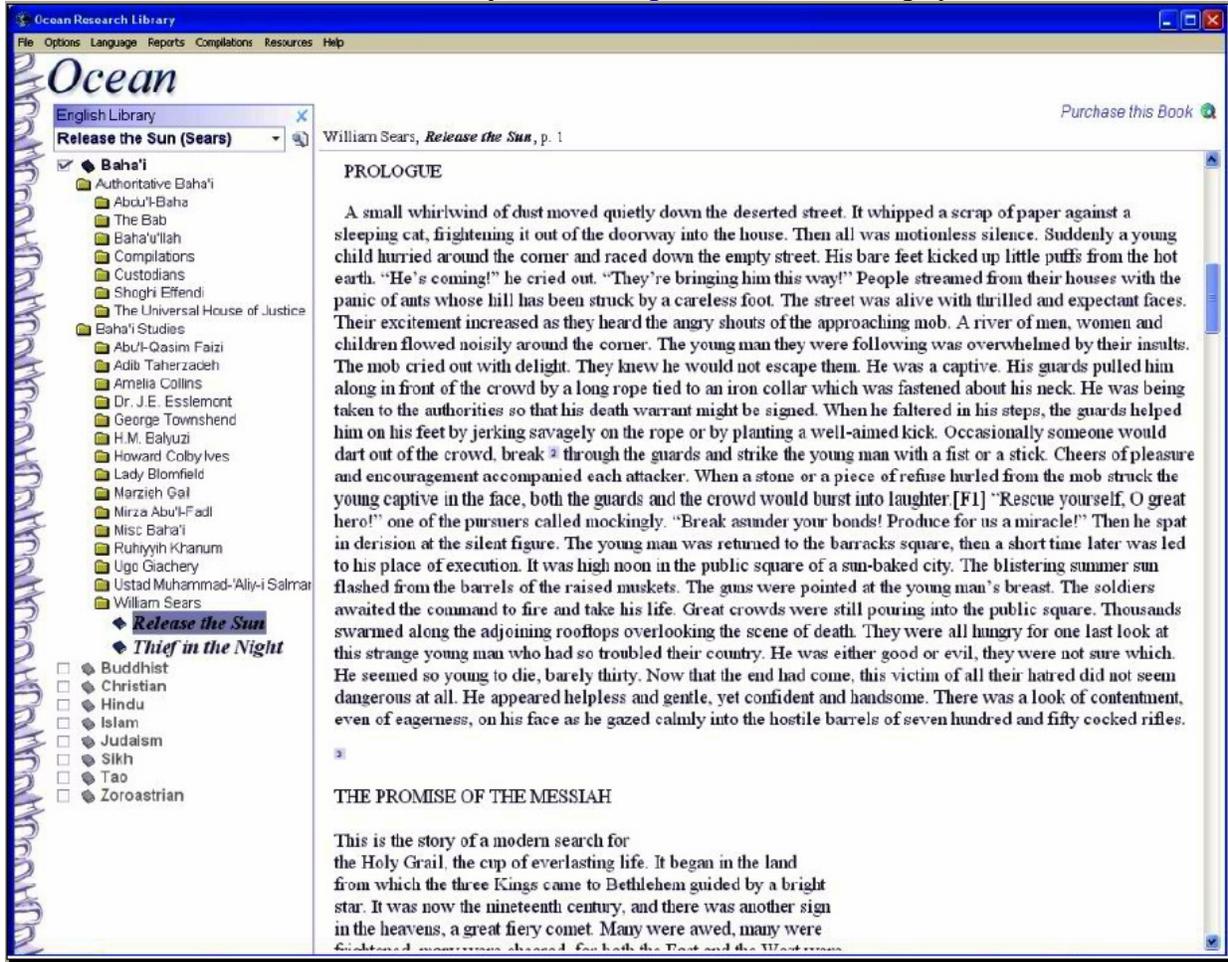


Release the Sun

By William Sears

A book on the early history of the Bahá'í Faith

The book is available online FREE by [downloading OCEAN](#) and looking up the text as follows:



(Release the Sun is also available to order from [Amazon](#))

The following paragraphs are excerpts from the APPENDIX (i.e., pages 189-231)

(Some of the original endnotes F1, F2, etc. may not be included at this time. Those that are underlined and in color are links you can click on.)

NOTE ONE

The period in history from the years 1830 to 1850 was one of strange and troublesome events. Men stared in wonder and uneasiness at the great halo that circled the sun. They looked up in horror at the night sky where a giant comet with a fiery tail rushed through the darkness. It was whispered that the comet was racing toward mankind bringing the "end of the world."

In America, Europe, Asia and Africa, there were men warning the people to prepare for the return of Jesus, for the second coming of Christ.

Wolf in Asia, Sir Edward Irving in England, Mason in Scotland, Davis in South Carolina, William Miller in Pennsylvania, and many others throughout the world agreed that this was indeed the "time of the end." [F1] Christ, they said, would soon appear. Leonard Heinrich Kelber and his fellow Christians in Germany confidently awaited the return of Christ during this same period. This millennial zeal reached its climax in the year 1844.

An historical account of those days states: "A converted Jew in Palestine, Joseph Wolf, predicted the Advent for 1847. Harriet Evermore, an eloquent and arresting woman of the time, who figures in Whittier's *Snowbound*, preached the Second Coming everywhere, including the House of Representatives at Washington where crowds gathered to hear her. Lady Hester Stanhope, the valiant madwoman, niece of William Pitt, who turned her back on London and power and fashion, made her home in Lebanon among the Arabs and Druses, in order to be ready and near to the scene of the Advent. She kept, it was reported, two white Arab steeds in her stable, one for the Messiah, one for herself! So real was the hope for the Advent (Christ's "coming"), people were actually taking almost violent measures for it. It was the nineteenth century, yet the shooting stars of the year 1833, and the perihelia, or halo-like rings around the sun in 1843, were objects of the most awesome speculation and discussion. And the tail of the great comet of 1843 measured 108 million miles in length. ... Whole families were engaged in making shrouds against that fateful day." [F2]

Some of the more zealous went so far as to sell their possessions and to await Christ's descent upon the clouds. Their more practical neighbors pointed out that clouds did not descend but were vapors that rose up from the earth. Others quoted St. Augustine who had written an entire volume proving that there could not be anyone living on the other side of the earth because it would be impossible for such people to see Christ when He came down on the day of His return. Mathematicians tried to calculate how many hundreds of thousands of "solo" it would be necessary for the Messiah to make before all humanity could see Him due to the curvature of the earth. It was reported that shops in some of the eastern cities of America advertised special "ascension robes" for the coming event. When the great comet streaked across the heavens in 1843, it was believed to be an omen for the hour of Christ's return. In that same year, the poet James Russell Lowell' wrote:

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide. Some great Cause, God's new Messiah ... [F3]

On May 24, 1844 in Washington D. C., Mr. Samuel F. B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, stepped to the keyboard of his new instrument. He was about to send the first official telegram in history flashing across the wires from Washington to Baltimore. The press had heralded this day as a modern miracle. By this invention the world would soon be united physically in the twinkling of an eye, they said.

The scholars of Scripture asked: Is this not still another proof that the hour has come for Christ's appearance? Is it not written in the book of Job that only God can send "lightnings that they may

go and say unto thee here we are!"[F4] Was not this electric telegraph of Morse the "lightnings" spoken of by which the "Word" would go? Morse put his hand to the keyboard and tapped out the message. It was a message chosen from the Bible, from the Book of Numbers: "What hath God wrought?"[F5]

The evening before, May 23, 1844 in Shiraz, Persia, the Bahá'í Faith began. The Báb proclaimed Himself to Mulla Husayn as the One foretold in all the holy Books of the past. This day, He said, was the beginning of the fulfillment of all the holy Scriptures.

The Báb arose in a Muslim country, whose people in their holy writings had the unmistakable prophecy which said that the Messenger of God would come when by "beating the iron upon the iron, you will hear the news from a far distance."

The Bab was a descendent of Abraham. He was of the "seed" which would "inherit the earth." The message of Morse had quoted only a part of the verse from Numbers. The full verse is: "According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel *what hath God wrought?*"

Why did so many Bible scholars from all parts of the world agree upon the years between 1843-1845 as the time for the return of Christ? Careful research makes it clear that they chose this time in history because of three very plain and specific promises given by Christ Himself foretelling the hour of His second coming. Christ assured His disciples that He would return to earth when the following three things took place:

1. When His Gospel shall be preached throughout the world.
2. When the "times of the Gentiles" is fulfilled and the Jews return to Israel (Palestine).
3. When all mankind would see the "abomination of desolation" foretold by Daniel the Prophet.

First Promise: When the Gospel of Christ is taught "in all the world" then He will return. This promise was made by Christ in direct reply to a question asked by His disciples: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Christ gave His promise in the following words: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness; then shall the end come."[F6]

A study of the spread of Christianity made by these scholars of the 1840's convinced them that the message of Christ had already well-circled the globe. It was being taught in all the continents. By 1844 it was being taught not by solitary missionaries, but on a wide and organized scale, even in the interior of Africa. A commercial history of East Africa states: "Christian missions began their activities amongst the African people in 1844."[F7]

The Gospel of Christ had now been "preached in all the world for a witness" and therefore, these scholars had reasoned, the hour of His coming was at hand.

Thus the first promise of Christ was fulfilled by the year 1844.

Second Promise: When the "times of the Gentiles" is fulfilled and the Jews return to Israel, Christ will come back to earth. Christ gave this promise in answer to the questions of His disciples. They asked Him: "When shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?"^[F8] He gave them His promise in the following words: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive to all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled ... and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."^[F9]

The meaning of the term "times of the Gentiles" was very clear to the scholars of Scripture. It denoted that period of time during which Jerusalem would be held by the power of aliens, non-Jews (Gentiles), and during which the Jews themselves would be banished from their homeland.

The "times of the Gentiles" would be fulfilled, therefore, when the Jews came back to their homeland following this banishment.

The first part of Christ's promise came true almost immediately. His words, "they shall be led away captive into all nations" began its fulfillment less than forty years after His crucifixion. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman Titus in 70 A.D. and the Jews were exiled.

The Jews tried to regain their freedom in 132 A.D. under Bar Kochba but were crushed by the armies of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. This time Jerusalem was devastated even more completely than it had been by Titus. The site of the city was ploughed under and a new city named in honor of Hadrian was built upon the ruins. The Jews were banished. Many of them, exactly as had been foretold by Christ, fell "by the edge of the sword." They fled, scattered, and were "led away captive into all nations."^[F10]

The Romans were the first aliens after the time of Christ to trample down the city of Jerusalem. Then came the Persians and the Muslims. The latter conquered Jerusalem in 637 A.D. During the period of occupation by the Muslims, the Jews were rigidly excluded from their homeland.

The famous Irish scholar and author, George Townshend, former Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, and Archdeacon of Clonfert, writes: "The strict exclusion of the Jews from their own land enforced by the Muslims for some twelve centuries was at last relaxed by the Edict of Toleration and the 'times of the Gentiles' were fulfilled."

Townshend goes on to point out that this document, the Edict of Toleration, was issued by the governing authorities in the year 1844.^[F11]*¹

There is a strong confirmation to be found in the Bible itself that 1844 was the year intended for the fulfillment of Christ's promise concerning the "times of the Gentiles." This confirmation is given in the Book of Revelation, chapter eleven:

¹ *This famous scholar discovered the Bahá'í Faith in his studies, and wrote saying that when "modern scholars and statesmen speak of World government, Social Security, an International language, international police force, the United Nations, etc., they are merely ringing the changes of truths set down by Bahá'u'lláh in everlasting language nearly a century ago."

"And the Holy City [Jerusalem] shall they tread underfoot for forty and two months, until the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled."[F12]

This period of forty-two months is expressed in the very next verse in the form: 1260 days. Bible scholars found this period of forty-two months or 1260 days to be identical with the year 1844. They arrived at this conclusion by the following process of reasoning:

1. In the study of Biblical prophecy, the period called a "day" becomes a "year" when calculating the passage of time.
2. This theory is supported by the following prophecies:
 - a) Numbers 14:34 -- "Even forty days, each day for a year."
 - b) Ezekiel 4:6 -- "I have appointed thee each day for a year."

James Henry Foreman in his compilation *The Story of Prophecy* writes: "... Biblical prophecy students, after a scrutiny of the entire problem of Bible chronology, deduce the following conclusions as virtually automatic -- namely, that -- (1) In symbolic prophecy a day is the symbol of a year."[F13]

By using the accepted formula of a "day" for a "year," forty-two months or 1260 days become 1260 years. Therefore, the "times of the Gentiles" would last for 1260 years.

The Muslims conquered Jerusalem in the seventh century, and according to the promise of Christ, they would tread the city underfoot until the hour of His return, which would be 1260 years later by the measurement of prophecy.

A study of the calendar of the Muslims reveals that the year 1260 of their calendar is identical with the year 1844 of the Christian calendar.

Thus the second promise of Christ was fulfilled by the year 1844, when the "times of the Gentiles" was ended.

Third Promise: When mankind witnesses the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, this will be the hour of Christ's return.

Christ gave this promise to His disciples in direct answer to their questions: When will you come, what shall we look for?

His promise was given in these words: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand)."[F14]

The third promise of Christ concerning the "abomination of desolation" is the foundation-stone upon which the Biblical scholars rested the structure of their belief in the return of Christ during the 1844 period.

The chapters of Daniel which deal with this subject are those from eight through twelve. These foretell clearly not only the second coming of Christ, but His first appearance as well. Therefore, this promise of Christ is considered to be the most important of the three.

In these chapters, Daniel prophesies that: From the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, until the time when the Messiah shall be cut off (crucified) there are appointed 70 weeks (490 days).[\[F15](#) << click here to see this footnote]

The decree would be issued, the city rebuilt, then Christ would be crucified. This is the clear meaning, foretelling Christ's first coming.

There were four decrees issued to rebuild Jerusalem:

1. Issued by Cyrus in the year 534 B.C. This is recorded in the first chapter of the Book of Ezra. It went unfulfilled.
2. Issued by Darius in the year 519 B.C. This is recorded in the sixth chapter of the Book of Ezra. It also went unfulfilled.
3. Issued by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign in the year 457 B.C. This is recorded in the seventh chapter of the Book of Ezra. It was fulfilled by the fourth decree.
4. Issued by the same Artaxerxes in the year 444 B.C. This is recorded in the second chapter of Nehemiah.

The scholars of Scripture accepted the third decree of Artaxerxes as the one prophesied by Daniel inasmuch as the fourth decree was merely an extension of the third. Therefore, this prophecy of Daniel could now be stated thus:

From the issuing of the decree of Artaxerxes in the year 457 B.C. until the time of the crucifixion of Christ there would be appointed 70 weeks (or 490 days). 70 weeks equal 490 days. By the use of our measure of prophecy, a "day" for a "year," 490 days become 490 years. Therefore, from the issuing of the decree until the crucifixion on Calvary there would be 490 years according to Daniel's prophecy.

It has been clear to scholars that the time of the first coming of Christ was foretold by Daniel with amazing accuracy. No wonder Christ Himself was so emphatic about Daniel's prophecy. What of the second coming? Christ promised that He would return when Daniel's prophecy came to pass.

These are the words spoken by Daniel:

"How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the abomination of desolation, to give the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, unto two thousand three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."[\[F16\]](#)

When would this take place? In 2300 days, says Daniel. These 2300 days in our prophetic measure become 2300 years. Using the same frame of reference as that used by Christ's first coming, the biblical scholars made their calculations.

Although many disputes arose as to the exact month, day, and hour, there was a basic agreement among all that Christ's return would take place between 1843 and 1845, with the year 1844 as the central point of reference.

One group of Christian scholars worked out Daniel's prophecy in the greatest detail. They even built a special chart to show that Christ would return in the middle of the year 1844.[\[F17\]](#)

The Báb, the Herald of the Bahá'í Faith, made His declaration to the world well into the year 1844: May 23rd.*² This hour marks the beginning of the Bahá'í Faith. Thus the proofs were now complete. All three of the specific promises of Christ concerning the time of His return pointed to the exact same period:

1. The Gospel was preached around the world by 1844.
2. "The times of the Gentiles" was fulfilled in 1844.
3. The prophecy given by Daniel came to pass in 1844.

Christ told His disciples: When ye see these things, it will be the time of My coming, and the time of the end. The words of Daniel, which told with such startling accuracy the story of both the first and second coming of Christ, were written by Daniel in Elam, a part of ancient Persia. It was in the capital of ancient Persia, Shush n, that Daniel gave his prophecy foretelling 1844 as the time for Christ's return. He not only gave the time, he also directed attention to the place in which he would appear, saying that "Elam" would be given as a place of "vision" in the latter days.[\[F18\]](#)

The holy Bible of Christianity, as well as the sacred writings of the Jews, and the Scriptures of Islam all foretold that the Promised One would appear in the last days in Elam or Persia. The Prophet Jeremiah, speaking of the time of the end, says:

"And I will set my throne in Elam."[\[F19\]](#)

In a prophecy of remarkable clarity, the sacred writings of Islam state: When the Promised One appears, "the upholders of His faith shall be the people of Persia."[\[F20\]](#) With all these proofs to guide them, why did the people fail to recognize Christ in the day of His return in 1844? Why did over a century pass with no clear explanation of this great riddle?

The answer is simple. It was the same reason that the people did not recognize Christ in the day of His first coming, until after the passing of centuries. Those who were spiritually "alive" knew Him, but the great mass of mankind were spiritually "dead" and knew Him not. These were the people spoken of by Jeremiah:

"O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not." [\[F21\]](#)

When Christ did not appear (the first time) in the magic, glorious way which the people expected of a Messiah, they denied Him. They called Him a false prophet and slew Him. After all, He was born of a woman and walked among them. Surely, they said, this is not the manner in which our great Messiah will appear. Their eyes were closed.

² For a further explanation, see Some Answered Questions, pp. 43-52.

The disciples of Jesus were greatly troubled because most of the people, especially the religious leaders and other influential persons, neither understood nor accepted His Message. They asked Jesus: "Why do they not believe?" Christ answered them: "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven but unto them it is not given ... their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed ... but blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."[\[F22\]](#)

It was to be the same in the day of His return in 1844. It takes special "eyes" and "ears" to recognize and accept the Messiah each time He appears. The great mass of mankind did not recognize Christ in the day of His first coming, nor would they recognize Him in the day of His second coming.

For He would appear in the same manner: He would be born of a woman, and walk among them. He would have the same Christ-spirit, but He would have a new physical identity. Jesus Himself had explained this spiritual truth with the greatest care so that mankind would understand and not be misled.

The people said of Christ, "why then say the scribes that Elias must come first?"[\[F23\]](#) The disciples found this question too difficult to answer because they, too, had been taught that Elias must come first. If so, where was he? They put this question to Christ. He told them that Elias had already come, but that no one understood this truth, since Elias had come in a manner they did not expect. "If ye will receive it," He said, "this [John the Baptist] is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."[\[F24\]](#) John the Baptist was Elias, Christ told them. He added: "If ye will receive it." He meant: If you can understand this symbolic truth. He added: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

This clearly warned them that it would take spiritual ears to hear and accept this truth. It was to be understood inwardly, not outwardly, in the world of comprehension, not by the senses. Only in this symbolical way could anyone accept the man John as Elias. Elias had returned in the spirit, not in the flesh of John. If they did not understand the significance of this inward truth, they would believe Him to be false. They must have the "eyes that see" and the "ears that hear"; otherwise, it would be impossible to understand or to accept. This truth was confirmed by John the Baptist Himself. He was asked: "Art thou Elias?" He answered: "I am not."[\[F25\]](#) He was not the return of Elias in the flesh. He was the return of the spirit of Elias.

In the Book of Luke it is promised for this same John the Baptist: "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. ... And he shall go forth before him in the spirit and power of Elias."[\[F26\]](#) This was the inward truth that Christ was trying to convey. He emphasized this vital spiritual truth on more than one occasion. He demonstrated to His disciples that a Messenger of God does not return in the flesh. It is the Holy Spirit that returns; but, through another channel, in another age, and with another outward name. "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall come first, and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall

also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist."[\[F27\]](#)

Elias had come but they knew him not because he came in a way they did not expect or understand. Christ likewise they knew not because He, too, came in an unexpected manner. Christ would be rejected and slain, as was John, because He came in a manner contrary to the expectations of the people.[\[F28\]](#) Elias came; he was John the Baptist. The Messiah came; He was Jesus of Nazareth. The prophecies were symbolical. Christ warned His disciples that the same conditions would also be true in the day of His second coming. Elias returned in John the Baptist and was rejected. "Likewise shall also the Son of Man [Himself] suffer of them," Christ warned.

When He returned in the promised Messiah in 1844, He was also rejected in spite of the overwhelming proofs; in spite of His own direct promise of the hour of His coming and His warning that man would need to have spiritual "eyes that see." "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet," Christ warned, "stand ye in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand)." Christ's last words show that His return would not be clear to outward vision or understanding. He says: "Whoso readeth, let him understand." He will return in the Christ-spirit, but not as Jesus of Nazareth. Man must look for the same Holy Spirit in a new physical identity.

Christ is here once again repeating the warning about His own second coming which He gave to His disciples about the return of Elias in John the Baptist: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

1. The three direct promises of Christ giving the time of His return, all pointed to the year 1844.
2. The holy Scripture of the Christians, Jews and Muslims gave the place: Persia.
3. Christ Himself unmistakably gave the manner of His return; not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

But only Almighty God could give mankind the "eyes to see" and the "ears to hear." These proofs which make it possible for everyone to understand the Holy Scripture could not have been given to mankind in such detail until the time of Christ's return. Until the hour of His appearance in 1844 in Elam (Persia) no one would be able to understand these inner mysteries of the holy Books. The way was closed.

This was yet another prophecy from the pen of the same Prophet, Daniel. The words came to him in a vision. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end.

" Daniel, still not satisfied, pressed for an answer to the meaning of the visions: "Then said I, 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."[\[F29\]](#)

This much was clear. No one would be able to discover the meaning of the words until after the return of the Spirit of Christ in the new Messiah in the last days. Isaiah reinforces this truth: "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of the book that is sealed, which men deliver to one who is learned, saying, read this I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot for it is sealed."[\[F30\]](#)

These seals would not be opened by Christ in His first coming, but only in His second. Leaders of the early Christians understood this:

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness. ..." [F31]

The Apostle Peter left this clear warning about trying to interpret the prophecies before the day of Christ's return:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy ... that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but the holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." [F32]

It was written of Bahá'u'lláh early in this century that His teachings "are the keys to all doors. Every hidden secret will become discovered and every hidden secret will become manifest and apparent." [F33]

With the coming of the Bahá'í Faith in 1844, the Books were at last opened. Mankind was once again faced with that same great spiritual challenge: To accept or reject the Messiah. His "throne" had been set in "Elam" (Persia) in the very hour (1844) foretold by Christ Himself in three distinct prophetic promises.

From the pen of the new Messiah were to come explanations of the hidden meanings of the prophecies in all the holy Scriptures of the world. This, too, had been foretold in the Revelation of St. John:

"In the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain. ... And they sung a new song, saying Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof." [F34]

Even Daniel, who said the books were sealed until the time of the end, saw another vision of the "last days" in which the books would be opened by the new Messiah:

Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened."

Speaking further of his great vision, following the opening of the books, Daniel says that he saw:

"The Ancient of Days ... and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, 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." [F35]

This is the story behind the great search for the promised One undertaken by Shaykh Ahmad, Siyyid Kazim, Mulla Husayn, Quddus, Tahirih, Vahid, and those holy souls who were so much like the disciples of Christ in His day. Now at last the books were opened and the truth revealed:

1. Christ would appear in Elam (Persia).
2. Christ would return in the year 1844.
3. Christ would return not in the flesh, but with the same Holy Spirit in a new identity.

In order that this last truth of the three might never be misunderstood, repeated promises were given throughout the Bible that in the last days the Messiah would come with a "new name." It was also promised that His followers would be called by a "new name."

1. "Thou shalt be called by a new name."
2. "The Lord God shall ... call his servants by another name."[\[E36\]](#)
3. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receives it."

Only those that had the "eyes to see" and the "ears to hear" would receive the name and know it. In the very chapter in which Christ revealed to John, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I come upon thee," a new name for His new followers is promised yet again. Christ counsels His followers to be prepared to cast aside all they hold dear at the time of His second coming, just as they had been forced to cast it aside in the day of His first coming. He makes it plain that His second coming will not be according to the beliefs, standards, or expectations of any man. He warns each individual that he must search for himself, must be alert, must look with an "inner eye."

In this final book of Christian Scripture (Revelation), Christ says: "Blessed is he that watcheth." It is chapter eleven of the final book of Christian Scripture which so clearly prophesied that the "times of the Gentiles" would be fulfilled by the year 1844. This was the hour (1844) when Christ Himself promised: "Then shall they see the Son of man coming." There is no subject spoken of more frequently or with more power in the New Testament than that of the Return of Christ. It is mentioned repeatedly on innumerable occasions. Christ says clearly, time after time:

1. "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."
2. "And behold I come quickly."
3. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father."
4. "I go away but come again unto you."
5. ""And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again."

Because mankind has failed to understand the symbolical fulfillment of Christ's return, he has been forced to abandon it and consider it a mistake; and teach some other doctrine concerning His coming. Yet, it is easy to understand why such a millennial zeal should have held the world in its grasp when we realize that the following references are but some of Christ's own promises of His coming: Matthew, chapters 16, 24, 25 and 26. Mark, chapters 8 and 13. Luke, chapters 12 and 21. Acts, chapter 1. I Corinthians, chapters 4 and 15. I Thessalonians, chapters 1, 4 and 5. II Peter, chapters 1 and 3.

In the second and thirds chapters of Revelation, chapters filled with the promise of Christ's second coming, and laden with warnings that it will require a spiritual ear to hear and to

understand the manner of His coming, the "new name" for His followers is mentioned for the final time in Christian Scripture.

In these chapters, Christ speaks of the new city, the new Jerusalem, and the new name. All the things of the past will be swept away forever: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and 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." [F37] He that hath an eye to see, let him see. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

NOTE TWO

Every Prophet has been called false by his own generation. This was true of Jesus. He was considered a "false prophet."

"And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said he is a good man; others said, Nay; but *he deceiveth the people*." [F1]

A famous philosopher named Celsus in the second century compiled an entire volume filled with terrible libels about Christ and His followers. Porphyry, one of the greatest of the Platonic philosophers, wrote a large book against Christ and the Christians, quoting the many abusive attacks against Jesus which were prevalent among the leaders and the masses. The book was later burned by order of Sydocius and Dovalantius, two Christian emperors, who after the passing of time lauded and defended Christ Whom the people of that same land had once called false and had despised.

James Murdock in his History of the Church quotes one of the great scholar-emperors of Rome, Marc Antony, as saying, "You should not ask concerning Jesus of Nazareth from these poor Romans, none of whom has seen him, but whom baseness and indolence have caused to follow him." He called them unimportant people, slaves, men and women without praiseworthy qualities.

The emperor Julian, who denied his faith in Christ, said the Christians were the "enemies of the world of humanity." Even hundreds of years after His crucifixion, Christ was called a false prophet by the leaders and people of the world. Most people could not believe that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled the prophecies about the coming Messiah which said:

1. He (the Messiah) will sit upon the throne of David. (Where was his throne?)
2. Mount Zion will dance. (Who had yet seen this wonder?)
3. He will rule with a sword. (He didn't even have a staff, let alone a sword.)
4. He will come from an unknown place. (Did not this Jesus come from Nazareth, a place from which tradition promised that no "good" could come?)

How then could this (Jesus) be the Messiah? When it was explained to the people of that time that all these prophecies had been fulfilled "inwardly" not "outwardly," symbolically and not literally, they refused to believe it. Some of Christ's own followers denied Him because they couldn't fully accept His teachings. They turned away from Him and considered Him to be a "false prophet." "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." [F2]

Whenever a Messenger of God appears, such as Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh, He is denounced as a "false prophet" by those who are not spiritually awake. What satisfactory proof can be given to the spiritually awake that Bahá'u'lláh is not a false prophet? After all, Christ did warn His followers to beware of false prophets.

In the twenty fourth chapter of Matthew, in which Christ so clearly foretold His own return in 1844, we also find one of His strongest warnings about the last days and false prophets: "Then if any man should say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. "[F3] But Jesus prophecies the coming of not one, but of many false Christs and false prophets.

He points out that they will work such astonishing wonders that they will deceive even the elect -- His own followers, the Christians. There are "false prophets" who deceive many of the "elect" in every age. These false prophets do not always appear in the guise of religion. There is the "false prophet" who teaches that there is no God at all -- atheism. The coming of this last "false prophet," disbelief in God, was plainly foretold in both the Old and the New Testament for the "time of the end":

1. "That day [the return of Christ] shall not come except there come a falling away first. ..."[F4]
2. "There shall be false teachers ... who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them. ... And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."[F5] The prophet Amos, who foretold with such startling clarity that the "sun would be darkened at noon," (in the hour of the Báb's martyrdom) also prophesied that it should be a day of disbelief in God and a day of great "falling away" from religion:
3. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro, to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it."[F6]
4. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers walking after their own lusts, And saying: Where is the promise of His coming?"[F7]

In the hour of Christ's crucifixion, the "scoffers" who considered Him a "false prophet" were many, those who believed in Him were few. One of His chosen disciples had betrayed Him for money, another had denied Him three times. When His enemies came against Him in the garden of Gethsemane with swords and stones, His most trusted disciples deserted Him, fear overcoming their faith: "Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled." No wonder Christ repeatedly warned His followers not to make this same mistake in the hour of His return. "Watch ye therefore," He warned them, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning. Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping."[F8]

Thus, Jesus warned all future humanity through His followers: "And what I say unto, I say unto all, Watch!"[F9] In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew where we hear Christ foretelling the

hour of His return (1844), He once again cautions His followers not to misread the signs of His coming and thus be misled into error:

"But if that evil servant shall say in his heart My Lord delayed His coming [and thus not expecting Him, shall deny Him], and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken [become material-minded]; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites!"[F10]

Christ, Himself, Who warned His followers to beware of "false prophets," gave humanity a measuring rod by which it is possible to judge every prophet and thus be sure of the truth. He provided an unerring standard by which every person can determine for himself whether a prophet is "true" or "false." This standard is found in the seventh chapter of Matthew. We find that in this one chapter Christ gave both the warning to beware of false prophets, and supplied the method by which to judge them.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. ... Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."[F11]

Judge the prophet by his fruits. This is a sound basis for judgement. It is the measure established by Christ Himself. Therefore, let us judge Bahá'u'lláh by the standard given by Christ. Let us test the fruits of Bahá'u'lláh's tree, for Christ has promised us that if the "fruit" is good, the tree is good, and the prophet true. Bahá'u'lláh wrote over a hundred volumes. Here it is possible to mention but a few of His teachings, and in the briefest manner. It is like trying to capture the ocean in a cup. The following are "fruits" from the tree of Bahá'u'lláh upon subjects which are nearest to the heart of every man, and most vital to his welfare:

1. his home and family,
2. his country,
3. his religion, and
4. his individual self. The first "fruit" we shall test is that relating to man's home and family:

1. HOME AND FAMILY Bahá'u'lláh calls upon all mankind to honor the sanctity of marriage. The bond between husband and wife must be upon a spiritual as well as a physical foundation. It must be a happy and lasting union, for the family is the basis of society. The Bahá'í law on marriage is that man must have but one wife (monogamy). If a man already has more than one wife, he does not give up any, but he can take no more. Thus an injustice or upheaval will not be caused in those lands where plural marriages are acceptable, but gradually by the application of this law, monogamy will be the rule everywhere. Bahá'u'lláh calls upon all men and women to marry so that children may be raised up who can honor the name of God and render service to mankind. It is obligatory to educate the children and they must be educated and given moral as well as scientific training.

2. MAN'S COUNTRY Bahá'u'lláh's teachings state clearly that it is the "unquestioned duty of every one of His followers to demonstrate their loyalty and obedience to their respective

governments." His teachings say, even more specifically: "According to the direct and sacred command of God we are forbidden to utter slander, and are commanded to show forth peace and amity, and are exhorted to rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and harmony with all the kindreds and peoples of the world."[F12] Bahá'u'lláh's followers are instructed to consider disloyalty unto a just government as disloyalty to God Himself. It is the sacred obligation of Bahá'ís to "promote, in the most effective manner, the best interests of their government and people."[F13] This is another "fruit" from the tree of Bahá'u'lláh by which you may judge whether He is a true or false prophet.

3. MAN'S RELIGION Bahá'u'lláh teaches that just as there is only one God, there is also only one religion. All the great Prophets have taught this same one religion. There is no exclusive salvation for the Hindu, the Jew, the Zoroastrian, the Buddhist, the Christian, the Muslim, or the Bahá'í. All these pure and holy Faiths are part of the one eternal religion of God which goes on for ever.

No religion is the one exclusive faith, or the final outpouring of truth from Almighty God. Each religion is true, is beautiful, is valid for the age in which it appears. It is the only truth for that particular age, yet it is but one part of the single, great, progressive, never-ending religion of God. The Word of God is one though the Speakers (Messengers) are many.

The Bahá'í teachings point out that the growth of religion is like the growth of a tree. In the teaching of Krishna we see the "seed," in that of Moses the "shoot," in that of Zoroaster the "trunk," in that of Buddha the "branches," in that of Jesus the "twigs," in that of Muhammad the "leaves," in that of the Báb the "blossoms," in that of Bahá'u'lláh the "fruit."

Because men failed to recognize and understand the oneness, the great religions have developed an enmity for each other. The Founders were united in love, but the followers became divided in hate. One step is not greater than another. All are necessary. Each stage is the fulfillment of the one that went before. No step is exclusive; no stage is final, not even the stage of the "fruit." The "fruit" is the fulfillment of the "seed"; it is the end of a cycle; but from that "fruit" will come the seed of another great cycle.

"The Religion of God," Bahá'u'lláh declares, "is for the sake of love and union; make it not the cause of enmity and conflict."[F14]

Bahá'u'lláh was exiled like Abraham, stoned like Moses, and scourged like Jesus. For nearly half a century Bahá'u'lláh underwent imprisonment and exile, during which He was poisoned, beaten, chained in a dungeon, and subject to the most brutal and continuous indignities. In the depths of His suffering, He again pointed out the oneness of His own Mission with that of Christ.

Bahá'u'lláh called out to mankind:

"If ye be intent on crucifying once again Jesus, the Spirit of God, put Me to death, for He hath once more, in My person, been made manifest unto you."[F15]

Bahá'u'lláh commands His followers to "consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship."[F16] Bahá'u'lláh upholds the basic teachings of Christ, Moses, Muhammad, Krishna and all the prophets of the past. He speaks of them all with great love and

beauty. In counselling His followers to mingle with the people of all Faiths with radiance and gladness, He says: "Ye are all the leaves of one tree and the drops of one ocean."

"Truly I say," Bahá'u'lláh tells us, "whatever lowers the lofty station of religion will increase heedlessness in the wicked. ... O people of God! Be not occupied with yourselves. Be intent on the betterment of the world and the training of the nations."[F17]

This is yet another "fruit" taken from the tree of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings by which you may judge whether He is a true or false prophet.

4. MAN'S INDIVIDUAL LIFE

The reason a Prophet (Messenger) comes to earth, Bahá'u'lláh says, is "to educate the souls of men, and to refine the character of every living man. ..."[F18] "The essence of faith," Bahá'u'lláh counsels, "is fewness of words and abundance of deeds. ..."

"Beware, O people of Baha, lest ye walk in the ways of them whose words differ from their deeds."

"Let your acts be a guide to all mankind. ... It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your life can be shed upon the whole earth."

"The most vital duty, in this day, is to purify your characters, to correct your manners, and improve your conduct," Bahá'u'lláh proclaims. "The beloved of the Merciful must show forth such character and conduct among His creatures, that the fragrance of their holiness may be shed upon the whole world. ..."

"A good character is, verily, the best mantle for men. ... The light of a good character surpasses the light of the sun. ... Upon this the honor and glory of the world are based and are dependent. ..."

"Trustworthiness ... is the door to the security and tranquility of mankind."[F19]

Throughout Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings, such additional counsels on individual behavior as these are found:

"Do not be content with showing friendship in words alone, let your heart burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path."[F20]

"... show the utmost kindness and compassion to the sick and suffering. This has greater effect than the remedy itself. You must always have this thought of love and affection when you visit the ailing and afflicted."[F21]

Bahá'u'lláh has given the following standard of conduct for all His followers:

"Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, ... an answer to the cry of the needy. ... Be unjust to no man. ... Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. ... Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. ... a breath of life to the body of mankind. ..." [F22]

This is another "fruit" taken from the tree of Bahá'u'lláh. Christ said "by their fruits ye will know them." These will help you to decide whether Bahá'u'lláh is a true or false prophet. The following final "fruits" are but a few of the Teachings taken from this vast reservoir which Bahá'u'lláh has left to humanity:

1. *Each individual shall make his own independent search after truth. The Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh say: "The greatest gift of God to man is his intelligence." Each individual should investigate spiritual truth for himself. He can, and should, learn from the knowledge and efforts of others, but he should not accept their findings as the final truth for himself without a personal investigation. Each person is individually responsible for the relationship between himself and God. Only a sincere individual search can bring about a just decision. This is a "fruit" from the tree of Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings.*
2. *Men and women should enjoy equal rights, privileges, education, and opportunities throughout the world.* Bahá'u'lláh attached great importance to this principle. His teachings emphasize the fact that this the mother is the teacher of the child during its early and formative years, it is most necessary that she have a good education. The universal education which Bahá'u'lláh advocates would give an equal position to boys and girls, men and women. When the station of woman is elevated until it is co-equal to that of man everywhere in the entire world, the stability and wholesomeness of social affairs throughout the world will be greatly improved. This is also a "fruit" from Bahá'u'lláh's tree.
3. *Education must be available to all.*
No one should be deprived of an opportunity for education, Bahá'u'lláh's teachings explain. Nor must anyone be permitted to deprive himself of an education. Education must be compulsory up to a certain age.
"To acquire knowledge is incumbent on all," Bahá'u'lláh declares, "but of those sciences which may profit the people of the earth. ... The possessors of sciences and arts have a great right among the people of the world. ... Indeed, the real treasury of man is his knowledge. Knowledge is the means of honor, prosperity, joy, gladness, happiness and exaltation." [F23]
This is another "fruit."
4. *An international language must be taught throughout the world in addition to the mother-tongue.* Bahá'u'lláh has instructed that a universal language must be fashioned or adopted from one of the existing languages. This will greatly aid commerce and will break down the barriers of misunderstandings among peoples. This language would be an international

auxiliary language. Each land would keep the beauty and charm of its own mother-tongue, but would learn in addition an international auxiliary language.

"... my determination is to gather the nations. ... For then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." [F24]

This, too, is a "fruit" from the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. tree.

5. *Religion must agree with science and reason.* In a world society such as that foretold by Bahá'u'lláh, "science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop." [F25] This is a "fruit" upon Bahá'u'lláh's tree.
6. *All men are the children of one Father, God, and are the brothers and sisters of one human family.* However great the conqueror may be, he is finally entombed, possessionless. He keeps but one small plot of earth for his bones. Thus every warrior is interred. The earth belongs to God, and man is a tenant here for but a brief span. His greatest possession, next to love of God, is love for his fellow human beings. Prejudices of all kinds must be banished from the earth. In order to eliminate racial prejudice, it is essential to eliminate racial consciousness and to see all humanity as the children of one Father. "Lovers of mankind," His Teachings proclaim, are the superior people, of whatever country, color or creed they may be." This also is a "fruit" taken from Bahá'u'lláh's tree.
7. *The soul is the essential part of every human being and lives forever.* The most vital belief any man can possess, Bahá'u'lláh assures us, and one which man cherishes most of all at the moment of death, is a belief in God and in the immortality of his own spirit. Bahá'u'lláh repeatedly gives mankind comforting assurance upon this essential truth.*³ After reading Bahá'u'lláh's words on this subject, man has great confidence in that inner prompting which tells him that he does indeed have an immortal soul. Many of the great scientific minds of our day substantiate these inner truths from their own research. They point out that matter itself is indestructible and has a form of immortality; therefore, how can the spirit be mortal? The eminent biologist C. C. Hurst writes, "Recent genetical research leads us to the inevitable conclusion that, in general, living genes are relatively immortal." [F26] Arthur H. Compton, Nobel Prize Winner for his work in physics, says: "... it is only fair to point out that science has found no cogent reason for supposing that what is of importance in a man can be buried in a grave." [F27] Dr. Compton says in yet another place, "Biologically speaking, life, whether it be an apple seed or the germ cell of a man, is essentially continuous and eternal ... May we not also logically say that continuity of consciousness, mind or soul may be presumed from the essential eternity of the germ cell?" [F28] This is another "fruit" of Bahá'u'lláh by which you may judge Him.
8. *Prayer is both a blessing and an obligation.* Prayer brings healing to the soul. It brings joy and happiness, and protects man from tests and difficulties. It is essential to the life of the spirit. Just as the physical body must have food each day, so does the soul need food each

³ Sears suggests that we read: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, Reality of Man, Life after Death, The Bahá'í World Faith, Some Answered Questions.*

day. Prayer is the spiritual food of the soul. A physical body which is not fed regularly becomes emaciated from malnutrition. It sickens and dies. The same is true of the soul of man. This spirit must be fed regularly and well, or it will suffer the same loss of power. It too, will sicken. While it never dies, it becomes so helpless that it exists in a form of death. For example, if a man lets his arm hang at his side without ever using it, soon the power to move the arm vanishes. The arm has become atrophied and useless. A man's soul without the nourishment of regular prayer also becomes atrophied and useless. Bahá'u'lláh has left a rich legacy of beautiful, uplifting prayers. However, His Faith instructs man to remember that prayer is by no means limited to the use of these prayers. Work itself, Bahá'u'lláh says, is worship. One's daily work when done in the spirit of service to mankind, and performed to the best of one's ability, is prayer of the finest kind. "We have made this -- your occupation -- identical with the worship of God," Bahá'u'lláh has written.[F29] He teaches that one's whole life should be a prayer. Every thought, word or deed devoted to the good of one's fellow-man is a prayer in the truest sense of the word.

By means of these principles and laws, Bahá'u'lláh has laid the foundation for a united world, so that the prophecies of Scripture might be fulfilled and there might come that promised day of "one fold and one shepherd." Nearly a century ago, Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed the essential need for the establishment of a universal House of Justice which would be dedicated to preserving the welfare of all men upon the planet. It would protect both great and small nations. It would guarantee the rights of individuals.

Bahá'u'lláh addressed the Rulers and Kings of the earth, warning them of the dire consequences which would follow if they failed to raise up such a structure. Without it, He told them, disaster would come upon the world. This world organization envisioned by Bahá'u'lláh would have a world parliament which would be democratically elected. It would have a world metropolis, an international police force, and a world tribunal or court. It would not be dedicated to the West or the East; it would not favor the light or the dark; it would not prefer the Jew or the Gentile. This world organization would be dedicated to one purpose only: the welfare of the entire human race. This great universal body would establish a common system of weights and measures and a common currency. It would develop all of the world's natural resources and would regulate markets so that "have not" nations would no longer exist. It would eliminate the extremes of poverty and wealth without destroying the natural degrees of difference which talent and initiative create. It would further an international auxiliary language. In short, it would take all the steps necessary to bring about a peace-loving, progressive, prosperous human family. Professor Edward G. Browne of the University of Cambridge visited Bahá'u'lláh in 1890. He wrote of that moment as follows:

"The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow. ... No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain! "A mild dignified voice bade me be seated, and then continued: "Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile. ... We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of nations. ... That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of

religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled. ... These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. ... Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind. ...' "Such, so far as I can recall them, were the words which, besides many others, I heard from Baha. Let those who read them consider well with themselves whether such doctrines merit death and bonds, and whether the world is more likely to gain or lose by their diffusion." [F30]

These are some of the "fruits" from the tree of Bahá'u'lláh. Christ said: "By their fruits shall ye know them." The responsibility of deciding whether or not Bahá'u'lláh is a true prophet now rests with you.

NOTE THREE

It is said in Scripture and Tradition that at the time of the birth or announcement of every Messenger of God, a star or a sign appears in the heavens. Nimrod was warned of the star that told of the coming of Abraham. The soothsayers warned Pharaoh of the star in the heavens that foretold the coming of Moses. The Magi informed Herod of the new star that guided them to the throne of the "spiritual king," Jesus. The same legend is told of Buddha, Zoroaster, Muhammad and Krishna. What were the signs in the heavens during the appearance of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh? The holy Scriptures of all faiths had spoken of Twin-Revelations that would appear at the "time of the end." Now that the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh had appeared, fulfilling these prophecies, what were the signs in the heavens? Signs, not for one, but for two Messengers of God, Who would appear almost simultaneously?

Some of us know the story of the great comet of 1843 which foreshadowed the coming of the Báb. Sir James Jeans, late British astronomer and mathematician, stated in his book *Through Space and Time*, "oddly enough, many of the most conspicuous appearances of comets seem to have coincided with, or perhaps just anticipated, important events in history." [F1] One of the most unique stories of a comet is that told of the period during which the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh were engaging correspondence, and during which the Báb was preparing His followers for the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh. This story was told in the stars as well as on the earth. In 1845 a comet appeared soon after the one in 1843. It was called Rel'a's Comet. It seemed to be an ordinary comet, in a year in which some 300 comets had appeared, and it had appeared many times before in the past. In 1846 it was still visible.

At this period in its history, it became one of the unique comets of all time. It was now entering into the last dramatic moments of its life. The *Encyclopedia Americana* gives the following account of this event: "It was found again late in November 1845, and in the following month an observation was made of one of the most remarkable phenomena in astronomical records, the division of the comet. It put forth no tail while this alteration was going on. Professor Challis, using the Northumberland 1846, was inclined to distrust his eyes or his glass when he beheld two comets where but one had been before. He would call it, he said, a binary (twin) comet if such a thing had ever been heard of before. His observations were soon verified, however." [F2]

History shows that there had been other binary (twin comets) but Rela's was one of the most unusual. Sir James Jeans wrote of this same comet, saying: "The most interesting story is that of Rela's comet which broke in two while under observation in 1846." The comet then disappeared. It returned in August, 1852. This was the very month and the very year in which Bahá'u'lláh was cast into an underground prison in Tihran. This was the year 1269 of the calendar of Islam. It was also exactly the ninth year after the Báb's Declaration to Mulla Husayn in the year 1260. The Bab had prophesied: "Ere nine years have elapsed" the Promised One of all ages and religions will come."

It was but a few weeks later, in that same prison, that Bahá'u'lláh's Mission began. August, 1852, was the hour of the reappearance of the comet, the comet that had split in two to become twin-comets. Strangely enough, at the time of the reappearance of the twin-comets in 1852, one half had receded far into the background. The other half, though in a parallel orbit, now dominated the scene. Just so had the Báb, the Herald of the Bahá'í Faith, passed into history, and the One Whose coming He had foretold, Bahá'u'lláh, had assumed His Mission. The Americana record of this astronomical event states:

"Late in August, 1852, the larger portion again came into view; and three weeks later the smaller one, now much fainter than its former companion was seen about 1,500,000 miles in the lead."

Sir James Jeans confirms this: "Six years later [1852], when the comet's orbit again brought it near to the sun, two pieces were observed to be one and a half million miles apart." Of that hour when the twin-comets rode the skies above His prison, Bahá'u'lláh has written:

"I was but a man like others, asleep upon my couch, when lo, the breezes of the All Glorious [God] were wafted over Me and taught Me the knowledge of all that hath been. This is not from Me, but from One Who is Almighty and All-knowing."[F3]

Following this twin-appearance, Sir James Jeans states, "neither of them has been seen in cometary form, but the place where they ought to be is occupied by a swarm of millions of meteors, known as the Andromedid meteors. Occasionally these meet the earth in its orbit, and make a grand meteoric display." The two comets were no longer separate comets, but were mingled in one great shower of light, just as the Faith of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are not separate but one in the light which they shed upon the earth.

NOTE FOUR

The Báb was from the line of Bani-Hashim. Hashim was the great-grandfather of Muhammad.[F1] The Báb was also a descendant of Abraham through Abraham's second wife, Hagar. The Báb was of the seed of [Isma'il], and through him of the "seed of Abraham." When Abraham, as is related in the book of Genesis, said unto God: "O that Ishmael might live before Thee," God replied: "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 be beget, and I will make of him a great nation."[F2]

Muhammad was a descendant of Isma'il. Through Muhammad the first concept of nationhood came into being. The first great "nation" was built upon His teachings. God's promise of Abraham that Isma'il would beget twelve princes was also fulfilled through Muhammad. These twelve princes were the twelve Imams, the spiritual leaders of Shi'ah Islam. In the holy traditions of Islam there is a prophecy which states that the twelfth of these princes (Imams) disappeared in the year 260, and that he would reappear in a thousand years -- in the year 1260 (1844).

This is the very year of the Báb's announcement of His Mission. Bahá'u'lláh was also descended from Abraham, through Abraham's third wife, Katurah. That historical record of the Bahá'í Faith, *God Passes By*, states: "He [Bahá'u'lláh] derived His descent ... from Abraham (the Father of the Faithful) through his wife Katurah. ..." [F3]

Bahá'u'lláh was also descended from the great Prophet of Iran, Zoroaster, and in addition to the two Branches of Holiness mentioned above, Bahá'u'lláh was also a descendant of Jesse. He is the "Branch" that "shall grow out of his roots" as promised by Isaiah. Likewise, He is the "rod" and the "ensign."

"In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious ... And he shall set up an ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." [F4]

This chapter of Isaiah refers to Bahá'u'lláh. He is the "Branch" of Jesse who will assemble the outcasts of Israel. The Jews were not dispersed until after the time of Christ; they were in his life still assembled in the Holy Land. They had not yet been banished to the four corners of the earth. At the present time, however, the Jews have been returning from all parts of the earth to Israel. On the sides of Mount Carmel, the Bahá'í Shrines and holy places can be seen from the sea for miles. They stand within the shadow of the cave of Elijah where the feet of Bahá'u'lláh, of Christ, and of the Prophets of old once walked. From the arid waste of this mountain of rock has been carved a beautiful garden of paths, flowers, trees -- indeed as Isaiah had promised, the place of "his rest shall be glorious."

The story in the Bible of the oneness of God began with Abraham's Father of the Faithful. Through the seed of Ismail came the religion of Muhammad and of the Báb. Through the seed of Isaac came the religion of Moses and of Jesus. Abraham talked with God in the land of Ur in the Chaldees in the valley of Tigris and Euphrates rivers. He was then exiled to Syria. Bahá'u'lláh, the seed of Abraham, made His open declaration to the world that He was the Promised One of all religions in this same valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. He, too, was then exiled to Syria. Descended from Abraham through his third wife, Katurah, Bahá'u'lláh extended one hand to the followers of Muhammad and the Báb, and the other hand to the followers of Moses and Christ and brought them together again as foretold for the day of the "one fold and one shepherd."

Thus Bahá'u'lláh fulfilled the words of Isaiah: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people. ..." [F5]

NOTE FIVE

The remains of the Báb were destined to rest eternally within the shadow of His Beloved, Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'u'lláh was driven into exile from His native land of Iran. He was sent to Baghdad, Constantinople, Adrianople, and finally He was banished to the prison-city of 'Akká across the bay of Haifa from Mount Carmel. One day while resting on the side of this holy mountain, Bahá'u'lláh pointed out to His son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the exact spot where a Shrine should be built and where the sacred remains of the Báb should be entombed forever. Those precious mangled bodies of the Báb and His fellow-martyr were rescued from the moat outside the city of Tabriz by Haji Sulayman Khan and were brought to a silk factory owned by one of the believers of Mil n. The next day they were laid in a wooden casket and carried to a place of safety. Bahá'u'lláh instructed that they be brought to Tihiran and be placed in the shrine of the Imam-Zadih Hasan, where They would be, as the Báb Himself requested, within the shadow of His Beloved." But, Bahá'u'lláh was stoned, imprisoned and finally banished from Tihiran, and those sacred remains of the Báb were no longer with the shadow of Bahá'u'lláh, the One He loved.

Throughout every step of His enforced exile, Bahá'u'lláh knew the exact spot which held those holy remains. They were later removed from the shrine to the house of Haji Sulayman Khan in the Sar-Chashmih quarter of Tihiran. They were then taken to the shrine of Imam-Zadih Masum, where they remained concealed until the year 1867-1868. A letter was received from Bahá'u'lláh in exile directing the friends to transfer them without delay to another spot. This was done immediately, and proved to be providential as shortly after this the shrine was reconstructed.

The followers of Bahá'u'lláh continued to search for a safe suitable place. While they were on the road heading to Chashmih-'Ali, they came upon an abandoned and dilapidated school. That evening after dark they deposited their precious burden within one of its walls, having first re-wrapped the remains in a silken shroud brought by them for that purpose. The next day they were alarmed to discover that their hiding place had been discovered.

They were afraid that their sacred charge might fall into the hands of enemies, so they carried the casket secretly through the gate of the city of Tihiran to the house of a friend, where it remained for fourteen months. The long-guarded secret of its whereabouts became known to the believers, and soon they began to visit the house in large numbers. A letter was sent to Bahá'u'lláh begging for guidance.

Word came instructing one of the followers to accept the Trust and to exercise the utmost secrecy as to its disposal. The casket containing the remains was buried beneath the floor of the inner sanctuary of the shrine of Imam-Zadih Zayd. It remained there, undetected, until it was necessary to move it again. The friend commissioned to undertake this task was informed of the exact location through a chart forwarded to him by Bahá'u'lláh.

Under the instruction left by Bahá'u'lláh, those precious remains were moved from house to house, from hiding-place to hiding-place until the year 1899. In that year, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed Mirza Asadu'llah, together with a number of other believers, to transfer them by the way of Isfahan, Kirman Shah, Baghdad and Damascus, to Beirut. From there they came by sea to 'Akká, arriving at their destination on January 31, 1899.[F1]

Finally, in the year 1909, the Tomb of the Báb on the side of Mount Carmel was completed. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, following the instructions of Bahá'u'lláh, deposited, with His own hands, the wooden casket containing the sacred remains of the Bab and His companion within a waiting marble sarcophagus in the floor vault of this Shrine.

'Abdu'l-Bahá announced the news of this glorious victory to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh:

"The most joyful tidings is this, that the holy, the luminous body of the Báb ... after having for sixty years been transferred from place to place ... and having known neither rest nor tranquility has, through the mercy of the Abha Beauty, been ceremoniously deposited on the day of Naw-Ruz [New Year], within the sacred casket, on the exalted Shrine on Mount Carmel." [F2]

Today His beautiful Shrine and the terraces leading to it are illumined at night and can be seen for miles. The Báb was denied even a candle in the Mountain of Mahku; now His Shrine of shining white, crowned with a dome of gold, on the side of its green throne on Mount Carmel, is a blaze of light. When the famed Orientalist, A. L. M. Nicolas, heard that a Shrine had been raised to the glory of the Báb, he longed to see it. He had been very touched by the Christ-like life of the Báb about Whom he had written so glowingly. Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, the late Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, sent M. Nicolas an artist's drawing of the Shrine as well as a copy of the Dawn-Breakers, Nabil's history of those early days. Nicolas was so deeply moved that he kissed the bearer's hand. [F3]

Thus, at last, the remains of the Báb were interred in Mount Carmel, the "vineyard of God," according to the direct instructions of Bahá'u'lláh. They rest near the cave of Elijah whose promised coming the Báb fulfilled, there on the side of God's holy mountain called the "nest of the prophets." The Shrine of the Báb faces directly toward the silver-city of 'Akká and toward the spot where Bahá'u'lláh Himself is enshrined. Once again, and this time forever, the Báb was "within the shadow of His Beloved."

NOTE SIX

One of the most dramatic stories of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, and His fulfillment of prophecy, is that told in the Book of Micah. Micah foretold: first, that the world would be disillusioned in that day, and that its only hope would be to await the coming of God's Messenger; second, that He would come from Babylon in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates; third, that He would come to Israel and dwell in the midst of Carmel; and fourth, that He would fulfill specific prophecies on His journey to the Holy Land. Of the condition of the world, Micah said:

"The good man is perished out of the earth; and there is none upright among them: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net ... they do evil with both hands ... the best of them is a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thornhedge. ..." [F1]

That man's hope would lie in the coming of God's Messenger, he expressed in these words: "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. ... Then she that is my enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me,

Where is the Lord thy God?" ... "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness."[F2]

Of the birth of the Mission of the Messiah in Babylon, Micah said:

"Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon, there shalt thou be delivered; there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hands of thine enemies."[F3]

That the promised Redeemer would come and dwell in Israel in the "last days" and nourish humanity with His teachings, is promised in these words of Micah:

"Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood in the midst of Carmel."[F4]

The manner of His coming, and each step along His path to Israel, was set down in detail by Micah in the same chapter:

"In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain."[F5]

The exact number of years during which the Mission of the promised Messiah would last are also foretold by Micah:

"According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew Him marvelous things."[F6]

These startling and prophetic words were all fulfilled by Bahá'u'lláh in the following manner:

1. He was born in Persia, once part of the ancient kingdom of Assyria; thus He came from Assyria.
2. He was driven in exile to Baghdad, modern metropolis of Mesopotamia. It is near the site of the ancient capital, Babylon, which was queen of the region in Biblical times.
3. Bahá'u'lláh withdrew out of the city into the fields and mountains, as Christ had gone into the desert. After a period of prayer and meditation, He returned to Baghdad (successor of Babylon) to make His declaration that He was the promised Redeemer of mankind.
4. He came to the Holy Land and dwelt in the midst of Carmel; from there His flock was fed by the rod of His teachings, for Mount Carmel is the world center of His Faith, and the site of many of its holy places.
5. Bahá'u'lláh came from Assyria to Babylon. He was then marched over land as a prisoner, and finally shipped by sea to the fortified city of Constantinople. He was later exiled

further, and came by sea to the fortified city of 'Akká. For two years He was confined in a cell in the fortress prison. After nine years within the prison walls of 'Akká, Bahá'u'lláh was at last permitted to leave the shadow of the fortress and go out to the river which flowed around an island in the garden of Ridvan. As a prisoner, He was shipped across the Black Sea to Constantinople, and via the Mediterranean Sea to Haifa and 'Akká. Bahá'u'lláh withdrew into the mountain of Sar Galu outside of Baghdad to pray before announcing His Mission, and in the last years of His life, He pitched His tent on the side of Mount Carmel, called by Isaiah the "mountain of God."

6. From the time Bahá'u'lláh's Mission began, until the day of His death in the Holy Land, exactly forty years elapsed, which was precisely "according to the days of thy [the Jews] coming out of the land of Egypt"; during these forty years Bahá'u'lláh poured out His teaching as Almighty God "shewed Him marvelous things." Bahá'u'lláh had come to Israel "by way of the sea" as prophesied by Isaiah. He was sent as a prisoner to the great stone fortress in the valley of Achor, now called 'Akká, as foretold by the Book of Hosea: "And I will give her vineyard from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." [F7] The Bahá'í House of Worship to be built upon Mount Carmel, and which will be open to the people of all nations and faiths, will look down upon both the plain of Sharon and the valley of 'Akká [Achor], as foreshadowed by the prophet Isaiah: "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people who have sought me." [F8] Bahá'u'lláh had been sent to the prison of 'Akká because it was believed by the religious leaders of Persia and Turkey that He would die there and be forgotten. The atmosphere was so foul that proverb said of the spot: "If a bird flies over 'Akká, it dies!" His enemies did not realize that by driving Him there in exile, they were fulfilling the prophecies of sacred Scripture.

Soon the followers of Bahá'u'lláh came to this arid, desert land from far off places. They brought with them roses of every hue, flowers, plants, and fruit trees. It became a garden as the years passed, filled with colorful blossoms, the fragrance of orange and lemon trees, with the brilliance of the flaming pomegranate. even as Isaiah had visualized: "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." [F9] Thousands of visitors from all over the world now visit the magnificent Bahá'í gardens on the side of Mount Carmel and on the plain of 'Akká. Wherever the feet of Bahá'u'lláh walked, there are now lovely gardens and paths. Roses of every hue and description can be seen. White and red stone paths wind through beds of many-colored flowers of all shapes and shades. The rocky desolate side of Mount Carmel and the desert sand of 'Akká have been transformed into green lanes shaded by dark cedars of Lebanon, fir trees, pine trees, box trees, towering mulberry trees, and fruit trees of all varieties; it is a pageant of beauty.

The words of Isaiah echo like a chorus through [the mountainside](#):

1. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall blossom as the rose." [F10]

2. "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious."[F11]

These beautiful gardens and holy places which were raised up by the pen of Bahá'u'lláh lie on the north side of Mount Carmel, looking across the Bay of Haifa toward the white sands of 'Akká. Here on the north side of the mountain is being built all the future institutions of the Bahá'í Faith at its world center. This is the day and the place which David promised in his Psalms when he spoke of the mountain of God:

"... on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."[F12]

Ezekiel echoes the same promise given by Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Zechariah, and Malachi:

"And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. ... And the glory of the Lord came unto the house by way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east."[F13]

Bahá'u'lláh, Whose names means the Glory of the Lord, or the Glory of God, came to Israel from His homeland, Persia, which lies directly east of the Holy Land. His Herald, the Báb, foretold His coming and prepared the way for Him. Báb is a word which means the Gate. When Ezekiel had this vision of the last days, he said:

"I saw it were the appearance of fire. ... This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face. ..." [F14]

The people at the time of Christ denied Jesus because they said that Moses had talked with God. Christ was plainly inferior. No station could equal that of the Interlocutor: He Who talked with God. Now in the time of Bahá'u'lláh, the people deny Him, saying: Christ is the Son of God. Bahá'u'lláh is plainly inferior. Nothing could equal the station of the Son of God. George Townshend, sometime Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, late Archdeacon of Clonfert, wrote in his book, *Christ and Bahá'u'lláh*:

"It has long been generally believed that Jesus Christ was a unique incarnation of God such as had never before appeared in the religious history. ... This tenet made the acceptance of any later Prophet impossible, to a Christian. Yet there is nothing in Christ's own statements, as recorded in the Gospel, to support this view, and it was not generally held during His lifetime. ... "In spite of Christ's promise of further revelation of Truth, through the Comforter, through His own return, through the Spirit of Truth, the Christian church regards His revelation as final, and itself as the sole trustee of this religion. There is no room for the Supreme Redeemer of the Bible to bring in great changes for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. ... "Well might Christ warn His followers that false prophets would arise and misinterpret His teachings so as to delude even the most earnest and intelligent of His believers: from early times the Christians have disputed about Christian truth in councils, in sects, in wars."

Will Durant in *The Age of Faith* states that more Christians were killed by their fellow Christians during the dispute over the meaning of the Trinity than were slain during all the martyrdoms of Pagan Rome.

Bahá'u'lláh pointed to the words of Christ:

"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father." [F15] The meaning of the station of the "Son" and that of the "Father" was explained by Christ Himself in beautiful and simple language in His parable of the Vineyard. In fact, the whole history of religion, Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings tell us, can be found in this one parable:

"A certain man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed and many others; beating some, and killing some. Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others." [F16]

The meaning is this: The vineyard is the earth, the man who planted it is God, and the husbandmen to whom it was let out are the people of the earth, especially their leaders. The servant who was sent by God to claim the fruit was a Messenger or Prophet of God. The fruit He came to gather was the hearts of the people given in love for God and for their fellowman. They beat the Prophet (servant) and drove Him off. So God sent another Prophet (servant) unto the world (vineyard) to claim His right from His creation. But the people (husbandmen) stoned them, beat them, and killed them. Always dealing thus with God's Messengers. Finally the owner (God) sent his son (Christ) into the vineyard (earth) thinking surely they will honor Him and at last know the truth. But they crucified Him. Thereupon the owner (God) sent the Lord of the vineyard (Bahá'u'lláh), representing the Father Himself into the vineyard (earth). His Mission was to destroy the wicked husbandmen who did not acknowledge and serve God, and to give the vineyard (earth) out to those who were worthy of the Truth of God.

This is the outward symbol of the inward truth explaining the meaning of a gradually unfolding religion, and of the station of the Son (Christ) and the Father (Bahá'u'lláh). One is not greater than the Other. Both are equal. The fullness of Their Message depends upon the age and the receptivity of the people to whom They appear. Their purpose and spirit is one, Their love for Each other great.

Bahá'u'lláh has written:

"Bethlehem is astir with the Breeze of God. We hear her voice saying: 'O most generous Lord! ... The sweet savors of Thy presence have quickened me, after I had melted in my separation from Thee. Praised be Thou in that Thou hast raised the veils, and come with power in evident glory.'"[F17]

Bahá'u'lláh was twice imprisoned in the land of His birth, Persia. He was scourged by the priests in the prayer-house at Amul. He was poisoned in the Black-pit prison in Tihran, into which He was hurled. He was stoned on two separate occasions. His shoulders were lacerated by two hundred-pound chains. He was driven into exile to Baghdad, across the icy mountains in the midst of winter, possessionless, without proper food or clothes. There, another attempt was made on His life. He was cruelly persecuted during His further banishment to Constantinople and Adrianople. In the latter city He was twice poisoned. Shipped in bondage to 'Akká, He was cast into a cell. At last Bahá'u'lláh reached the Holy Land and walked where the feet of Christ had walked.

NOTE SEVEN

All the Faiths of the world speak of a great "last day" when God will rule the earth and all the sheep will be gathered together into one flock. Christ Himself said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."[F1] In the Book of Zechariah it is expressed in yet another way:

"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one."[F2]

Although the name of every prophet up until the present time has appeared in various forms in the different languages of the world, the name Bahá'u'lláh is never spoken other than in this one form which is used throughout the earth. In speaking of the last day, the Book of Habbakuk states:

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the *glory of the Lord*, as the waters cover the sea."[F3]

The great American Negro educator, George Washington Carver, said that he believed that it was Bahá'u'lláh of Whom Habbakuk spoke when he uttered these prophetic words. In NOTE ONE of this APPENDIX, we mentioned Leonard H. Kelber of Stuttgart, Germany. He and his followers awaited Christ's return in those fateful years between 1843-1845. When Christ did not appear as they expected, Kelber and his followers sold their possessions, chartered a boat, and sailed to the Holy Land. This colony of Christians, German Templers, settled at the foot of Mount Carmel. They were convinced by their study of the Scriptures that the "Glory of God" would appear on the side of Mount Carmel in the last days. In the stones above their doorways they carved the words: "Der Herr ist Nahe: the Lord is near."

They arrived in 1863, the very year when in far off Baghdad, Bahá'u'lláh made His public declaration to the world that He was the Promised One of all Ages, the "Father" foretold for the time of the end. Bahá'u'lláh was driven into exile until He reached the prison of 'Akká, and in the last years of His life He walked on the side of Mount Carmel. He looked down upon that colony

of Christians who were waiting for the appearance of the "Glory of God." His name, Bahá'u'lláh, when translated into English, means "The Glory of God." In the Revelation of St. John the Divine, that disciple associated the Glory of God with the new Jerusalem, saying:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem. ... And the city had no need of the sun ... for the Glory of God did lighten it."[F4]

At the time of the coming of the Bahá'í Faith, there were seven of the old revealed religions extant, with followers supporting them. This does not count philosophies and sects separately, such as were established by great reformers such as Confucius and Luther. These seven great historical religions are those with a Book, a Prophet, and an historical civilization. They were as follows:

1. Sabeian: Prophet, unknown. Date -- 5,000 B.C.*⁴
2. Hindu: Prophet, Krishna. Date -- 2,000 B.C.*
3. Jewish: Prophet, Moses. Date -- 1330 B.C.
4. Zoroastrian: Prophet, Zoroaster. Date -- 1,000 B.C.*
5. Buddhist: Prophet, Buddha. Date -- 560 B.C.
6. Christian: Prophet, Christ. Date -- 1 A.D.
7. Islamic: Prophet, Muhammad. Date -- 622 A.D.

From the first of these great religions, Sabeianism, to the last, Islam, there was a cycle of 5,000 years. During this period, each of these religions looked forward to the "last days," or "day," when their own Faith would have its final fulfillment. Each of these pure and holy religions was a step in the progressive unfolding of the one great religion of God, divine and indivisible.

These seven religions were spoken of by Isaiah in one of his prophecies, which was to be fulfilled in the day of the "one fold and one shepherd." Isaiah wrote:

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."[F5]

With the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, each of these seven women (religions) *do* eat of their own bread and wear their own apparel. It is one of the principles of the Bahá'í Faith that the spiritual, or underlying truths, ("food" and "apparel") are the same in every religion. These inner truths are not altered. It is only the outer teachings which are changed according to the needs of the people in the day in which each new prophet appears. A basic teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is that the foundation of all religions is one. These "seven women" (religions) can take hold of "one man" (Bahá'u'lláh) and accept Him, confident that they are losing none of the pure, beautiful truths upon which they were founded.

The same remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, which foretells the unity of all the great religions in the "last days," also gives the promise of a new name by which God's Faith will be known.

⁴ *Date is approximate, as authorities differ.

The prophecy says: "Let us be called by *thy name*," meaning the name of the new Prophet. Bahá'u'lláh is the name of the Prophet. His followers are called Bahá'ís, meaning followers of Bahá'u'lláh, the "Glory of God." Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all religions. He fulfilled by His coming the promise given to each of these Faiths in their own sacred Scripture:[F6]

"To Israel He was neither more nor less than the incarnation of the 'Everlasting Father,' the 'Lord of Hosts' come down 'with ten thousand saints'; to Christendom, Christ returned 'in the glory of the Father'; to Shí'ah Islam, the return of the Imam Husayn; to Sunni Islam, the descent of the 'Spirit of God' (Jesus Christ); to the Zoroastrians, the promised Shah-Bahram; to the Hindus, the reincarnation of Krishna; to the Buddhists, the fifth Buddha."

Isaiah referred to Bahá'u'lláh as: The "Glory of the Lord," the "Everlasting Father," the "Prince of Peace," the "Rod come forth out of the stem of Jesse," Who "shall judge among the nations," Who "shall assemble the outcasts of Israel." David sang of Bahá'u'lláh as the "Lord of Hosts" and the "King of Glory."

Daniel proclaimed His appearance as the "Day of the Lord." Malachi described it as "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" when "the Sun of Righteousness" will "arise, with healing in His wings."

To Bahá'u'lláh's coming, Zoroaster must have referred when He foretold a period of three thousand years of conflict which must precede the advent of the World-Saviour, Shah-Bahram, Who would "usher in an era of blessedness and peace." Bahá'u'lláh alone is meant by the prophecy "attributed to Gautama Buddha, Himself, that 'a Buddha named Maitreye, the Buddha of universal fellowship' should, in the fullness of time, arise and reveal 'His boundless glory.'"

To Bahá'u'lláh the Bhagavad-Gita of the Hindus referred, calling Him the "Most Great Spirit," the "Tenth Avatar," the "Immaculate Manifestation of Krishna."

To Bahá'u'lláh, Jesus, the Christ, referred as the "Prince of this world," the "Comforter" Who will "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement," the "Son of Man" Who "shall come in the glory of His Father," the "Lord of the Vineyard," the "Spirit of Truth," Who "will guide you to all truth."

To Bahá'u'lláh, Muhammad alluded in His Book as the "Great Announcement." He declared the Day of Bahá'u'lláh to be the Day whereon "God" will "come down" "overshadowed with clouds," the "Great Day," the "Last Day," the day "when the earth shall shine with the light of her Lord."

The Book of Revelation referred to Bahá'u'lláh as the "Glory of God," as "Alpha and Omega," "the Beginning and the End," "the First and the Last." To the hour of Bahá'u'lláh's appearance, St. Paul alluded as the hour of the "last trump," the "trump of God."

St. Peter spoke of Bahá'u'lláh's day as "the times of refreshing," the "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began." the Bab extolled Bahá'u'lláh as the "Lord of the visible and invisible," "the Omnipotent Master," the

"Essence of Being," the "sole Object of all previous Revelations, including the Revelation of the Qá'im [the Bab] Himself."

Bahá'u'lláh is the source of joy and thanksgiving to all the religions and Prophets who preceded Him. He is the seal of their labor, the fulfiller of their promises, the blessed object of all their hopes. He was indeed destined by the finger of God, to be the Author of the day of the "one fold and one shepherd." All the Books of the past which had been sealed were opened by Him, and their truth made clear to men. In that historical record of the Bahá'í Faith, *God Passes By*, written by Shoghi Effendi, the first Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, and great-grandson of Bahá'u'lláh, it is stated:

"Foremost among the priceless treasures cast forth from the billowing ocean of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation ranks the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* (Book of Certitude), revealed within the space of two days and two nights. ... [it] broke the 'seals' of the 'Book' referred to by Daniel, and disclosed the meaning of the 'words' destined to remain closed up 'till the time of the end.'"[F7]

"The Word of God hath set the heart of the world afire," Bahá'u'lláh proclaims; "how regrettable if ye fail to be enkindled by its flame!"[F8]

Linking His own Faith forever with that of Christ, Bahá'u'lláh wrote movingly: "O Bethlehem! ... Tell Me then: Do the sons recognize the Father, and acknowledge Him, or do they deny Him, even as the people aforetime denied Him (Jesus)?"[F9]

The Pen of Bahá'u'lláh has called out to all mankind to have "eyes that will see" and "ears that will hear" in this day. To the question: "Have the verses been sent down?" He answers, "Say: 'Yea, by Him Who is the Lord of the heavens!' 'Hath the Hour come?' 'Nay, more; it hath passed. ... He, the True One, hath appeared with proof and testimony. ...'"[F10]

"We, in truth, have opened unto you the gates of the Kingdom," Bahá'u'lláh calls out. "Will ye bar the doors of your houses in My face?"[F11]

Bahá'u'lláh calls to the "pure in heart" who are seeking for the healing Word of God: "I bear witness, O friends! that the favor 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."[F12] "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

EPILOGUE

"Let no one, while this system is still in its infancy, misconceive its character, belittle its significance or misrepresent its purpose. ... The source from which it derives its inspiration is no one less than Bahá'u'lláh Himself [God's Messenger for this day]. ... Its seed is the blood of no less than twenty thousand martyrs who have offered up their lives that it may be born and flourish."

Unlike the religion of Christ, unlike all the religions of the past, the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in every land, "wherever they labor and toil, have before them in clear, in unequivocal and emphatic

language, all the laws, the regulations, the principles, the institutions, the guidance, they require for the prosecution and consummation of their task. .. Therein lies the strength in the unity of the [Bahá'í] Faith ... that claims not to destroy or belittle previous Revelations, but to connect, unify and fulfill them."

"The Call of God when raised, breathed a new life into the body of mankind," said 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "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 been quickened. Erelong the evidences of this regeneration will be revealed, and the fast asleep will be awakened." [F1]

Since the day that 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, spoke these words, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Faith, executed and carried out a world-wide teaching plan during which, up to 1959, Bahá'í literature was translated into two hundred and forty-four languages. Bahá'í schools, National Headquarters, and properties are to be found in every continent. The National Assemblies of the Bahá'í Faith have been given legal recognition by the leading countries of the world. The Bahá'í Faith has been recognized as one of the non-governmental agencies attached to the United Nations.

The [world center of the Bahá'í Faith](http://www.bahai.org) is in Haifa, Israel, on the side of Mount Carmel, the "mountain of God." Professor Norman Bentwich in his article on Palestine, said of the Bahá'í Faith, [<http://watsongregory.homestead.com/files/Haifa.htm>]

"Palestine [now, Israel] may indeed be now regarded as the land of not three but four faiths, because the Bahá'í creed, which has its center of faith in 'Akká and Haifa, is attaining to the character of a world religion. ... it is a factor making for international and inter-religious understanding."

The magnificent Bahá'í gardens, Shrines and holy places are a center of beauty and pilgrimage which attract Bahá'ís and visitors from all parts of the earth. Bahá'í Temples are being erected in Africa, Australia and Europe. They already have been raised up in Asia and America. The beautiful Bahá'í House of Worship in the United States of America has been called "the first new idea in architecture since the thirteenth century." There is hardly a country, territory or island of the sea where the Word of Bahá'u'lláh has not been taught. Like a mighty wind of God, this Faith has swept across the face of this planet. It began on May 23, 1844. In a little over a hundred years, it has spread to over five thousand centers in every corner of the earth, fulfilling the prophecy of Habbakuk for the last days.

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord [Bahá'u'lláh], as the waters cover the sea." (2:14)

[See <http://www.homestead.com/watsongregory/files/CivilProgress.pps>]

Great figures from all walks of life have paid tribute to this young, encouraging, uplifting religion. [Also see: http://www.homestead.com/watsongregory/files/tributes_ps.html]

1. "If there has been any prophet in recent times, it is to Bahá'u'lláh that we must go." (the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, British Clergyman)
2. "The Bahá'í Cause is one of the great moral and social forces in all the world today." (Eduard Benes, former President of Czechoslovakia)
3. "Not alone China, but the whole world needs these Teachings." (Y. S. Tsao, former President of the University of Shanghai)
4. "I regard it as one of the noblest of the world's religions." (Dr. R. F. Piper, Philosophy Dept., Syracuse University)
5. "The Bahá'í Faith. ... accepts all great Prophets gone before, it destroys no other creeds and leaves all doors open." (Dowager Marie of Rumania)
5. "They [the Bahá'ís] have done more to bring interreligious understanding to the world than any other religious group." (Dr. Paul Anderson, President of the Pennsylvania College for Women)
6. Dr. Pitrin A. Sorokin of Harvard University has called the Bahá'í Faith: "... this highly spiritual and moral religion."
7. Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons, American historian, writes of the Bahá'í teachings: "... they form an unanswerable argument and plea for the only way that the world can be made over. If we could put into effect this program, we should indeed have a new world order."
8. D. V. Lesney, famous scholar: "Bahá'u'lláh is a Savior of the Twentieth Century."

"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." "The Lord is come in His great glory!" "He, verily, is the One Whom ye were promised in the Books of God. ... How long will ye wander in the wilderness of heedlessness and superstition. Turn your hearts in the direction of your Lord, the Forgiving, the Generous."

"Every Prophet hath announced the coming of this day ... This Day is God's Day! ... Happy is he who hath renounced this world, and clung to Him. ..."

"Bestir yourselves, O people, ... for the promised hour is now come. Beware lest ye fail to apprehend its import.

..." "Night hath succeeded day, and day hath succeeded night, and the hours and moments of your lives have come and gone, yet none of you hath, for one instant, contented to detach yourself from that which perisheth. Bestir yourselves, that the brief moments that are still yours may not be dissipated and lost. Even as the swiftness of lightning your days shall pass, and your bodies shall be laid to rest beneath a canopy of dust. What can ye then achieve? How can ye atone for your past failure?"

"He Who is the Everlasting Father calleth aloud between earth and heaven. Blessed the ear that hath heard, and the eye that hath seen, and the heart that hath turned unto Him ... "This is that which the Son (Jesus) hath decreed." -- Bahá'u'lláh

APPENDIX, NOTE ONE (all the numbers below are F1, F2, F3, etc.)

1. The Bahá'í World, vol. V, 1932-1934, p. 604.
2. James Henry Foreman, *Story of Prophecy*, pp. 310-311.
3. James Russell Lowell, "The Crisis," (1843).
4. Job 38:35.
5. Numbers 23:23.
6. Matthew 24:3, 13-14.
7. *Year Book and Guide to East Africa*, p. 44, (Ed. Robert Hale Ltd., London, 1953).
8. Luke 21:7.
9. Ibid., 21:24, 27.
10. *Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 16, p. 31 (1944 Edition).
11. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Introduction by George Townshend, p. IV.
12. Revelation 11:2.
13. James Henry Foreman, *Story of Prophecy*, p. 88.
14. Matthew 24:15.
15. (1) Daniel, 9:24, 25. (2) 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 43.
16. Daniel 8:13, 14.
17. *Bible Reading*, edited by Review and Herald Publishing Co., Battle Creek, Michigan, U.S.A. p. 94.
18. Daniel 8:2, 7:13, 14.
19. Jeremiah 49:38.
20. Nabil, *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 49.
21. Jeremiah 5:21.
22. Matthew 13:11-16.
23. Ibid., 17:10; Mark 9:11.
24. Matthew 11:14, 15.
25. John 1:21.
26. Luke 1:15-17.
27. Matthew 17:10-13.
28. Ibid., 11:18.
29. Daniel 12:4; 8-9.
30. Isaiah 29:11-12.
31. I Corinthians 4:5.
32. II Peter 1:19-21.
33. *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, vol. III, p. 692.
34. Revelation 5:6, 9.
35. Daniel 7:10; 13-14.
36. Isaiah 62:2 and 65:15.
37. Revelation 2:17; 3:3, 12; 16:15.

APPENDIX, NOTE TWO

1. John 7:12.
2. Ibid., 6:66.
3. Matthew 24:23-24.
4. II Thessalonians 2:3.
5. II Peter 2:1-2.
6. Amos 8:11-12.
7. II Peter 3:3-4.
8. Mark 13:35-36.
9. Ibid., 13:37.
10. Matthew 24:48-51.
11. Ibid., 7:15-20.
12. Bahá'í World Faith, p. 440.
13. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 65.
14. J. E. Esselmont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 147.
15. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 101.
16. Ibid., p. 95.
17. J. E. Esselmont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 164.
18. Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 22.
19. (1) Ibid., pp. 21-22. (2) Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablet of Tar z t*, Tar z 3-4.
20. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 16.
21. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 199.
22. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 285.
23. Bahá'í World Faith, p. 189.
24. Zephaniah 3:8-9.
25. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 204.
26. C. C. Hurst, *Heredity, the Ascent of Man*, pp. 32, 35, 131.
27. Arthur H. Compton, *The Freedom of Man*, pp. 121, 126.
28. *Washington Star*, Article 12, 1936.
29. Bahá'í World Faith, p. 195.
30. *A Traveller's Narrative*, Introduction by E. G. Browne, p. XXXIX.

APPENDIX, NOTE THREE

1. Sir James Jeans, *Through Space and Time*, pp. 102, 154.
2. *Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. III, 1944 Ed., p. 691.
3. Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, pp. 40-41.

APPENDIX, NOTE FOUR

1. Nabil, *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 322.
2. Genesis 17:18, 20.
3. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 94.
4. Isaiah 11:1, 10, 12.
5. Ibid., 11:11.

APPENDIX, NOTE FIVE

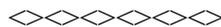
1. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 273-274.
2. Ibid., p. 276.
3. *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, 1950-1954, p. 225.

APPENDIX, NOTE SIX

1. Micah 7:2-4.
2. Ibid., 7:7, 9, 10.
3. Ibid., 4:10.
4. Ibid., 7:14.
5. Ibid., 7:12.
6. Ibid., 7:15.
7. Hosea 2:15.
8. Isaiah 65:10.
9. Ibid., 35:2.
10. Ibid., 35:1.
11. Ibid., 60:11-13.
12. Psalms 48:2.
13. Ezekiel 43:2, 4.
14. Ibid., 1:27-28.
15. Matthew 16:27.
16. Mark 12:1-9.
17. Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 106.

APPENDIX, NOTE SEVEN

1. John 10:16.
2. Zechariah, 14:9.
3. Habbakuk 2:14.
4. Revelation 21:1, 23.
5. Isaiah 4:1.
6. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 94-97.
7. Ibid., pp. 138-139.
8. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 316.
9. Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 106.
10. Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 131-132.
11. Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 110.
12. *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 51-52.



Also see:

<http://www.bcca.org/bahaivision/docs/kersting.html> (may be temporarily unavailable)

<http://www.homestead.com/watsongregory/files/station.htm>

<http://bci.org/prophecy-fulfilled/>

<http://www.manvell.org.uk/zeal/>

http://www.simjon.com/John/Bahai_Faith_in_Prophecy.htm

(*Release the Sun* is available to order from [Amazon](#) and from <http://www.bahaibooksonline.com>)

ENDNOTES