrote: "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles and the inhabitants thereof."—Isa. 42 : 10. For behold I create new heavens and a new earth! and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."—Isa. 65 : 17. "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful."—Rev. 21 : 5.

Bahá'u'lláh's own words proclaim: "Soon, will the present Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead...The day is approaching when We will have rolled up the world and all that is therein, and spread out a new Order in its stead...The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this Most Great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System, the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed".—W.O.B. pp. 161-162.

"Know thou of a certainty that the Day Star of Truth hath, in this Day, shed upon the world a radiance, the like of which bygone ages have never witnessed. Let the light of His glory, O people, shine upon you, and be not of the negligent"—Gl. p. 319.

God has spoken through the mouths of His Holy Prophets since the world began, and each One has foretold and given the signs by which man can recognize the Promised One when He comes. Each One successively reveals more of the light of Truth as man unfolds spiritually from infancy to childhood, to youth

and to the age of maturity. Even as Moses gave light according to the infancy of mankind and foretold the coming of His Successor, so Christ gave more of the light of Truth and revealed the signs of the One Who would follow Him. The Light of Revelation shineth in this Day in meridian splendor and Bahá'u'lláh foretells the Ones to come.

When all things are made new, then obviously God speaks through a new name. "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name."—Isa. 62 : 2. "And the Lord shall be king overall the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord and Him name one."—Zech. 14 : 9. Christ said; "Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near; go ye not after them."—Luke 21 : 8.

Bahá'u'lláh is the name chosen, not by any one of the religions of the past, but is the New Name which the mouth of the Lord has Himself revealed, for all peoples over the earth. This new Name unites all peoples, as Christ foretold, into one Fold with one Shepherd.

"All the peoples of the world are awaiting two Manifestations, who must be contemporaneous; all wait for the fulfillment of this promise."—SAQ p. 46.

Moses Maimonides, 1135-1204, founder of Jewish theological law which the Jews have strictly observed throughout the centuries, foretold the coming of the two Messiahs, One announcing the Other, and gave the signs of Their coming. In the Old Testament the Jews have also the promise of the coming of the Lord of Hosts and Elijah, Whom they call Messiah ben Joseph and the Messiah ben David, one heralding the other. In the Gospel the return of Christ and Elijah is promised. All these are fulfilled in the coming of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

In the religion of Muhammad there is the promise of the Mahdi and the Messiah, and it is the same with the Zoroastrians and the other religious systems. Each faith expects the advent to herald the beginning of a new era of human experience, when the world will be judged according to its works, and the Kingdom of God will become established upon the earth with peace and equity for all mankind.

"And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way

of the gate whose prospect is toward the east...And, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house."—Ezek, 43:4-5. All of the prophecies are unanimous in declaring that the Glory of the Lord shall come to the Holy Land from the East. The Glory of the Lord, Bahá'u'lláh, was born in Iran, was heralded by the Báb, meaning the Gate, or Door to the New Age. Bahá'u'lláh was taken as a life prisoner to Mt. Carmel in the Holy Land: thus again is prophecy fulfilled today.

Isaiah foretold the place of His coming. "The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God."—Isa. 35:1-2. "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations."—Isa. 25:7.

A most interesting prophecy of place also occurs in Micah 7:12; "In that day also He shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain."—See map following last page.

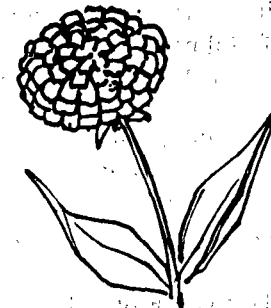
Bahá'u'lláh, the great New World Educator, was born in Tíhran, the capital city of Iran, which is located in a part of the ancient Assyrian Empire.

Not by any effort on His part to fulfill prophecy, but as a prisoner of the government, Bahá'u'lláh was taken under guard from the fortified city of Constantinople to Adrianople, and finally to the fortress of Akka, from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and from Sar-Galu mountain in Kurdistan to Mount Carmel, and gave His teachings for the Day of Unity and Peace. In this tortuous journey the ancient prophecy recorded by Micah and other Prophets was quite literally fulfilled. "Out of prison He shall come, to reign; whereas also he that is born in the kingdom becometh poor."—Eccl. 4:14. He was banished to the solitary desert place of the prison of Akka in Palestine. He gave His Teachings in the valley of Sharon and upon Mount Carmel, so that those places quite literally saw the Glory of the Lord through His Manifestation, just as Isaiah had promised.—See map following last page.

In the Book of Revelation we read of One riding on a white horse Whose name is "called the Word of God." "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."—Rev. 19:13, 16.

After giving all the proofs of His station, Bahá'u'lláh, the Spirit of Truth, declared in these soul-stirring words: "He Who is the King of Kings hath appeared, arrayed in His most wondrous glory, and is summoning you unto Himself, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Take heed lest pride deter you from recognizing the Source of Revelation, lest the things of this word shut you out as by a veil from Him Who is the Creator of heaven. Arise, and serve Him Who is the Desire of all nations, Who hath created you through a word from Him, and ordained you to be, for all time, the emblems of His sovereignty."—Gl. pp. 211-212.

The foregoing are a few of the convincing signs and evidences that are completed. The argument is now fulfilled, the proof manifest and evidence established. May we now, sincerely and prayerfully, study and meditate on the history of the Bahá'í Faith as related to this remarkable divine communication from Christ—"The Book of Revelation", with the Keys given by Bahá'u'lláh, the Promised One.



THE BLOSSOM OF MATURITY

CHAPTER XXV

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Civilizations rise and fall; crises come and go; a cycle begins, rises to its culmination and ends, and another cycle begins. The great turning points in history mark the decline of one social order and the rise of the new one. Few will doubt that we are experiencing such a crisis today. And how few realize that this world shaking crisis means not only the rolling up of an old order and the birth of a new one, but also the dawning of a new cycle with new laws, new principles, new patterns and a nobler way of life. It is a new creation!

History shows that these great cyclic steps forward are the result of a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit through one of the Chosen Divine Channels or Messengers of God. Sometimes They are called the Divine Educators or Holy Prophets Who have come as Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ and Muhammad, to lift mankind a step higher in the Path toward God.

The Bahá'í world community is proclaiming the Glad Tidings that the Holy Spirit is released in this Day through Bahá'u'lláh, "the Promised One", Who has brought the Word of God and Whose universal principles and quickening power have already become established in human consciousness. We begin to see the brotherhood of man in terms of social and spiritual reality. We begin to envision the fulfillment of the glorious words of Christ that the Golden Age of Peace and Unity will soon come upon the earth.

Slowly the veil lifts from the future. Along whatever road men may look out, they will see before them some guiding truth, some leading principle, some basic law, which Bahá'u'lláh revealed long ago and which is part of the thinking and of the spirit of this age.

On May 23, 1844, a radiant youth of Shiraz, Persia, known as the Báb meaning "The Door of the Spirit" proclaimed His Mis-

sion as heralding the coming of a Divine Educator Who would quicken the souls, illumine the minds, unify the consciousness, and remold the customs of mankind. After six years of heroic effort, steadfastness and ardent teaching, the result of which rent the Muslim World in twain, this radiant Comet of Light, the Prophet, the Báb, became a victim of fanatical persecution and was publicly martyred in Tabriz on July 9, 1850.

Bahá'u'lláh, meaning the "Glory or Splendor of God", Whom the Báb foretold, then unveiled Himself, and gave the Glad Tidings to the entire world that the Holy Spirit had again come to revivify humanity in its hour of need, that a new and greater cycle had begun, that the Day foretold by Christ and all the Prophets—the Age of Brotherhood, and the Knowledge of God and the Day of Peace had dawned. He summoned all people of the world to drink from the spiritual fountain of Everlasting Truth, and to unite, to build a better world.

Desperate forces of reaction and hatred gathered at once about the Pure One, His family and His little band of faithful followers. Always the persecutions begin when the Prophet of God states His Mission, which is ever for the physical, mental and spiritual uplift of all mankind.

In that age of frightening darkness and fanaticism in Persia, Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in the Black Pit of Tihiran. He and many of His followers were stripped of their property and rights, and tortured. He was exiled to Baghdad, Constantinople, Adrianople, and at last, as the supreme infliction, in 1868, to the Most Great Prison in Akka. This was historically a despicable and foul penal city, the most desolate in the world, located across the bay from Mt. Carmel in the Holy Land.—See Map following last page.

Voluntarily sharing these ordeals from early childhood, in order to be of service to His beloved Father, was the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, meaning "Servant of the Glory". His confinement, lasting 40 years, was terminated in 1908 by the collapse of the Turkish Empire. Then a more humanitarian regime was initiated by the Young Turks under Kamal Pasha and 'Abdu'l-Bahá was set free.

Bahá'u'lláh, ascended in 1892 after appointing, in His last Will and Testament, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as His authorized interpreter and Center of His Covenant. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, through His great love, purity of heart, His unfailing wisdom and tireless effort, pro-

claimed the Word of God throughout Europe and America. He passed on in 1921.

In 'Abdu'l-Bahá's last Will and Testament He appointed Shoghi Effendi, His first grandson, to maintain the pristine purity of the Message, as the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. This divinely chosen young man, in collaboration with the faithful Bahá'is, has spread the unity and integrity of the Faith throughout the world. In this brief time it has now become firmly established, among all races, in most of the countries, islands, and dependencies on the planet.

During the 40 years of cruel oppression unequalled in the annals of religious history, Bahá'u'lláh wrote the Message of God with His Own Pen as no Prophet before has ever done. These Writings constitute as much as a library of books on all phases of life and are unprecedented in human history.

In these authoritative and authentic Writings are the New Principles necessary for unfolding the New World Order.

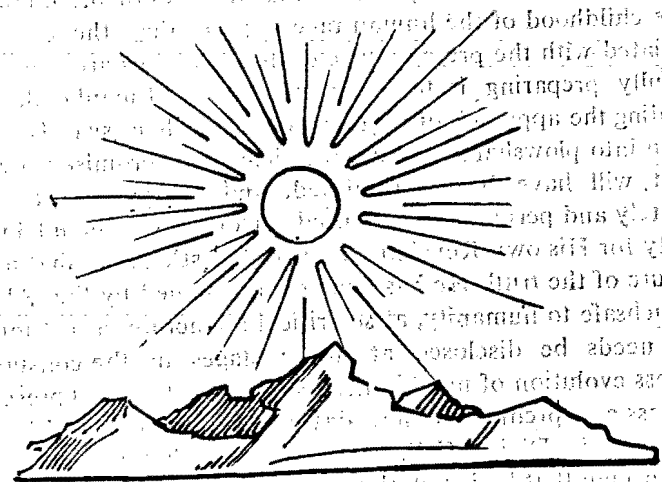
1. The Oneness of Mankind.
2. The Independent Investigation of Truth.
3. The Foundation of all Religions is One.
4. Religion *must* be the cause of Unity.
5. Religion must be in accord with Science and Reason.
6. Equality between men and women.
7. Prejudice of all kinds must be forgotten.
8. Universal Peace.
9. Universal Education.
10. A Spiritual Solution to the Economic Problem.
11. One Universal Language.
12. An International Tribunal.

The Bahá'í Faith, the Bahá'is believe, is the call to a new age of human maturity. An age of Justice, Unity, Hope and Peace; foretold by Christ and all the Prophets before Him. The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh are the breaths of Holy Spirit that create men anew. They now are building an advancing world civilization, a new creation and a nobler and loftier way of life, for all mankind.

Bahá'u'lláh states it in this way: "This is the Day in which the testimony of the Lord hath been fulfilled, the Day in which the Word of God hath been made manifest, and His evidence firmly established. His voice is calling you unto that which

shall profit you, and enjoineeth you to observe that which shall draw you nigh unto God, the Lord of Revelation." —The Kitab-i-Iqan.

"Blessed are the people of Bahá! God beareth Me witness! They are the solace of the eye of creation, through them the universes have been adorned, and the Preserved Tablet embellished. They are the ones that sailed on the ark of complete independence with their faces set toward the Day-Spring of Beauty. Through their light the heavens have been adorned, and the faces of those that have drawn nigh unto Him made to shine." —A.D.J. p. 64.



THE SUNBURST OF KNOWLEDGE

HISTORIC COMMENTARY

The Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith Shoghi Effendi made this remarkable statement as to the significance of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

"The fundamental principle enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh is that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that Divine Revelation is a continuous and progressive process, that all the great religions of the world are divine in origin, that their basic principles are in complete harmony, that their aims and purposes are one and the same, that their teachings are but facets of one truth, that their doctrines, and that their missions represent successive stages in the spiritual evolution of human society.

"His mission is to proclaim that the ages of the infancy and of the childhood of the human race is past, that the convulsions associated with the present stage of its adolescence are slowly and painfully preparing it to attain the stage of manhood, and are heralding the approach of that Age of Ages when swords will be beaten into plowshares, when the Kingdom promised by Jesus Christ will have been established, and the peace of the planet definitely and permanently ensured. Nor does Bahá'u'lláh claim finality for His own Revelation, but rather stipulates that a fuller measure of the truth He has been commissioned by the Almighty to vouchsafe to humanity, at so critical a juncture in its fortunes, must needs be disclosed at future stages in the constant and limitless evolution of mankind...It shows the depths of present day darkness and predicts the new dawn to a humanity which would respond to the Divine Call. But above all, it forcefully reminds modern man that he is not alone in the universe, that his existence is not meaningless, that his destiny is significant, and that the way to God is once again open to him." —See P.D.C.

CONNECTED TOPICAL REFERENCES

CHAPTER XXVI

CONNECTED TOPICAL REFERENCES

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá Beloved son of Bahá'u'lláh, means "Servant of the Glory"; Center of His Covenant, "occupant of an office without peer or equal in the entire field of religious history".—G.P.B. p. 245.
- 'Abdu'l-Aziz Sultan of Turkey, ruled from 1861-1876, and embodied the concentrated power vested in the Sultanate and Caliphate; "author of calamities heaped upon Bahá'u'lláh".—G.P.B. p. 225.
- 'Abdu'l-Hamid II. Successor of 'Abdu'l-Aziz, ruled 1876-1909, called "The Great Assassin", responsible for forty years imprisonment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and many other horrors.
- Abraham A Prophet born in Ur of Chaldea and founder of the Jewish nation. Called "Friend of God", "Father of a Multitude", Ancestor of Christ, Moses, and Muhammad and also of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Adam The Prophet of God, beginning a 6,000 year cycle ending with the Báb.
- Adamic Cycle The cycle of history beginning with Adam, and of city building.
- A.H. Anno Hejirae, meaning the year of the Hejira, dating the Muhammadan Dispensation from Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D.
- 'Akka The ancient city of the Most Great Prison in Palestine in which Bahá'u'lláh was incarcerated.
- 'Ali Rightful successor of Muhammad, the first Imam, husband of Fatimih, Muhammad's daughter. The one Christ referred to as the "Witness", called "the Lion of God", and "the Lord of Saintship".—B.N.E. 20.
- Allah-u-Abhá The word of greeting in the Bahá'í World, meaning: God is All Glorious! one form of the Greatest Name.

Amir-Nizam, Grand Vizier for the Shah of Persia. He was responsible for the martyrdom of The Báb. D.B. p. 526.

Báb, The The Báb was born in Shiraz, Iran, October 20, 1819, and was martyred on July 9, 1850, in Tabriz, Iran. The word meaning "Gate" or "Door" expresses the Mission of the Báb as the "Gate of the Spirit". The Prophet-Herald of Bahá'u'lláh, Whom "posterity will recognize as standing at the confluence of two universal, prophetic cycles, the Adamic...and the Bahá'í."—G.P.B. p. 54. Spoken of as "The Primal Point". The Bábí Dispensation began May 23, 1844 A.D. or 1260 A.H., two hours and eleven minutes after sunset, and ended with the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh April 21 to May 2, 1863.

Baghdad The capital of Iraq, where Bahá'u'lláh declared His Mission to the world. He called it the City of God, the abode of peace.—G.P.B. p. 110.

Bahá Splendor or Glory of God. The Greatest Name expressed also as Bahá—a word of reverence, greatness and blessing. Name of the first Bahá'í month.

Bahá'í Light, glory of, or pertaining to or follower of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Cycle, which began March 21, 1844 and is destined to last for 500,000 years.

Bahá'u'lláh "The Glory of God", "The Lord of Hosts", "The Word of God", "King of Kings", spiritual titles of the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith Who has born in Tihiran, Persia, November 12, 1817. "The Supreme Manifestation of God and the Day Spring of His Most Divine Essence".—B.A. p. 11.

Bahji "The Place of Delight", where the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh is located, the Most Great Place of Pilgrimage.

Bayan The Book of Laws of the Báb in which He fixes the date of the Promised Revelation.—G.P.B. p. 28. The Báb is called the "Primal Point".

Black Stone The Holy Shrine of Muslim pilgrimage in Mecca, sacred to all Muslims.

Caliph "Self-styled" Vicar of the Prophet of Islam. —P.D.C. p. 99. The Founders of the Caliphate, "Usurped the authority of the lawful successors" of Muhammad.—W.O.B. p. 178. The

Caliphate is merely the outward and visible Defender of the Faith while the Imam of the Shi'ites is the divinely ordained successor of the Prophet. This constitutes the great division in Islam. Also, Khalifah or Khalif.

Fatimih The beautiful daughter of Muhammad, wife of 'Ali, ancestor of the Báb and the twelve Imams, considered to be one of the five perfect women of unsurpassed excellence. At the heart of every Religious System there is a perfect woman, such as, Sarah (Abraham), Asiyih (Moses), Maryah (Buddha), The Virgin Mary (Christ), Fatimih (Muhammad), Tahirih (The Báb), and Bahiyih Khanum (Bahá'u'lláh). —G.P.B. p. 347.

Hijaz The territory of Southwestern Arabia, also the Arabic language.

Hijra The time of the escape of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina, and the beginning of the Muslim era, in 622 A.D. (See A.H.), also spelled Hijrat or Hegira.

Imam "The divinely ordained successor of the Prophet, Muhammad, one endowed with all perfections and spiritual gifts.... Whose decision is absolute and final, Whose wisdom is superhuman, and Whose words are authoritative."—Browne Tr. Narr. p. 296. The twelve Imams descending in line from Fatimih, daughter of Muhammad, provide the genealogical line from which the Báb was born. "Imam" means one who stands before, or who is followed.

Iraq The territory in southwest Asia, of which Baghdad is the Capital, the city on the outskirts of which Bahá'u'lláh made The Declaration of His Prophethood to the world.

Ishqabad City in Russia, southeast of the Caspian Sea, where the first Bahá'í House of Worship was built, initiated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in 1902, and called the Mother Temple of the East. —G.P.B. p. 300.

Iran Ancient and modern name for Persia, meaning excellent and the land of the Aryans.

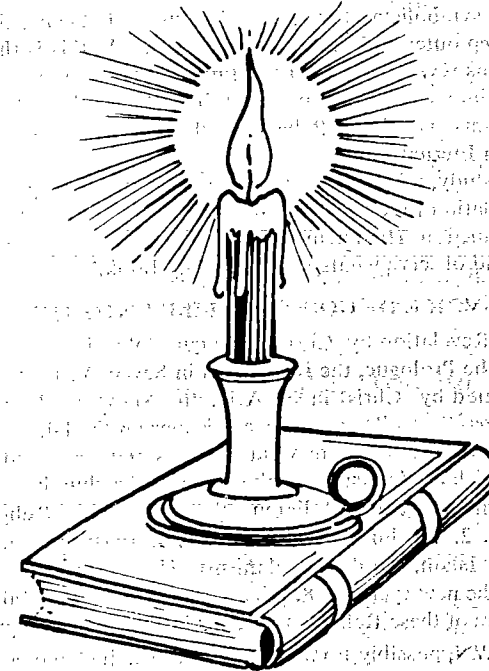
- Islam** This word identifies the religion founded by Muhammad and the history, government, and culture of the people, means to be at perfect peace and "striving after righteousness." Also means Spirit of Islam.
- Ishmael** The first son of Abraham, believed by the Muslims to be the first-born offered in sacrifice.
- Katurah** Third wife of Abraham, the command of God, from whom Bahá'u'lláh descended.
- Kitab-i-Aqdas** The Most Holy Book of Bahá'u'lláh, the charter of His World Order, the chief repository of His laws... P.D.C. p.24. Revealed in 1873 in 'Akka.
- Kitab-i-Iqan** Called "The Book of Certitude". . . . of unsurpassed pre-eminence among the Writings of the author of the Bahá'í Revelation. Revealed in 1862, in fulfillment of the Báb's prophecy that the Promised One would complete the unfinished Bayan.—G.P.B. p. 138.
- Kull-i-Shay** A period in the new Bahá'í calendar comprising 19 Vahids, each of 19 years. We are living in the first Kull-i-Shay, which will end in 361=19X19 years. The expression signifies, "all things".
- Letters of the Living** The first 18 disciples of the Báb who recognised Him as the result of meditation and prayer, and the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh the 19th and 20th Letters. D.B. p. xvii.
- Maiden** This is the symbol of the Holy Spirit speaking, in the Bahá'í Dispensation, by the celestial Maiden, as in the Zoroastrian the symbol was the Sacred Fire; the Mosaic, the Burning Bush; the Christian, the Dove; the Muhammadan, the angel Gabriel; the Bahá'í, the Celestial Maiden, which is a higher symbol.
- Mashriqu'l-Adhkár** The Bahá'í House of Worship and surrounding educational and cultural institutions to be erected in many localities in the future. "Symbol and precursor of a future civilization."—G.P.B. p. 350. "Literally Dawning Place of the Mention of God."

- Muhammad** The Prophet of God, the Founder of Islam and Revealer of the Quran, the "Seal of the Prophets". Bahá'u'lláh states, "The designation 'Seal of the Prophets' fully revealeth its (this Day's) high station. The Prophetic Cycle hath verily ended. The Eternal Truth has now come."—W.O.B. p. 167.
- Mulla** A priest, theologian or judge, in Islam.
- Mulla-Husayn** The first to proclaim his belief in the Báb, the Moon reflecting the Light of the Báb.
- Nasiri'd-Din Shah** Notorious and fanatical ruler of Persia from 1848 to 1896. Mightiest official of Shi'ah Islam. Called by Bahá'u'lláh "Prince of Oppressors".—G.P.B. p. 197.
- Navvab** The saintly wife of Bahá'u'lláh whose offspring include 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Greatest Holy Leaf and the Purest Branch. She was entitled by Him, "The Most Exalted Leaf", and "His perpetual consort in all the worlds of God."—G.P.B. p. 108. See 54th Chapter of Isaiah.
- Naw-Ruz** Bahá'í New Year's Day, on March 21, which is celebrated at the vernal equinox and closes the Nineteen-day Fast throughout the Bahá'í World.
- Paran** A mountain in the wilderness in Trans-Jordania. Bible references to Mt. Paran refer to the Muhammadan Dispensation.
- Qa'im** The promised Qa'im in the Qur'an refers to the Báb.
- Qiblih** Cubelike stone building at Mecca, containing the Sacred Black Stone. The point of adoration toward which the faithful turn in prayer, as Mecca, in the Muslim World, and the Most Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, at Bahji, in Israel, the "Qiblih of the Bahá'í World."—G.P.B. p. 277. (also Kabih).
- Qur'an** The Sacred Book of Muhammad, which the Muslims are often required to memorize.
- Ridvan** The name of the Garden in Baghdad where Bahá'u'lláh made the Declaration of His Mission in 1863, during a

twelve day period, beginning on April 21st, and celebrated annually. Also the Garden in Haifa, Israel, where Bahá'u'lláh stayed at times.

- Sarah** First wife and maternal aunt of Abraham, ancestor of Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and Christ.
- Shah** King or ruler especially of Persia.
- Shah-Bahram** The Promised One of the Zoroastrians, fulfilled by the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Shoghi Effendi Rabbani** Eldest grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, divinely appointed Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, "Sign of God upon the earth". He was the authorized interpreter of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings.
- Shi'ah, Shi'ih, or Shi'ite** The division of Islam that recognizes the divine right of successorship of the twelve Imams through the hereditary line of 'Ali.
- Sunni, Sunite** The division of Islam that does not recognize the Divine Right of Successorship, but believes the leaders or Caliphs must be elected from a member of the Prophet's tribe.
- Tahirih** One of the Eighteen Letters of the Living of the Báb, and the only woman disciple of any of the Prophets of God; martyred in 1852.—D.B. p. 628.
- Tihran** Birthplace of Bahá'u'lláh and Capital of Persia. Scene of many horrible Bábí and Bahá'í martyrdoms.
- Universal House of Justice** The universal governmental authority to which eventually all the nations will turn.
- Ulama** Learned doctors of Muslim law.
- Vahid** A period of 19 years, each year composed of 19 months, each of 19 days, in the Bábí calendar. Vahid symbolizes the unity of God.
- Ya Bahá'u'l-Abhá** "O my Lord, the Most-Glorious!" Supplication to God. Another expression of the Greatest Name.

- Yazdigird III** Ancestor of Bahá'u'lláh and the last King of the Sassaniyan Dynasty.
- Zoroaster** Prophet of God in ancient Iran. Founder of Zoroastrianism, Who arose in a later era than Moses in Egypt. Ancestor of Bahá'u'lláh.



THE WORD OF FULFILLMENT

CHAPTER XXVII

INDEX SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION
FOR STUDY

'Abdu'l-Bahá writes regarding this book; "Consequently be engaged in perusing St. John's Revelation; all these signs are spoken of in that vision. Thou shalt soon behold things still greater than this."—T.A.B. p. 286.

'Abdu'l-Bahá also said (P.U.P. p. 455), that these signs are not to be taken literally, but with symbolic and spiritual meanings. These are the mysteries of God and have deep outer and inner significances. As this is the Day of Fulfillment of the signs revealed by Christ, fulfilled in the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, it is exceedingly important to study carefully the new Keys to the Book of Revelation, and thus, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "become attracted to the Kingdom of God and attain Eternal Life."

To facilitate study, a brief Index summary of the twenty-two chapters of the Book of Revelation follows. Pray God that the spiritual truths and symbolic warnings enshrined in His Divine Revelation may enable the reader to "gaze on Thy Beauty and observe whatsoever is in Thy Book."

Chapter 1. THE VOICE OF GOD—ONE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF MAN

The Book of Revelation by Christ, through John, is divided into three general sections; the Prologue, the Revelation in Seven Visions, and the Epilogue. It was revealed by Christ in 96 A.D. "to show the things which must shortly come to pass."—while John was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos.

John is commanded to write what he sees and hears and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia. In the visions, the churches symbolize the seven existing divinely revealed Religious Systems. These Religious Systems are: 1. Sabeanism. 2. Hinduism. 3. Judaism. 4. Zoroastrianism. 5. Buddhism. 6. Christianity. 7. Islam. (Muhammadanism). These are still extant in the old cycle, and in the new cycle are 8. The Bábi Faith. 9. The Bahá'í Faith.

The Revelators of these Religious Systems in their chronological order are:

1. UNKNOWN, possibly Enoch according to some Sabians.
2. KRISHNA, appeared in India between 2,000 and 3,000 B.C.
3. MOSES, advent was in Egypt about 1330 B.C.
4. ZOROASTER, came in Iran between 1,000 and 500 B.C.
5. BUDDHA, was born in India about 500 B.C.
6. CHRIST, the birth of Christ was between 4 B.C. and 1 A.D.
7. MUHAMMAD, was born in Arabia about 570 A.D.
8. THE BAB, born in Shiraz, Persia, October 20, 1819.
9. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, born in Tihran, Iran, November 12, 1817.

The Declaration of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh was in Baghdad, Iraq, April 1863.

Christ in the first chapter reveals that "one like unto the Son of Man", which is Bahá'u'lláh, "stands amid the seven golden candlesticks"—(the seven Religious Systems). He holds the "seven stars in His right hand" upraising and uniting their Truth and Light into the New Cycle.

Chapter II. THE VISION BRIGHTENS—MESSAGE TO THE FOUR
CHURCHES

The Messages are addressed to the first four of the seven churches and each one is divided into seven parts.

1. The Salutation to the church stating who is speaking.
2. Commendation of the church for the good it has done.
3. Condemnation of the church for the evil that it has permitted.
4. Punishment for that for which it is condemned.
5. Reward for that for which it is commended.
6. A Promise is given to each church. Study the Promises as they are the most important and relate to this Day.
7. Refrain near the end of each message or little poem, is "He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches."

Chapter III. THE NEW NAME—MESSAGE TO CHRISTIANITY

Philadelphia or Christianity is the church of Brotherly Love. Though it is commended for many great and excellent achievements, it is condemned "for thou hast a little strength." The more a thing is divided the less its strength. "In union there is strength." The last church is condemned for being "luke warm, neither hot nor cold." Study the history of each church in relation to the Commendation, the Condemnation, the One Who is speaking and the Promise when it repents.

Chapter IV. THE GLORIOUS THRONE—THE SHINING RAINBOW

The Throne, the station of Manifestation and the One sitting upon it are described and the four and twenty elders, the disciples of the Promised One and the four creatures who proclaim Him, are pictured. This chapter is full of important significances.

Chapter V. THE MIGHTY BOOK SEALED WITH SEVEN SEALS

The little Book sealed with the seven seals, is the Message of God revealed by all the seven Revelators. It is the Word of God, not what man has said about them and built into conflicting creeds and theologies. Christ revealed that the "Lion of Judah, the Root of David," Who is the Promised One of this Day had the sealed book and gave it with His right hand to the Lamb ordained for slaughter from the foundation of the world. Christ was the first Lamb and the Báb is the Second Lamb to Whom, Bahá'u'lláh gave the book to open. Multitudes sang "Worthy is the Lamb to take the book and open the seal thereof." Before this time no one on earth nor in heaven had been able to take the book nor open the seals thereof.

Chapter VI. THE LAMB—OPENING THE SEVEN SEALS

Six of the seals are opened by the second Lamb, the Báb and historical events in the unrolling scroll of history are established. The seventh seal however remains unopened until after a special, soul-stirring event occurs. This spirit-searching event relates to every soul upon this planet.

Chapter VII. SEAL OF THE LIVING GOD—SEALING 144,000 OF THE SERVANTS

The four angels are commanded to hold back the winds that were to destroy everything upon the earth until the servants are sealed in their foreheads. One hundred and forty-four thousand of those who had gained the light of the "unified or nine consciousness", in recognition of the Divine station and Mission of all the Revelators of God, symbolically were sealed. This is a very important chapter and should be carefully studied, that a gleam of this light may brighten each soul, that he may receive the seal of the "living God".

Chapter VIII. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS—THE TWELVE IMAMS

The seventh seal is opened and seven angels are each given a trumpet to sound. Four angels blow the trumpet of awesome warning. They are the first four holy Imams. But the people heed them not and great persecutions follow. The third part of the waters, the World of God which giveth life, "became wormwood, and many died of the waters because they were made bitter." They drank not of the pure truth but partook of the twisted teachings, and woe followed. Christ unrolling the great scroll of history pictures the distress of those days when man follows the ideas of human origin rather than the untarnished Word of God.

Chapter IX. THE SEVEN ANGELS—LOCUSTS LIKE SCORPIONS

Three other holy Imams sounded the trumpet of warning. Hordes of people like locusts that are given the power of scorpions persecute the innocent and defenseless people by means of the "beast". The Bani-Umayya, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Islam, destroyed the divine laws of Muhammad, and substituted human rituals and forms, during one hundred and fifty years of most terrible martyrdoms in all Islamic history. Christ foretold that this would come to pass before the dawn of the New Day. Study Islamic history and teachings, to understand that the predictions of Christ were fulfilled.

Chapter X. THE LITTLE BOOK OPENED—A NEW DIMENSION OF TIME

The mighty angel stands with the book open in His right hand, the hand of power and proclaims "there shall be time no more." This is a cyclic change, with a new calender, a new rythm. It was on May 23, 1844 that the Báb raised His hand to heaven and made the astounding Declaration that the cycle had ended, a New Day had dawned and that He was the Prophet-Herald of One greater than Himself, Who would be made manifest and Who would be the Originator of a New Universal Cycle with a new direction and a new rythm.

Chapter XI. THE TWO WITNESSES—FOUR AND TWENTY ELDERS

Power is given unto the two witnesses who will prophecy for one thousand two hundred and three score years, 1260 years, clothed in sackcloth. This is during the complete Muhammadan Dispensation. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said that the two witnesses are Muhammad, the Messenger of God and 'Ali, son of Talib. Muhammad was the "sun" of His Dispensation and 'Ali was the "moon" reflecting His light, being the first to proclaim the station of Muhammad. These two witnesses brought the Law of God to the wild tribes of Arabia in such a way that they reached the highest degree of knowledge known in those days and their fame became world wide. The beast was the Bani-Umayya which destroyed the love of God in the spiritual life of the people and left only a lifeless form. Christ foretold the coming of the Divine Morning Star after the 1260 years, the Báb, Who brought Light into all the darkness and deadness. The appalling martyrdom of the Báb is pictured.

Chapter XII. THE WOMAN—THE GREAT RED DRAGON

A woman appeared with the sun and moon under her feet and twelve stars in her crown, and "she brought forth a man child." The woman is the Law of God, revealed by Muhammad, which fell into greatest difficulties until through Fatimih, the daughter of Muhammad, and the twelve Imams, the Báb appeared, born of the lineal line of Muhammad. He was born of the Law of Muhammad, nurtured by that Law, and became manifest on earth 1260 years after that law was promulgated, thus fulfilling the prophecies of both Christ and Muhammad, regarding the time, times and half a time. The great red dragon is the ecclesiastical heirarchy of the Bani-Umayya which persecuted the Law of God as represented by the Woman and her seed. This continued with distress, fear and horror.

Chapter XIII. TWO STRANGE BEASTS—THE LETTERS OF THE LIVING

The civilization of Islam rose to a great height, the envy of the known world, but the great red dragon gave his power to the beast who was like a leopard, and to the beast who looked like a lamb. These held sway over ten countries of the world, ruling them without the Law of God but by ecclesiastical power. Mu'aviyyih was, the sixth Caliph and first of the corrupt line of Umayyad rulers, who seized the Caliphate from Hasan, the son of Muhammad, by force and deception, and appointed his dissolute, evil-minded, treacherous son, Yazid to succeed him. It was Mu'aviyyih who desecrated the Shrine of the birth-place of Muhammad in Mecca and ordered the sacking of Medina, the burial place of the Prophet in 666 A.D. and tried to make Damascus the Kaaba of the Moslem world. "The number of the beast was 666!"

Chapter XIV. THE ANGELS AND THE SICKLES—THE TIME OF HARVEST

The Lamb stood on Mt. Zion with the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had the Father's name in their foreheads. Four angels prepare their sickles to reap for the harvest is ripe. The "new song" is the new Revelation

which no one can sing save those who know it. The angels mentioned here, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, are the spiritual and merciful powers sent to warn and guide mankind. Christ paints a picture of the harvest time of the latter days, when the angles would thrust in their sickles to reap. The sixth angel is the Báb and the seventh Angel on the Throne, Bahá'u'lláh.

Chapter XV. THE SEA OF GLASS MINGLED WITH FIRE — SEVEN GOLDEN VIALS

The angels are given vials containing the seven last plagues. These are the symbols of the punishments that come to us when we disobey, individually, collectively or universally the Laws of God. Being "golden vials" they signify the spiritual nature of the "plagues to cleanse the world." The "Sea of glass" is the sea of Truth revealed in this Day. Each Prophet brought Truth according to the capacity of mankind, some drops, some small streams. Christ a "River". In this Day a "Sea" or "Ocean" of Truth upon which those stand who have been purified with the fire of tests and have the Father's name in their foreheads.

Chapter XVI. ARMAGEDDON — THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE

The seven angels poured out their vials upon the earth, the sea, the fountains of waters, upon the sun, the seat of the beast, the Euphrates and then the Battle of Armageddon took place from which no one could escape. Humanity and the earth were cleansed, by staggering tests, fire, floods, storms, and the great earthquake. Then the seventh angel poured out his vial in the air, and "great Babylon came in remembrance before God."

Chapter XVII. THE SIREN — BABYLON THE GREAT

The woman in purple and scarlet — the beautiful siren, deceived the people, the rulers of the nations and the inhabitants thereof, even those before the altars. On her forehead is her name written "MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." The image of the beast continues. Bahá'u'lláh warned a century ago, "the signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order is lamentably defective." —W. O. B. p. 162. "The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this New World Order." G1. p. 136.

Chapter XVIII. NO MORE AT ALL — THE EARTH SHALL SHINE WITH HIS GLORY

This is shocking picture of the destruction of the great Babylon and of the weeping and wailing of the merchants. Evolution alone is not enough to bring about the great changes that must come to the world to prepare for the magnificent and glorious world ahead. It can be brought about only by means of sudden, violent, electrifying forces. Christ pictures this as a mighty angel casting a great mill-stone with violence into the sea, and with a great splash, it shall be found no more at all. Study well this lesson.

Chapter XIX. THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD — KING OF KINGS — LORD OF LORDS

This chapter is a prophetic climactic peak to which the entire Bible mounts; in fact the prophecies of all the Bibles of the Religious Systems of the world find fulfillment. The marriage supper of the Lamb is stirringly told, and blessed is he that is called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The most soul-thrilling picture is the heavens opening and a white horse riding forth and He that sat on him was clothed in white garments of "spiritual life force". On his head are many crowns of divine authority. His eyes are penetrating and purifying fire and His name is called The Word of God, KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS! And armies follow Him on white horses, clothed in white linen, white and clean. Millions today are following the WORD OF GOD, KING OF KINGS, the LAW OF GOD, building the foundation for the NEW JERUSALEM IN THE GOLDEN AGE.

He is the Messiah the Christians are awaiting. Moses Maimonedes, founder of the Jewish law which Jews have strictly observed throughout the centuries, foretold the coming of two Messiahs, the LORD OF HOSTS and ELIJAH, whom they call MESSIAH ben JOSEPH and MESSIAH ben DAVID, one heralding the other. What a Day of fulfillment in which to be living and serving His Glory! Study it well!

Chapter XX. A NEW DIMENSION—THE THOUSAND YEARS

Satan is bound for a thousand years and the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. Satan is called by several names, the dragon, the old serpent, the devil, the deceiver, the evil spirit. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that the cycle of Bahá'u'lláh would last for 500,000 years and His Dispensation for 1,000 years, that His Cause is very great, its powers are growing, its signs are dazzling, that it shall continue in elevation, exultation, growth, promulgation and promotion until it shall reach the apex of its glory in 1,000 years. No one of major nor minor station of Prophethood will appear in less than a thousand years and Satan shall be buried in oblivion. The Book of Life is opened and each soul is judged by the record written therein of the words, thoughts, deeds and motives of each human soul. Bahá'u'lláh writes "Think not that the deeds ye have committed have been blotted from my sight. By My Beauty! All your doings hath My Pen graven with open characters upon Tablets of chrysolite." —G1. p. 210. Examine carefully thy record for pointless activities.

Chapter XXI. THE CITY OF GOD — THE TWELVE FOUNDATION STONES

The magnificent city with its streets of gold and the twelve stately foundation stones upon which the majestic edifice of peace, justice, security and unity shall be erected, is described. Nothing that maketh an abomination nor a lie, nor those that are not written in the Book of Life can enter the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. The Universal House of Justice will establish the Justice needed for the New World Order. Praise and thanksgiving for the divine instrument to maintain the World Order for all peoples!

Chapter XXII. POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH

The pure water, the river of life, clear as crystal proceeding out of the Throne and the Lamb is the new Revelation with the laws, principles and ocean of Truth for the New Age, poured forth through the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh. The Power of the Holy Spirit hath poured forth the radiating Light of Revelation in meridian splendor, in this Day. The Holy Spirit spoke through the Blessed Christ for three years of oral Teachings 2,000 years ago; and through the dictated Message of the Messenger of God, Muhammad, from 622 to 632 A.D. So, in this Day, the Spirit has spoken through the shining Báb for six years, during which He revealed 500,000 written verses; and through the Most Glorious One, Bahá'u'lláh, Who during 40 years, revealed an entire library of His recorded, creative Revelation. After Him, the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi were ordained, in this Day, to keep the Word of God pure and untarnished in the midst of human suppositions.

All praise be to God for 113 years of unveiled Light for the guidance of mankind in the great, new cycle!

At long last man has entered "the Seventh Day, the Creational Day of God." This is the Day in which Peace and Progress shall be established in the "New Heaven and the New Earth." Christ said that it is the Great Day of Decision, "he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." —v. 11. Christ was born of the Holy Spirit. He was raised up by the Holy Spirit. He was guided by the Holy Spirit. He is the embodiment of the Holy Spirit. He is the Quickening Spirit that brings life to human souls. The same Quickening Holy Spirit has returned in Bahá'u'lláh to bring life, not only to an ailing humanity and a tottering civilization but to bring forth a New World Order, a new Rhythm and a new Creation! Let us explore it carefully, transform our attitudes and reflect in our lives the GLORY OF GOD and help to bring the KINGDOM OF GOD UPON THE EARTH!

WHAT CAN I DO? HERE AM I! O! LORD!

SEND ME!

SEND ME!

IMPORTANT DATES RELATING DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY TO THE HOLY LAND

- 5000 B.C. Jericho is a flourishing city.
- 2000 B.C. Abraham brings His family and followers from Ur to Canaan. God makes a Covenant with Him that in His seed all the nations would be blessed, if He obeys God.
- 1800 B.C. Israelites enter the land of Goshen in Egypt.
- 1300 B.C. Moses leads the downtrodden Israelites out of Egypt toward Canaan. Moses reveals the Ten Commandments probably 1233, and Joshua conquers and settles Canaan. (Encyclopedia dates differ.)
- 1175 B.C. Philistines sail from Greek Islands to coast of Palestine.
- 1020 B.C. Israelites settle on both banks of the Jordan River; Saul becomes the first king and establishes a monarchy for seven years (1092-1098).
- 1013 B.C. David the second king, unites and strengthens the nation and builds the capital city of Jerusalem. rules for 22 years.
- 981 B.C. Solomon rules as a wise king from 981-933, erects the Temple in Jerusalem over the Sacred Rock. Noted for his wisdom and splendor of His Court and for the spread of progress.
- 745 B.C. Assyrians conquer the Holy Land, scatter and enslave the Israelites.
- 587 B.C. Beginning of Babylonian captivity of the Jews. Fall of Jerusalem.
- 539 B.C. Cyrus II of Persia conquers Babylonia, restores Judah.
- 530 B.C. Many Jews return and rebuild Solomon's Temple in 515 B.C.
- 333 B.C. Alexander the Great conquers Palestine, brings Greek culture and language, has the Old Testament translated from Masoretic Hebrew into Greek.
- 325 B.C. Death of Alexander. Palestine falls to Ptolemy, Founder of dynasty which ruled Egypt for 300 years.

- 200 B.C.: Selcucus I defeats Ptolmey and controls Palestine.
- 157 B.C. Judas Maccabeus leads Israelites in revolt against the Syrian king.
- 75 B.C. Herod the Great is king of Judah until 4 B.C.. Is converted to Judaism. Begins rebuilding the great Temple of Jerusalem; builds Caesarea.
- 53 B.C. Pompey the Great takes over the Greek empire. Reorganizes Palestine under Roman rule with Jewish-Priest kings.
- 27 B.C. Augustus Caesar rules Roman Empire including Palestine until 14 A.D. Rules during the ministry of Christ.
- 5 B.C. Estimated birth of Christ, by star of Bethlehem, in Bethlehem of Judea.
- 4 B.C. Herod Antipas rules Galilee until 34 A.D. Puts John the Baptist to death. Orders death of all boy babies.
- 22 A.D. Pontius Pilate procurator of Judea under Emperor Tiberius, tries and condemns, Jesus Christ. Rules until 36 A.D.
- 26 A.D. Beginning of Christ's ministry. Reveals the Word of God, recorded years later in the Gospels. He did not write them.
- 30 A.D. Jesus Christ crucified in Jerusalem probably April 7, 30 A.D.
- 71 A.D. Romans destroy Jerusalem; exile the Jews and rename the country Palestine. This name continued until after World War I.
- 395 AD. Palestine becomes part of the Byzantine Empire.
- 570-632 A.D. Muhammad, Founder of Muhammadan Religion and Islamic culture, reveals the Word of God, as a Divine Revelator. Dictates Qur'an, (did not write it Himself). Islamic culture spreads in the Holy Land.
- 636 A.D. Byzantine territory and Palestine falls to Arabs under Omar.
- 581—644 Omar I conquers Jerusalem. Decrees that the Sacred Rock of the Temple was the site of Muhammad's ascent unto heaven and a Moslem Shrine henceforth. It still is.
- 1061—1100 Godfrey of Bouillon of France conquers Jerusalem and becomes the first ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.
- 1006—1291 Period of Crusades. Kingdom of Jerusalem continues.
- 1138—1193 Saladin, Sultan of Egypt and Syria fights to drive Christians from Palestine; defeats them in 1187.

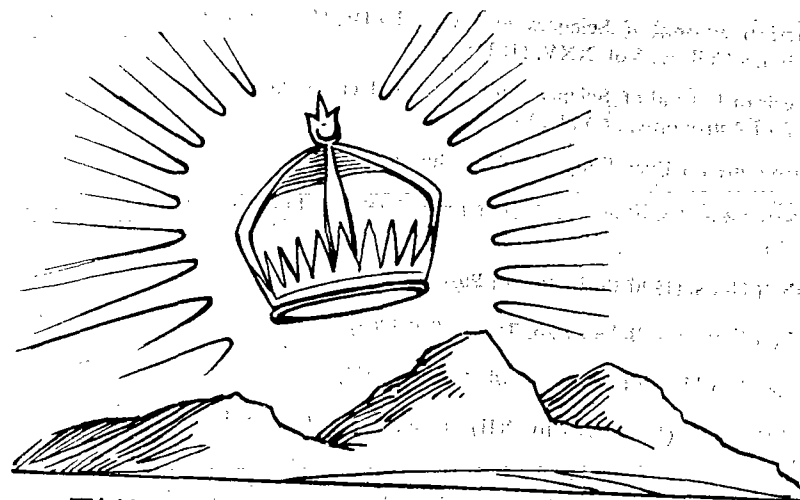
- 1157—1197 Richard the Lionhearted, King of England, starts the Third Crusade in 1189; conquers Akká and Cyprus; recaptures Jaffa from Saladin.
- 1291—1516 Mameluke Sultans of Egypt rule Palestine.
- 1496—1566 Suleiman The Magnificent, Turkish Sultan; restores walls of Jerusalem; builds Damascus Gate.
- 1400 Mongolians under Tamerlane, called Prince of destruction, devastate the Holy Land.
- 1516 Ottoman Turks defeat Mamelukes; rule Palestine until 1918.
- 1753 Shaykh Ahmad of Arabia, first forerunner of the Báb, "the Gate", born.
- 1789 Siyyid Kazim, second forerunner of the Báb born in Persia.
- 1817 Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, Mirza Husayn 'Ali, is born on November 12 in Tihran, Persia; foretold by all the Prophets before Him.
- 1819 The Báb, the Gate, Mirza 'Ali Muhammad, is born on October 20 in Shiraz, Persia; foretold in all Sacred Scriptures, the Herald for Bahá'u'lláh.
- 1829 Shaykh Ahmad of Arabia, proclaims the coming of the Great Qa'im, foretold by Muhammad.
- 1844 The sign of Aquarius crosses the vernal equinox on March 21st, and a new cycle begins, the beginning of the Bahá'í World Calendar and a new creation.
- 1844 The Báb makes His momentous, world-shaking Declaration on May 23, 1844.
- 1847 The Báb's persecutions begin in August under unspeakable conditions.
- 1849 Mulla Husayn, the Bábu'l-Báb, Herald of the Báb, is martyred.
- 1849 Quddus, disciple of the Báb is tortured and martyred.
- 1849 Vahid, disciple of the Báb is tortured and martyred.
- 1850 Seven Martyrs of Tihran are martyred in March in Tihran.
- 1850 The Báb is martyred in Tabriz on July 9. He gave evidence that His Teachings in spirit and in purpose are the same as that of Christ and quoted some of Christ's instructions, to His disciples "Letters of the Living".

- 1851 Hujjat, disciple of the Báb, is martyred.
- 1852 Tahirih, great emancipator of womanhood, only woman disciple, is martyred.
- 1853 Bahá'u'lláh, Promised One of all the Prophets, imprisoned in the Black Pit of Tíhran; tortured, exiled from Persia on January 12, across deserts, mountains, without sufficient food, clothing, shelter, with family to Baghdad, where He arrives April 8.
- 1854 Bahá'u'lláh withdraws from Baghdad to mountains and wilderness of Kurdistan, (to be compared with Christ when He went into the wilderness, to Abraham, Moses and all the Prophets of the past withdrawing for a time.)
- 1856—1858 Bahá'u'lláh returns from the wilderness March 19, reveals "Hidden Word", "Seven Valleys", marvelous Writings begin to be revealed for the New Age.
- 1862 Bahá'u'lláh reveals "The Iqan, the Book of Certitude" in 48 hours, written by His own pen, signed and stamped with His seal. His Writings constitute most authoritative and authentic of Divine Revelations in all history.
- 1863 Bahá'u'lláh on April 22, 1863 makes His Declaration in Baghdad in the Garden of Ridván, before many of His followers.
- 1863 This Holy One, a life prisoner, is exiled on May 3, 1863, to Constantinople.
- 1863 In December, He is banished to Adrianople and arrives there December 12, 1863.
- 1864 Many of the followers of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are exiled from Persia.
- 1867—1868 Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh in Adrianople to transfer the body of the Báb to a safe place.
- 1870 Death of Purest Branch, June 23, son of Bahá'u'lláh, who prayed that his life might be a ransom for those who were prevented from attaining the presence of their Beloved.
- 1873 Kitab-i-Aqdas revealed in the House of Abud in Akka. It is the Most Holy Book—The Book of Laws.
- 1888 Bahá'u'lláh goes to the Cave of Elijah and reveals the Tablet of Carmel, part of the Charter of the New World Order.
- 1890 Bahá'u'lláh reveals "Epistle to the Son of the Wolf", last of His many majestic Writings.

- 1892 Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahji, May 29, 1892, in the Holy Land.
- 1893 First public mention of Bahá'u'lláh and the Bahá'í Faith in America, by Dr. Jessup of Syria at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, September 23.
- 1894 The knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith begins to spread around the world.
- 1892—1921 The responsibilities and power are placed upon the shoulders of the Son of Baha'u'llah, Whom He appointed in His last Will and Testament, as the Center of the Covenant, the Mystery of God, The Moon of Guidance, stating "His Word is My Word, hear ye Him". 'Abdu'l-Bahá was a life prisoner, during the 40 years of imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh and until the collapse of the Turkish Empire. Reveals more of the Charter of the New World Order.
- 1897 Shoghi Effendi, great-grandson of Bahá'u'lláh, is born in the prison city of Akka on March 1st. He was destined to have the whole world on his young shoulders.
- 1898 December 10, the first pilgrims from the West arrive in Akka to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
- 1899 January 31, the arrival in the Holy Land of the remains of the Báb, after dangerous journey. Later laid in a special Shrine on Mt. Carmel constructed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
- 1908 Collapse of the Turkish Empire, due largely to the efforts of General Allenby. 'Abdu'l-Bahá is freed.
- 1909 'Abdu'l-Bahá places wooded casket containing remains of the Báb and His Companion in marble sarcophagus on Mount Carmel.
- 1910 'Abdu'l-Bahá leaves the Holy Land to teach in Egypt. He had been a prisoner with Bahá'u'lláh for more than 40 years. (1868-1908).
- 1911 'Abdu'l-Bahá leaves the Holy Land to teach in Europe and England. He arrives in London, England, on September 4, 1911.
- 1911 'Abdu'l-Bahá returns to Egypt.
- 1912 'Abdu'l-Bahá leaves Holy Land to teach in America, Canada, and Europe and on March 25, He sails with a party on the Cedric via Naples to New York.
- 1912-13 May 1, 'Abdu'l-Bahá lays the corner-stone of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois. He then returns to the Holy Land on December 5, 1913, where He arrives in Haifa.

- 1918 Chaim Weizmann, noted chemist and scholar, becomes the first president of Israel. He secures the Balfour Declaration in favor of a Jewish National Home in Palestine: He also establishes the Weizmann Scientific Institute.
- 1918 The British defeat the Turks in World War I. Palestine is made a British mandate. Birth of the League of Nations.
- 1920 'Abdu'l-Bahá is knighted by the British government in Haifa.
- 1921 'Abdu'l-Bahá passes away November 28, 1921 in Haifa. There is great mourning among all peoples.
- 1921 Shoghi Effendi appointed Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith in the Will & Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the young age of 24 years.
- 1925 The Muslim court in Egypt, May 10, 1925, pronounces the Bahá'í Faith an independent Religion, not a division of Islam.
- 1937 Shoghi Effendi launches the first Seven Year Plan continuing till 1944.
- 1946 He launches the second Seven Year Plan continuing till 1953.
- 1948 Israel becomes an independent nation. Arab League begin attacks which continue to foment trouble.
- 1953 He launches the Ten Year Crusade until 1963, a spiritual crusade around the world. Arranges for the election of the first Universal House of Justice. "The last remaining citadel for peace in a tottering world."
- 1957 Shoghi Effendi passes away in London, on November 4th.
- 1963 The centenary year of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration when the first Universal House of Justice is elected on Mt. Carmel, in Haifa. It is announced to the world during the great Bahá'í World Congress "the most great Jubilee," in London, England, in May, destined to establish peace among the nations.
- 1967 On June 5, Israel in a six day war takes the Gaza Strip, extends her borders, takes Golan Heights overlooking the Sea of Galilee, and old Jerusalem; the beginning of the Bible prophecy of her extended borders.
- 1968 The Palace of King Solomon is discovered. The walls were 6 feet thick.
- TODAY** This historic picture of the lights and shadows of the Holy Land, throughout the centuries, reveals the majestic process of God toward the great destiny of that Holy Land. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said "Israel is very important. It will become a sea of light.

Its destiny is "very great". The Jews do not know why they have been called the Chosen People. They think they have been called to build a national home or state. But according to Bahá'u'lláh it will become the beautiful chalice holding the precious jewel of the Bahá'í World Center! **THE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD! THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING!** Some day they will "recognise the Holy One of Israel in their midst" and rejoice in having been chosen for so great a destiny. Rejoice! **"LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O YE GATES! EVEN LIFT THEM UP YE EVERLASTING DOORS! AND THE KING OF GLORY SHALL COME IN! WHO IS THE KING OF GLORY? THE LORD OF HOSTS! HE IS THE KING OF GLORY!—Psalms 24.**



THE GLORY OF THE HOLY LAND

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