

**VISIONS OF GOD.** by Steve Day

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**THE WORLD OF THE UNSEEN**

*My soul yearns for thee in the night, my spirit within me earnestly seeks thee.*

Isaiah 26:9

There is a spirit in man, and that spirit yearns for reunion. We may tread for a moment the dust of this barren and sometimes wretched place, but somewhere within we know this earth is not our real home. The unseen self yearns for reunion in a world that is neither physical nor transient; a world established upon the eternal bonds of hope, love, dreams, knowledge, and compassion. In such a world as this we breathe not air but art, poetry, wisdom, harmony, and justice.

It is strange that however individually we may welcome the retreat and solace offered by this haven of the inner self, we still find it difficult to accept it as an everyday reality shared by all. Indeed this is an unseen and eternal world in which we all have a very real and very profound existence.

However we shall not make any attempt to perpetuate the fruitless and wrangling debate concerned with the existence, or non existence, of this spiritual realm of love, art, music, and knowledge - rather we shall proceed upon a journey, a journey of bold exploration and startling discovery. We shall journey inward and we shall journey outward, towards the elusive source of this mysterious and wonderful land. For if we should discover therein an ancient and hidden treasure - a secret both hidden and supremely manifest; well then, such a discovery would render all disputes superfluous and establish beyond all reasonable doubt, the existence of an infinite and eternal realm of existence. This discovery, is one of such magnitude, that it may be said to be the very purpose of all earthly existence.

On the first leg of this journey, we arm ourselves with the sure knowledge that a Messenger of great import was sent to us at the bidding of the Creator of both the “seen” and “unseen” kingdoms. That Messenger's name is, Yeshua ben Joseph; better known perhaps by the Greek form of His name, Jesus - the son of Joseph and Mary, and the Son of God. It is in this ancient and well-trampled arena that we tentatively take the first steps of our momentous journey. We shall attempt to peer through the haze of some two thousand years of misconstrued and doctrinal opinion. For I believe that it is only now, in the light of this magnificent and illumined century, that we may discover for ourselves the incorruptible heart and the astonishing secret of His teachings.

Mark 4:22 Nothing was hidden but that it should be brought to light.

But first, a word of caution: if, upon this journey, we are to soar like birds in an unclouded atmosphere of discovery - our wings must be light. Our hearts and minds must be free from the weight of any preconceived notion, doctrine, or opinion. How often, throughout our vast history of development, has this inability to shed the veil of tradition, blinded our eyes to the verity of great discoveries and great truths? Only if we release ourselves from this tenacious impediment, will we be enabled to complete the journey and reach the desired goal.

Jesus, aware of our attachment to opinion, and ancient dogma, adequately demonstrated just what is required to see, hear, and enter in upon this secret kingdom of discovery. That something is the ability to see and hear with the eager eyes and ears of a child. For children - having not yet acquired the learned opinions that mark the obstinacy and pride of adulthood, are ready, willing, and excited at the prospect of any discovery.

So in preparation for our journey we should make a genuine effort, and with great humility place to one side our age-old opinions, lest they be the very rocks upon which our feet stumble.

On the first step of our journey we shall beg the question:

What was the real message of Jesus?

We may be reasonably certain, from a multitude of scriptural references that a major concern of His mission was to establish within us, a greater awareness of the existence of a world apart from this physical one. Indeed He bought us the understanding of an “unseen” kingdom, distinct from and certainly preferable to the world of the seen.

To His deniers He would announce,

John 8:23 ...You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.

Further in the Gospel we find these inspired words:

James 4:4 ...Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1Corinthians 15:50 I tell you this, brethren: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

2Corinthians 4:18 Because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

These last, seemingly inconsequential words, form the bedrock of our first discovery. Look again, the statement is far from trivial, it is both profound and sweeping. It could be rendered thus:

All that is material and physically discernible, will eventually fade and perish, but that which is not discernible to the eye and not physical, cannot fade; it is unseen and eternal.

Now we are all sufficiently aware, that the physical “seen” aspect of our being has an all too common tendency to shrivel up and cease to be. We refer to this process as ageing and death.

Can this be all there is?

Is this physical body all I really am?

What of the unseen aspects of my being?

What of my feelings, my hopes, my dreams, my knowledge, the love I feel for humanity, the love I feel for my Creator, my yearning to reach for Him, and my hunger for unity peace and justice?

It would certainly appear that we all possess a certain non-physical something; something, which is our very being; something that is above and beyond any temporary, or indeed any permanent physical injury we may incur. How often have we seen the character, personality, and spirit of a person strengthened by a disabling physical injury.

Will this unseen self perish along with the body?

Well there is nothing in scripture to suggest it will, but much indeed to suggest it wont.

That we all possess an indwelling self referred to in scripture and philosophy as the “soul” or “spirit” is readily discernible from the Holy Writings. In the Old Testament book of Isaiah is the quite beautiful:

Isaiah 26:9 My soul yearns for thee in the night, my spirit within me earnestly seeks thee.

Add to this:

Job 32:8 But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes

him understand.

1Corinthians3:16 Do you not know that you are God's Temple and that God's spirit dwells in you.

Luke 17:20 The Kingdom of God is within you.

James 4:5 He [God] yearns jealously over the spirit which He has made to dwell in us.

1Peter 3:3 Let not yours be the outward adorning...but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit.

Psalms 31:6 Into Thy hands I commit my spirit.

These, and many more like them, are one and all references to that unfading inner self, that “unseen” soul or spirit, which does not, and can not, perish along with the physical body. This is the life that Jesus said couldn't be killed by the sword.

So, why are we concerning ourselves with all this?

If we all possess an unseen inner self that survives the physical decline and death of the body, let's continue to live a purely physical life and deal with the life of the spirit, as and when it departs from the body.

This appears a perfectly logical (not to mention easy to live up to) ideology, but as you would expect, it does not fully embrace reality.

To experience life in this physical world we require physical nourishment - food and water. With this we develop our limbs and organs, and with these we walk around, see, hear, discover things, and generally live.

To experience life in the unseen world, however, your food is knowledge, compassion, humility, justice, love and the knowledge of God. These are the

arms and legs of the unseen kingdom, and to experience this unseen life to the full, we must develop these qualities to the utmost of our abilities, and this we must do whilst still in the world of the seen.

Should we choose to ignore these essential requirements of the spiritual life, and should we develop a character closer to one of selfishness, cruelty, ignorance, and pride, then we could well be termed as being spiritually dead.

When Jesus referred to the relatives of one of His would be followers as “the dead burying the dead”, He clearly meant they were spiritually dead. They were obviously alive in the physical sense for they were occupied with the physical task of burial. However, had they been acquainted with the life of the unseen spirit, and had they been possessed of a yearning for wisdom, compassion, and humility, they would have recognised Jesus as the source of these things, followed Him, and relinquished their concern with the transitory world of the seen.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

John 8:51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if any one keeps my word, he will never see death.

John 11:26 And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

John 6:50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die.

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life.

Those who truly hear the Word of God pass from death to life, in fact they will never see death. Now clearly this is not a reference to the physical decline of the body, which needs must will perish and no doubt will see death. Jesus is clearly referring to the life of the unseen soul or spirit that

dwells within each one of us.

1Corinthians3:16 Do you not know that you are God's Temple and that God's spirit dwells in you.

Romans 8:16 It is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

If we receive the life giving words and wisdom of God we are transformed, we are born again. But not into the physical world, this time we are born into the unfading splendour of the world of the spirit. And just as in the physical world, we require a physical sun to provide us with light and life, so it is that in the spiritual world, we have need of a spiritual sun, a Divine Educator, to provide us with spiritual light and life.

And just as in the physical world we require physical nourishment in order to grow, so it is that in the spiritual world we require heavenly bread and heavenly water. This spiritual light, this spiritual food, is the Word and the Wisdom that emanates from God, and this is the subject of the next section.

### **MORE PRECIOUS THAN RUBIES**

*She is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.*

*Proverbs 3:15*

Wisdom is calling her children. She calls from the crossroads and from the high places. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her, and the man who finds her, finds life.

Proverbs 8:17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Notice the similarity here with our earlier reference to Isaiah:

Isaiah 26:9 My soul yearns for thee in the night, my spirit within me earnestly seeks thee.

Not forgetting the famous statement from the New Testament:

Matthew 7:7...Seek and ye shall find.

We are being urged to seek and find something. But what exactly is the object of our quest?

The object of our quest is nothing less than the Wisdom of God. A journey to the third chapter of Proverbs reveals that “She” was the first amongst all created things. “She” was made in the very beginning; “She” was with God like an Architect, and through “Her” the earth was created.

Proverbs 3:19 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth.

Proverbs 8:22-9:5 The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old...when he established the heavens, I was there...I was beside him like a master workman...I was daily his delight...he who finds me finds life...come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine...

We should compare these beautiful statements concerning God's wisdom, with the opening verses of the New Testament book of John.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God...He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him...In Him was life...

It is evident that The Word and The Wisdom of God, are both references to the life giving light of divine knowledge that emanates from the Source of all knowledge. It is the very Bread of Heaven and the Wine of God's “unseen” kingdom.

Jesus brought this light to the world. He conveyed “The Word” and He conveyed “The Wisdom” of God. In this respect we identify Him as “The Word” and “The Wisdom” of God.

1Corinthians 1:24 Christ Who is the wisdom of God.

But what, in these times of liberation and equality, do we make of the many references within the Old Testament to a “feminine” aspect of The Wisdom of God?

Proverbs 3:15 She [is] more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

Proverbs 1:20 Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

Proverbs 9:1 Wisdom hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

Proverbs 31:26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue [is] the law of kindness.

Proverbs 3:18 She [is] a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy [is every one] that retaineth her.

Proverbs 9:3 She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city.

How do we reconcile this with the masculine nature of Jesus, and the masculine “Word”?

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God...He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him...In Him was life...

And just to confuse the matter further, if you gain access to a copy of the New Testament in its original Greek, you will find this quite beautiful and profound statement:

John 10:17...I lay down the life of me, that again I may receive her; no one takes her from me, but I lay down her of myself; authority I have to lay down her, and authority I have again to receive her; this the command I

received from the Father...

It is unfortunate, if not altogether surprising, given the highly patriarchal society of the time, that the original New Testament Greek word for “Her” - “Auteen” - has been rendered as the rather more neutral, “It”, stripping the passage of its intended reference to the feminine Wisdom of the Old Testament.

John 10:17...I lay down my life, that I may take “it” again. No one takes “it” from me, but I lay “it” down of my own accord. I have power to lay “it” down, and I have power to take “it” again; this charge I have received from my Father.

There is really no reason why we shouldn't accept the original references to God's Wisdom for what they purely and simply are, references to those feminine qualities of safety and compassionate shelter, that every mother lovingly offers her children. The same loving shelter that God offers those who seek the shelter of His unseen kingdom of wisdom and love.

So it is to this gentle motherly nature of God's wisdom that Jesus refers when he addresses His reality in such beautiful feminine terms. For, although physically He was a man, in His real nature we can see the fusion, equality, and essential unity of that which is masculine with that which is feminine.

Jesus was a Messenger of God in that He came to deliver a message; a message entrusted to Him by God. A message of such importance, that He readily consented to denial, persecution and a grotesque crucifixion, in order that it might be delivered.

John 17:8 I have given them the message that You gave Me.

This message, these words of Wisdom from God to His people, must rank in importance above all other considerations. For it is by these words, and by the light of this message, that we are delivered from the night of spiritual darkness and ignorance, and brought into the dazzling light of a spiritual

dawn.

John 6:63...the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

These very words spoken by Jesus, words given to Him by God, contain the essence of His real nature. He is The Word and Wisdom of God. His reality does not consist merely of being a messenger but rather of being: The Message!

John 1:1 In the beginning was The Word and The Word was with God...

1Corinthians 1:24 Christ Who is The Wisdom of God.

It is, after all, His words that have endured, and it is by those words that we have come to know and love Him. That is not to say that the essence and reality of Jesus consists of a mere grouping together of sentences and paragraphs. The words convince us by their spiritual power. The words convey the spirit of Jesus and the Wisdom of God.

A useful analogy is that of a lamp and its light. We can readily appreciate that the essence, the function, and the reality of the lamp resides in its ability to give light. If the lamp sheds no light then it is useless.

If we see the person of Jesus as the lamp, and The Word of God as the light which shines from the lamp, then we can see that the essence and reality of Jesus (the lamp) is The Word and Wisdom of God (the light).

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

2Corinthians 4:4...the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Obviously any understanding of the reality of Jesus, is going to be somewhat restricted due to our limited ability, as human beings, to comprehend His reality.

Just as a painting can not possess the ability to comprehend its painter, humanity will never possess the ability to fully comprehend its God. Nor can we adequately realise the station of the Messenger and Manifestation of His Wisdom, Jesus. However, within those accepted limits, we can at the very least obtain a useful understanding of His purpose and catch a glimpse of His reality.

From His own words we may surmise that the message is the essential thing. The life giving wisdom of the words of God - words which came through Jesus from God.

John 14:10...The words that I have spoken to you...do not come from Me, the Father who remains in me does His own work.

John 14:24...And the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

Jesus left many allusions to the mystical relationship between Himself and God the Father; Statements which at the time were the cause of great consternation and provoked allegations of blasphemy and possession.

John 14:9...Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father.

John 14:11...I am in the Father and the Father is in Me.

John 10:30 The Father and I are one.

Even to this day, there lingers a great wrangling and division amongst Christians concerning His real nature. Do we take the above statements as literal in meaning, or are they allegorical? Is Jesus God? Is He a God separate from God? Is He God's only Son? Is He the Spirit of God? Or is that a separate entity too?

The numerous and divergent interpretations concerning the divinity and reality of Jesus, are surely sufficient witness in themselves to humanities inability to comprehend His reality.

We need a new approach.

Let's construct a simple model to help us reach a valuable understanding of the relationship between God and Jesus. You may construct the model in your imagination, or your living room. It matters not, either will suffice to demonstrate the principle.

First we take a source of light, a candle, a light bulb, or ideally the sun. Now place within the compass of it's light a mirror, in such a way that you see a perfect reflection of the source of light, within the mirror.

God is light, and for the purpose of our demonstration, we represent God by the source of light. If you have chosen to place your mirror in the light of the sun, then the sun - being the source of all light - represents God. The mirror, reflecting the light of the sun, represents Jesus; and the light itself represents The Word and Wisdom of God.

If we now look again at those difficult sayings of Jesus we should be able to grasp the intended meaning.

“Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father.”

[Whoever has looked in the mirror has seen the Sun.]

“I am in the Father and the Father is in Me.”

[The mirror is in the sun and the sun is in the mirror.]

“The Father and I are one.”

[The sun and its light share an essential unity. They are one and indivisible.]

With the aid of this simple yet effective model, we can appreciate that the essential thing here is the light. For without the transmission of light, we can see no sun. Without light there can be no mirror, and without light, no image in the mirror.

The light symbolises here, and in the Holy Scriptures, the Word and Wisdom of God.

2Corinthians 4:4...the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

So, we should have no need to construct a complicated trinity of sun, mirror, and light, or, God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit. Indeed there exists no real separation. For on the level of the spirit (the light) all are one and indivisible. We may speak of the sun; we may speak of the light of the sun; we may speak of the mirrored image of the sun. But we must understand that all three are perspectives of one reality.

Perhaps we now have something approaching a rudimentary appreciation of the mystical relationship between Jesus and His Father. And perhaps we are even closer to the essence and reality of Jesus Himself.

It may be that the journey thus far, has been one of painstakingly establishing truths that you are already quite comfortable with. If so, I apologise for the tedium and trust you will bear with me.

We have much exciting ground to cover, some of which you may find not only difficult to accept, but even downright intolerable. Whichever the case I can certainly promise you that from now on the journey becomes one of amazing mystery and discovery.

What we must carry with us as we approach the next section of our journey, is the understanding that Jesus brought us The Word and The Wisdom of God. This is the reality of Jesus; and THIS! Above all else, must remain our only quest.

## **THE RETURN OF WISDOM**

*The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen...the Kingdom of God is within you.*

*Luke 17:20*

The Word and Wisdom of God - Jesus - gave us no cause to doubt that He would return.

John 14:28 I go away, and I will come to you.

Revelation 22:12 Listen says Jesus I am coming soon.

Matthew 24:42 Be on your guard then, Because you do not know what day your Lord will come.

Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega...saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.

These are the words of Jesus, or more correctly (and the realisation and acceptance of this is essential if our search for the return of Wisdom is to bear fruit) these are the words of God - spoken THROUGH Jesus!

John 14:10...The words that I have spoken to you...do not come from Me, the Father who remains in me does His own work.

If we look again to that simple analogy of the mirror (Jesus) reflecting the image of the sun (God), it is the image within the mirror of Jesus that speaks to us, and it is the image of God that is saying: "I will return".

So, we come swiftly upon the first major stumbling stone of the journey. At this point many will find cause to abandon the chase, and return to the apparent security of an ancient belief.

Should you fall into this category, you need read no further.

However, for those who possess the required freedom of spirit, the desire for adventure, and that all important yearning for wisdom - the Wisdom of God - the excitement of discovery begins.

We are about to embrace the notion that Jesus of Nazareth was not the only Major Messenger of God.

Moses, before Jesus, came with a Message from God. He, like Jesus, revealed The Word and Wisdom of God. To Moses God spoke these words:

Exodus 4:12 I will tell You what to say.

And further on in the New Testament:

John 3:34 Whom God has sent speaks God's Words.

John 1:16 God gave the Law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus.

It should be clear from the last quotation that God sends His Wisdom “THROUGH” His Divine Messengers. Just as with our model of the mirror, the light and the image of the sun comes to us “THROUGH” the mirror. So, our model now requires the presence of another mirror. One mirror represents the person of Jesus, the other, the person of Moses. And now we can clearly see that the light of the sun shines equally within each mirror. Within each glows the same image - the same sun.

The followers of Moses, but for a select and chosen few, held fast to the ancient and traditional beliefs of their forefathers. Stubbornly they turned from the light glowing within the mirror of Jesus; not knowing that it radiated from the same source as the light that had shone from the mirror that was Moses.

As we stand poised to embark upon the next stage of our search for the return of Wisdom. We must take great care that we do not repeat the error of those followers of Moses: an error that cut them off from, and blinded their eyes too, the return of the Wisdom of God in the form of Yeshua ben Joseph.

John 16:12 I have yet many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He may come the spirit of truth, He will lead you unto all truth, for He will not speak of Himself, He will speak whatever He may hear, and declare to you the coming things.

Hidden within this passage is a key of immense value. We must examine these statements very closely and without bias or prejudice.

The first thing to note is that the “Spirit of Truth” is referred to with the masculine pronoun “He”. “He may come” - “He will lead” - “He will speak”.

It has been traditional practice to interpret this as a reference to the “masculine” Holy Spirit, descending upon the disciples, sometime after the crucifixion of Jesus.

This theory does not stand the test of investigation.

If we examine the above passage in it's earliest and most exact form, we discover that a Greek pronoun - pronounced “Ekeenos” - has in two instances within this passage alone, been erroneously translated as a simple “He”.

You will appreciate the importance of this when you discover that “Ekeenos” is not in fact equivalent to a simple “He”. “Ekeenos” (as any good book on New Testament Greek will testify) is a “singular demonstrative masculine pronoun”. An exact transliteration, therefore, would have correctly rendered “Ekeenos”, as the phrase, “That Man”.

Should we read again the passage, using the more exact rendition of the word “Ekeenos”, it would read thus:

John 16:12 I have as yet many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. But when THAT MAN may come, The Spirit of Truth, He will lead you unto all truth...

Common sense, and the sheer weight of evidence we are yet to unveil, should avail you of the intended meaning.

Clearly the disciples, to whom Jesus addressed these words, would have been well versed in the usage of the word “ekeenos” and its Aramaic equivalent. Surely they would not have written “that Man” unless that was precisely the sentiment conveyed to them by Jesus.

And just as Jesus repeatedly emphasised that His words were not His own, He leaves us in no doubt that the words to be spoken by this other man will be taken from the same source.

John 16:13 ...for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come...for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you...All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew[it] unto you.

So to the disciples the message was plain, even if the implication was, at first, somewhat confusing.

Jesus, in unmistakable terms, speaks of His return. He also speaks of the appearance of another man! They shall see Him and they shall not see Him!

John 16:17 Then said [some] of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

John 16:20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

John 16:21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a MAN is born into the world.

Again, to dispel the confusion amongst the disciples, Jesus makes a clear reference to the appearance of a man.

How can we reconcile this apparent dilemma?

Is Jesus saying He will return?

Or, is He pointing us to another man?

We have already established the simple model by which we may solve the enigma - the mirror is another mirror, but the image within is one and the same.

Jesus, with reference to Himself as the Word and Wisdom of God, is saying: "I will return - you will see Me".

Jesus, referring to His physical reality, is saying: "Another man will come - you will not see Me".

The Word and Wisdom of God, as we established in the previous section, is the essence and the reality of Jesus. If that reality should return, and Jesus assures us it will, then this is none-other than the return of Jesus, albeit in the form of another Man.

This, if you can bear it, is the quantum leap. It is not the mirror that speaks but the image within the mirror - it is not the man that speaks but God within the man. Now, should the image of God within the mirror of Jesus announce its future appearance upon the surface of yet another mirror, are we to reject the light of God because it shines from another mirror?

When the old lamp fades, do we reject the light of a new lamp?

Does a man dying of thirst reject fresh water offered from a new cup?

As ludicrous as it sounds, time and time again we reject the pure water of the

Word and Wisdom of God on account of its appearance in a fashion contrary to our expectations.

When Jesus appeared the majority of the people held fast to their traditions. To His light, they were blind. Even the esteemed religious leaders of the day, who had (to their own satisfaction) accepted the Wisdom of Moses, were veiled from the light of Jesus. Yet the light has but one source. The mirror reflects the same indivisible image.

And yet, we must not allow the acceptance of this truth to, in any way, diminish, challenge, or bring into doubt, our acceptance and belief in Jesus. Quite the opposite, in fact, should be the case. If we accept that the reality of Jesus is His station as The Word and Wisdom of God; and if that is what we seek, then we are searching for the real Jesus. Should we discover that reality, such a discovery can only serve in bringing us ever closer to the object of our desire. The Wisdom and love of God.

So, thusfar we have established a few salient points.

Jesus will return, or more correctly, The Word and Wisdom of God (the reality of Jesus) will return.

The Word and Wisdom of God will appear in the form of “Ekeenos” - that man.

But what of the fashion of this return? In what manner can we expect the reality of Jesus to manifest itself? Well, if we have learnt anything at all from the repetition of religious history, surely it is that the Promised One will come in a way least expected by the vast majority of humanity.

Millions are waiting for the physical return of Jesus, upon a physical cloud. Millions are waiting for a day of awesome grandeur, the heavens alight with a myriad sparkling angels.

And millions still wait for the appearance of the Old Testament Messiah; the King and liberator of the Jews; the Christ!

If we are to recognise the promised appearance of The Word of God in His new attire, we must divest ourselves from the leprosy of traditional expectations. Expectations that have so blinded the eyes of our former generations.

The Scriptures adequately announce that the Return of Jesus on that Day of Days, the Day of God, will be (for those with the eyes to see) a Day of glorious radiance. However, for those who lack the necessary purity of vision, it will be a Day of great darkness and clouds.

Zephaniah 1:15 That day [is] a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness

Joel 2:2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness.

Psalms 97:2 Clouds and darkness [are] round about him: righteousness and judgement [are] the habitation of his throne.

Matthew 26:64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds

To those with the eyes to see, the appearance of The Word of God in the guise of another man, will be a luminous event. Indeed it will be easily perceived by every open and spiritual eye.

For with the physical eye, the Kingdom of God cannot be seen.

Luke 17:20 The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen...the Kingdom of God is within you.

Further evidence of the unexpected fashion of His return can be seen in the

following references:

2Peter 3:10 The Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.

Revelation 3:3 I will come upon you like a thief.

Now, a thief does not broadcast his appearance. He comes hidden, and not in a way to be seen. In fact, we generally discover the presence of a thief AFTER his visit! Especially if he is a “good” thief.

Surely this is the “judgement” that Jesus refers to when He says:

John12:47 If anyone hears my sayings...I do not judge him...the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day.

For it is by our individual ability to perceive the hidden glory of His return, that we are distinguished from the people of error. And it can only be by our individual ability to see beyond the traditional; beyond the literal; beyond the outer meanings of God's Word that we are judged.

At this stage we are chasing shafts of light in search of the sun. When we reach our destination, however, the resplendent glory of the sun will be its own proof - all previous doubts and apprehensions will surely be forgotten.

Let's move a little closer.

### **THE NAME ON THE WHITE STONE**

*I will also give each of them a white stone on which is written a New Name that no one knows except the one who receives it.*

*Revelation 2:17*

In ancient times, if a member of an organisation or brotherhood wished to stage a function or a secret meeting, he would have issued, to each of those whom he desired to attend, a stone: upon that stone he would inscribe a secret name.

Let's say he inscribes the name "Arthur" upon each stone.

Should a person arrive at the function bearing a stone upon which is inscribed the name "Arthur", that person shall be admitted to the festivities. Anybody attempting to gain entrance with a name other than "Arthur" inscribed on their stone, will be turned away an obvious impostor.

This ancient custom is clearly referred to in the above verse taken from the last book of the Bible. The stone is white, a symbol (to the Jews) of victory. The New Name inscribed on the stone, is thus far, a secret.

This theme of a "New Name" permeates other scriptural references concerned with the return of Wisdom, and the establishment of God's Great Day.

Isaiah 62:2 Jerusalem, the nations will see you victorious. All their Kings will see your glory, you will be called by a new name, a Name given to you by the Lord Himself.

Isaiah 65:15...I will give a new name to those who obey Me.

Isaiah 56:5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

And in the New Testament...

Revelation 3:12 I will make him who is victorious a pillar in the Temple of My God...I will write on him the Name of My God and the Name of the City of My God. I will also write on him My New Name.

Revelation 19:11 Then I saw heaven open, and there was a white horse, its rider is called faithful and true, it is with justice that He judges and fights His battles. His eyes were like a flame of fire...He had a Name written on Him, but no one except Himself knows what it is.

Revelation 2:17 To those who win the victory I will give some of the hidden manna, I will also give each of them a white stone on which is written a New Name that no-one knows except the one who receives it.

Revelation 22:4 They will see His face and His Name will be written on their foreheads.

We will now endeavour to unfold what must be considered the greatest discovery to which any human being can ascribe - the discovery of the New Name under which the Word and Wisdom of God will return.

You will not find any direct and precise references to the New Name under which Jesus will appear, for there are none. It is, after all, a hidden secret, known to none but "he who receives it". It is only now, in this enlightened era, that the secret of the New Name may be discovered.

The Old Testament, in similar fashion, made no direct reference to the name under which the promised Messiah would appear. Most of the world now acknowledges that name to be Jesus. However, it must be conceded that the only allusions made to the name of the Messiah in the Old Testament are indirect - to say the least:

Daniel 10:21 But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and [there is] none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Both of these titles come to us from the ancient Hebrew. Michael (one who is like God) and Immanuel (God is with us), are both symbolic titles referring to the spiritual reality of the promised Messiah. These examples alone are a pretty good indication that the meanings and prophecies of the Bible should not be interpreted literally, there is always a hidden meaning, our God continually urges us to look deeper.

Michael was a name associated with the "Archangel" or "Chief-Messenger" and Saviour of the children of Israel. Likewise the name Immanuel became associated with the One Who would reflect the very "image" of God.

So we can appreciate that even though the name "Jesus" was not referred to directly within the text of the Old Testament, the essential characteristics of the Promised Saviour (Jesus) are embodied and hidden in the titles Michael and Immanuel. To those with the eyes to see, Jesus (the name Jesus has its origin in the Hebrew Joshua meaning, "God is salvation") was the very image and likeness of God - He was Michael. To those with the eyes to see, when Jesus was with them, God was with them - He Was Immanuel.

We propose, therefore, that: the "New Name" under which Jesus will return, may well be referred to in the same indirect and allegorical fashion.

With this in mind we can search the text of the Bible for any instances that would suggest the meaning of the New Name, together with any references to the attributes and character of its Possessor.

If we conduct such a search we find there is one phrase in particular, that occurs again and again within references to the return of Jesus, and the emergence of God's Great Day.

That phrase is "the Glory of God" or "the Glory of the Lord".

Isaiah 40:5 And the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

Isaiah 58:8 The Glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

Isaiah 35:2 And the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the Glory of the Lord.

Ezekiel 43:2 And the Glory of the God of Israel came from the east, and his voice was like the sound of many waters.

Ezekiel 43:4 And the Glory of the Lord came into the House.

Ezekiel 43:4 This was the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of the Lord.

Isaiah 60:1 Thy light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

And within the New Testament...

Revelation 21:2-23 The Holy City Jerusalem...shining with the Glory of God...for the Glory of God did lighten it.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father.

Further to this we note from the book of Revelation that the New Name is known to none but the bearer. And His Name is: "The Word of God."

Revelation 19:12 He had a Name written on Him, but no one except Himself knows what it is. The robe He wore was covered in blood. His Name is The Word of God.

Both these titles: "The Word of God" and "The Glory of God" allude to the meaning of the New Name. We should remember - the Name itself is known to none but the Bearer.

We also discover the following references, again taken from the book of Revelation:

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True

Revelation 19:16 And he hath on [his] vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Let's place our findings in a group.

The Glory of God

The Word of God  
Faithful and True  
King of Kings  
Lord of Lords

From this we may conclude that the New Name, and its bearer, will manifest, and be worthy of, all the above descriptions.

However, further to this documentation there exists, hidden within the mystic cloak of scripture, precise and incontrovertible evidence concerning the secret of the Name on the white stone. This exciting new evidence is the subject of the next section.

### **THE HIDDEN NUMBER**

*PRIVATE And the angel said to me, "Rise and measure the Temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship within."*

*Revelation 11:1*

In biblical times names and numbers lived in a perfect and mystical harmony. The Hebrew language used symbols as a means of conveying both a sound and a number associated with that sound. In this way Aleph, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, may also represent the number one. Beth is equal to two, and so on.

If you know a man's name and therefore the letters comprising his name, then by adding the numerical value of each letter you may determine the number associated with that name - you would then have the "measure" of the man.

This is of great significance, because the angel in the above verse, taken from the book of Revelation, is asking John of Patmos to "measure" - not only the Temple - but also the people within the Temple.

Until now it has been common practice to interpret this as meaning: "Go and count the people within the Temple" primarily because no other meaning to this beautifully symbolic, and seemingly enigmatic verse, was forthcoming. Consequently, later versions of the Bible have rendered the above passage as: "Go and count those who are worshipping in the Temple."

However, if we refer to the original Greek text, we find the command is quite unambiguous - the order is to rise and "measure" the people within the Temple. In this respect the good old Authorised Version retains the original meaning of measuring and not counting; for this reason, amongst many others, it is one of the preferred renditions for our journey of discovery.

Further evidence to substantiate the theory of measurement and not counting can be found in the last but one chapter of Revelation:

Revelation 21:17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel.

This verse is very important to us. In many ways it holds the key to our search and we shall, in due course, return to it for a more thorough examination. For the moment, however, the phrase, "The measure of a man" can only reinforce our claim that we are indeed looking for a measurement and not a head count.

Should we now interpret the command to measure the people within the Temple as meaning: "ascertain the measure of these people" (or) "find the single number that is the measure of them all", then we shall find ourselves on the verge of an exiting and very major discovery!

However, before we go on to measure the Temple and the people worshipping within, it would be of significant value to note the following point. Throughout the Bible, those who are designated as God's "chosen people", are represented as being within the boundaries and confines of His Temple.

Furthermore, it can be seen that references to the Temple are not merely references to the physical construction of the Temple, they are also

references to the Temple of the Word and Wisdom of God. They who reside within the sanctuary of this Temple are the righteous followers of His Teachings. The Bible refers to these people as: Israel, God's Nation, God's chosen servants.

Psalms 27:4 One [thing] have I desired of the LORD...that I may dwell in the house of the Lord...and to enquire in his temple.

Psalms 65:4 Blessed [is the man whom] thou choosest, and causest to approach [unto thee, that] he may dwell in thy courts:

Isaiah 56:5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters.

Ezekiel 42:20 The wall [of the Temple] served to separate what was holy from what was not.

To be in the Lord's presence, is to be within the confines of His Holy Temple. To be within His Temple, is to be within the loving shelter and sanctuary of His Word and Wisdom. If we jump ahead to the book of Revelation we find this:

Revelation 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne...clothed with white robes...

Revelation 7:14...These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white...

Revelation 7:15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.

The things we should note here are:

1. John speaks of a multitude that no man can number.

2. The multitude is within God's Temple.
3. They stand before the throne of God.
4. They are God's chosen servants.
5. They are victorious - having come through a great tribulation.
6. They are dressed in white (representing purification).

Further references, by John, to the multitude within the Temple reveal these astonishing facts.

Revelation 22:3-4...and his servants shall serve him...And they shall see his face; and his name [shall be] in their foreheads

Revelation 7:3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

This is not the first time we have encountered this victorious crowd. A crowd that "no man could number". Nor is it our first encounter with the New Name!

Revelation 2:17 To those who win the victory I will give some of the hidden manna, I will also give each of them a white stone on which is written a New Name that no-one knows except the one who receives it.

It is becoming increasingly obvious, and will continue to do so the further we go on, that: "sealed in their foreheads", is a reference to God's chosen people who have won the victory against blind tradition, self, and doctrine. They have (of their own volition) recognised and pledged allegiance to, the Revelation of the New Name. The Name sealed in their minds and written on the white stone of their purified hearts.

And now!

Revelation 7:4 I heard the number of them that were sealed and there were sealed 144,000...

Revelation 14:1...with Him were 144,000 people who have His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads...

Revelation 14:3 The 144,000 people stood before the throne...they are the only ones who have been redeemed.

This is amazing! The multitude that no man could number has a number, and it is 144,000.

What can this mean?

Well, we have thus far seen what it cannot mean. It cannot possibly mean that John "counted" 144,000 people worshipping before the throne, because earlier John said no man could number the multitude before the throne. Further evidence to support this idea can be found in the Old Testament book of Isaiah. Isaiah also received a vision of the One Who sat upon the throne, and the multitude standing before Him:

Daniel 7:9-10 I beheld till the [other] thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit...and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him...!

Remember that the angel of Revelation did not ask John to "count" the worshippers - he asked him to "measure" them!

Could this number be the "measure" of the people within the Temple? The "standard" by which they are measured, and therefore, the number by which they may be identified?

If so, what does the number signify?

We started this chapter with a reference to the ancient and mystical

relationship that exists between numbers and letters. We intimated that a number could be used to refer to a name, and may even be used in place of it. Further evidence of this custom can be seen in the famous verses of Revelation describing the number of the name of the beast.

Revelation 13:17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

At this stage I am somewhat tentatively suggesting that, the number identifying the servants of God (144000) is the measure of the New Name we seek. And, according to ancient tradition, this number is both a reference to and a simile of that Name; the New Name that will establish God's New Era; the Name under which the Word and Wisdom of God, the essence and reality of Jesus, will return.

Let's review a few items.

1. Throughout the Bible the phrase the "Temple of God" refers, outwardly, to the actual material structure of the Temple. In other places the phrase clearly adopts an inner spiritual meaning, in this sense it is a reference to the spiritual Temple of God's Word.
2. John's vision of those who worship within the Temple is symbolic of the appearance of the Temple of God's Word and those who seek its sanctuary.
3. Those who have recognised and sought the sanctuary of that spiritual Temple are said to be within the confines of its walls.
4. The "measure" of the great crowd (which no man can number) within the Temple of God's Word is: 144,000
5. We are asked by the angel of Revelation to "Go and measure the Temple..."

Having obtained the measure of the people, we must now obtain the measure of the Temple.

Throughout the Bible we find that precise measurements are rendered for the actual physical construction of the Temple. However, as we are about to discover, these measurements are themselves of a highly symbolic nature. Within them is concealed a great mystery. The task we now set ourselves is the same task given to John of Patmos in his vision, described in the book of Revelation. Let's rise and measure the Temple of God.

We shall construct a list of Temple measurements, wherever they may occur in the Bible. Where we have figures for height, width, and depth, we shall multiply them together to obtain the total volume of the Temple.

In some instances the width and depth appear alone, with no mention of height. In these cases we are only able to obtain the area of the Temple and not it's entire volume. However, due to the magical quality of a certain number used in the divine mathematics, this has no bearing on the outcome.

Revelation 11:1 Rise and measure the Temple of God, and the alter, and them that worship within.

Note: All measurements are in Cubits.

Solomon's Temple in Kings: 60x20x30 [1 Kings 6.2] 36,000

Solomon's Temple in Chronicles: 60x20x120 [2Ch 3.3-4] 144,000

Zerubabel's Temple: 60x60 [No height given] [Ezra 6.3] 3,600

Temple of Ezekiel's vision: 3000x3000 [Ezekiel 42.15-20] 9,000,000

Temple wall 6x6      36

East gate threshold 6x6 [Ezekiel 40.6]      36

Such are the numbers concerned with the measurement of the Temple.

There are other highly significant measurements in the Bible concerned with sacred items, which, like the Temple, are a means of salvation and sanctuary to God's chosen people.

Noah's Ark was a means of salvation to those who would take heed of God's Wisdom. Another means of salvation was the Ark of the Covenant box within which were contained God's laws and commandments.

Noah's Ark measured 300x50x30 [Gen 6.15] 450,000

The Ark of the covenant box: 2.5x1.5x1.5 cubits [Exodus 25.10] 5.625

In the New Testament book of Revelation we find measurements for the Holy City New Jerusalem. Again a symbol of redemption and sanctuary to God's chosen.

The Holy City Jerusalem 12,000 x 12,000 reeds.

[Note: 1 Reed = 6 Cubits]

1728x10E9 (1728 followed by nine zeros)

"And he measured the wall thereof, 144 cbts, according to the measure of a man that is of the angel." 144

All the above numbers are derived from physical constructions that are used to represent the sanctuary of God's Word. In the last reference we are even given the measure of the messenger "the man who is an angel" who delivers the Word of God. It is the measure and the "Name" of this Messenger of God that we so ardently seek.

So what startling discovery may we conclude from the above evidence: if you have not already seen the obvious solution its time to reveal all - the above numbers have one thing and one thing alone in common.

They are all multiples of the number nine!

The number nine, alone of all numbers, possesses a certain magical quality, a quality well known to the ancients. It is that any number which is a multiple

of nine will resolve to nine when its individual digits are added together.  
Thus:

$$9 \times 2 = 18 \quad \text{and} \quad 1 + 8 = 9$$

$$9 \times 16 = 144 \quad \text{and} \quad 1 + 4 + 4 = 9$$

$$9 \times 29 = 558 \quad \text{and} \quad 5 + 5 + 8 = 18 \quad \text{and} \quad 1 + 8 = 9$$

Try this yourself; no matter what the number you choose to multiply it with, the digits of the answer will always resolve to the number nine. With this deceptively simple method we may discover whether or not a number is a multiple of, and, therefore, based on the number nine.

It is in this mystical, mathematically perfect and conclusive way, that our Creator has hidden the numerical equivalent of the New Name of His Promised Messenger.

To those "with the eyes to see" this number represents nothing less than the hidden "measure" of the "Name" of the promised Messenger of God. He is that Ninth Messenger Who will announce the Great Day of God, and manifest to the world the spiritual Temple of God's Wisdom.

This is the number of the Name, by Whose Revelation, all of God's people stand to be measured and identified.

This is the number of the Name inscribed on the "white stone" of the consciousness of each of His servants.

Isaiah 56:5 Even unto them will I give in Mine House and within My walls a place and a Name better than of sons and daughters.

1Kings 8:17 And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.

2Chronicles 7:16 For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there

perpetually.

Revelation 7:3...hurt not the earth neither the sea nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed.....

That number is 144,000 and once again that number is a multiple of the number nine.

Can there be any doubt that the mystery of the hidden number has but one solution?

The number that is the measure of the Temple; the number that is the "measure" of the people within the Temple; the number that is the "measure" of the Name of the Man Who is an Angel - the promised Messenger of God - the return of the reality of Jesus.

Can there be any doubt that that number is the number nine?

The number nine is the last and highest number in our system of digits - it symbolises completion. In the context of the Bible, it symbolises the completion of God's plan and the dawning of a new era.

It will suffice to close this chapter with a beautiful story taken from the New Testament.

The disciples have been fishing all day and night. A stranger appears on the shore. He tells them to cast their net to the right of the boat. Doing this, they catch a multitude of fish. With great joy the divine fishermen, whom Jesus had designated: "Fishers of men" recognised the stranger to be none other than their crucified Lord. They rush to the shore to meet Him. When Peter carries the fish ashore, he counts them. He notes that there are exactly 153!

### **FORTY TWO MONTHS IN ELAM**

*And after three and a half days a life giving breath came from God and entered them.*

*Revelation 11:11*

PRIVATE Thus far we have shown that the promised return of the essence and reality of Jesus - the Word and Wisdom of God - will be in the form of the human temple. This "Man" will be the Bearer of the "New Name" mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. We have also shown that Name to be synonymous with the phrase "The Glory of God", and Perhaps our greatest discovery thus far is the measure of that Name, the number nine.

We shall now attempt to establish both the time and place of His promised appearance.

Bible scholars agree - according to Biblical prophesy, the year 1844 is one of great significance, even-though the majority seem unable, or even unwilling, to adequately discern just what took place that year.

Did the year 1844 see the dawning of the Great Day of God?

Before seeking to answer that provocative question, we shall first confirm and establish the fashion in which this date occurs in the text of the Bible.

In Daniel's apocalyptic visions, concerning the arrival of God's Great Day, he was taken to the land of Elam, now known to us as Persia or Iran. The Persian calendar is constructed according to the Revelation of Muhammad. With this in mind, we discover that the year 1844 was equivalent to the Islamic year of 1260. It is worth noting that  $1+2+6+0 = 9$ .

Now, it is generally accepted by all scholars of the Bible, that in Biblical prophecy a year is referred to as a day.

Numbers 13:34 Even forty days, each day for a year.

Ezekiel 4:6 I have appointed thee each day for a year.

So 1260 years may be written as 1260 days or, as a Biblical year consisted of 360 days, it may even be referred to as three and a half years, for  $3.5 \times 360 = 1260$ . It may also be referred to as 42 months (a Biblical month consists of

30 days, and,  $30 \times 42 = 1260$ ).

Daniel 12:7 It will be three and a half years. When the persecution of God's people ends, all these things will have happened.

Revelation 11:2 But do not measure the outer courts, because they have been given to the heathen, who will trample on the Holy City for forty-two months.

Revelation 11:3 And I will grant My two witnesses power to prophesy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Revelation 11:11 And after three and a half days a life giving breath came from God and entered them.

From the above listings we begin to realise that the year 1260 of the Muslim calendar or 1844 of the Christian calendar, is indeed one of some significance, but can we find anything extra to strengthen our interest in this date?

In the New Testament, the disciples approach Jesus on the Mount of Olives and ask:

Matthew 24:3-15 When will all this happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming? You will see "The Awful Horror"(some translations have "The Abomination of Desolation") of which the prophet Daniel spoke. It will be standing in the holy place. [Note to the reader: understand what this means!]

If we wish to understand what this means, we must refer to Daniel and scan his words concerning what is variously translated as the "Awful Horror", the "Abomination of Desolation" or the "Transgression of desolation".

Daniel 8:13-14 How shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand three hundred days then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

We have previously discovered the phrase "sanctuary" and "Temple" to be associated with the "sanctuary" and "Temple" of God's Word. The cleansing of the sanctuary, therefore, would suggest the purification of God's Word. That is to say: when the Great Day of God arrives, the sanctuary of His Word will be cleansed of all false interpretation. Then, and, only then, may it be a pure and beckoning light to all humanity.

But let us return to our theme. The key to this hidden mystery is the reference to the sanctuary being cleansed in 2300 days that in Biblical prophecy would suggest a period of 2300 years.

Now I want you to imagine you are a pilot at the controls of a time machine. You have with you a copy of the Bible, from which you have thus far discovered the year 1844 to be one of some significance. Referring to the verse in Daniel mentioned by Jesus, you discover this mention of 2300 years. You set the controls of your machine to go backwards in time 2300 years from 1844 and you arrive at the year 457 BC

457 BC <-----2300 yrs-----> 1844 AD

At first sight you can see nothing of any great consequence happening in the year 457 BC, so you refer once again to the prophecies of Daniel. At Daniel 9:24 you find the following.

Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy Holy City, to finish the transgression...and to bring in everlasting righteousness...

You note the mention of 70 weeks. A little further on you find this:

Daniel 9:25-27 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks (69 weeks)...and He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.

The 69 weeks and the 1 week mentioned in the above verse, again total 70 weeks. You also notice the mention of an order being given to rebuild Jerusalem. From your vantage point in 457 BC you notice that Ezra (an important Old Testament prophet) is receiving just such an order from Artaxerxes, the then Emperor of Persia. (See Ezra 7:11- 26)

You hurriedly calculate that 70 weeks equal 490 days. Again, according to Biblical prophecy this would suggest a time span of 490 years. With great excitement you set your controls forward 490 years from 457 BC. With a bump you arrive at the year 34 AD.

457 BC <----490 years--->34 AD<-----> 1844 AD

This time you see something of great consequence happening. For it was in this very year that Jesus, at the age of 33, was crucified!

If you study the simple diagram above, you will see that the picture is complete.

Jesus directed us towards an important prophecy in the book of Daniel which, Once resolved, would reveal, with amazing accuracy, two extremely important years in the history of our world. The year of His crucifixion in 34 AD and a year we can only assume to be the date of His promised return -1844!

So once again we see the year 1260/1844 hidden within the prophetic text of the Bible.

What happened in the year 1844? And is there anything in the Bible that would suggest where to look?

The prophecies we have just dealt with all come from the book of Daniel. As previously stated, in his vision Daniel was taken to the land of Persia, referred to in the Bible as the land of "Elam".

Daniel 8:2 And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I

[was] at Shushan [in] the palace, which [is] in the province of Elam.

Jeremiah 49:38 And I will set my throne in Elam.

It would certainly appear that we should initially set our gaze toward the land of Elam, or Persia, and ask:

What happened there in 1844?

However, before we take this important and exciting theme to its amazing conclusion, we must establish our footing and explore three essential themes that permeate all revealed religion.

### **THE SEVENTH HEAVEN OF REVELATION**

*PRIVATE In the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God, as announced to His servants the prophets, shall be fulfilled.*

*Revelation 10:7*

We have likened Jesus to a perfect mirror and God to the sun. This simple model demonstrates that Jesus reflected the light of wisdom that shines from God.

However, before Jesus could bring the teachings of Christianity to the world, God had to prepare His people for this next stage in their education and development. This He did with the laws and teachings delivered by Moses. In this way our Creator is educating us, His children, in much the same way that we educate our children. In the first stages of a child's education you might lovingly say, "You can do this, but do not do that". At a later stage in the child's development you might reveal the reasons for your former commandments. You would also only deliver lessons of a more profound nature, once the child had mastered the basics.

Obviously the full measure of the wisdom of things is with the parent or educator of the child. Nevertheless, the wise educator will only reveal that

wisdom in strict accordance with the child's progressive development and understanding.

It is apparent, from a cursory glance at the history of the world's spiritual development, that God sends Great Educators of humanity, with new lessons and laws, approximately every one thousand years. Just like a loving parent, the All-Knowing Educator delivers His lessons in strict accordance with the receptivity and development of His children - humanity. We refer to this period as a "millennium", a period of approximately one thousand years. This method God has chosen to educate humanity we shall term, "Progressive Revelation."

It is readily gleaned from the Bible that God's secret plan was to prepare the world by sending, not just one Supreme Educator of humanity, or indeed two, but no less than seven! Each Teacher being the bearer of a more progressive revelation of God's Wisdom. In this way God was preparing humanity for the Great Day of God; the Day that will see the revelation of all truth and all knowledge; the Day when the followers of each of these Great Teachers, will stand united under the banner of one Great Teacher.

Revelation 10:7...In the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God, as He announced to His servants the prophets, should be fulfilled.

Isaiah 4:1 And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach."

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

Great mysteries are hidden within the above verses, but again we must acquire the ears to hear and the eyes to see these great pearls of God's Wisdom.

The word "Angel" is simply Greek for "a messenger". Blowing a trumpet would suggest an announcement, and indeed each of the Seven Great Messengers came with a Great Announcement. The reference to "Seven Women wishing to be called by one "Name" is very important to us and we shall investigate this theme more fully later on.

Many other beautiful references to these Seven Great Messengers of God appear throughout the Bible.

In the Old Testament we find mention of the following:

7 Days of creation. [Genesis 1:1-2:4] An explanation of this theme will follow in a subsequent section.

7 Colours of the rainbow. [Genesis 9.13 and Revelation 4.3]

7 Branched Lamp Stand or Menorah. [Exodus 25.31 and Revelation 1.12 & 20]

7 Lamps facing east. [Numbers 8.1]

7 Pillars of the House of Wisdom. [Proverbs 9.1]

7 Women [Isaiah 41.1]

7 Shepherds. [Mic 5.5]

And in the New Testament:

7 Woes described by Jesus. [Matthew 23]

7 Churches of Revelation [Revelation 1.4]

7 Angels of the Seven Churches [Revelation 1.20]

7 Spirits before the Throne [Revelation 1.4]

7 Stars in His right hand [Revelation 1.6]

7 Torches, "Which are the Seven Spirits of God" [Revelation 4.5]

7 Seals on the scroll [Revelation 5.1]

7 Horns on the Lamb [Revelation 5.6]

7 Eyes of the Lamb [Revelation 5.6]

7 Trumpets [Revelation 8.1]

7 Plagues [Revelation 15.1]

7 Bowls of God's anger [Revelation 16.1]

7 Thunders [Revelation 10.3] 7 Heads [Revelation 17.9]

7 Hills or Mountains [Revelation 17.9]

7 Kings [Revelation 17.9]

Each of these Sevens, describe the Seven Major Revealers of God's Wisdom, the Seven Spirits of God Who have gone throughout the nations to proclaim His message.

Revelation 5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Revelation 4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared

themselves to sound.

Revelation 10:4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

They are the Shepherds, the Kings, the Angels, the Stars, the Thunders, the Trumpets and the Lamps of all humanity.

Just as we have represented Jesus and Moses as perfect mirrors, we can use the same model to represent these, Seven Perfect Mirrors. Within each mirror is seen a light that has but one source. Within each is seen the evident light of God's Wisdom.

If we search the pages of the world's history for seven major religious lights, their Names are made readily apparent to us. These divine mirrors, each of Whom came to prepare humanity for the coming of the "Great Day of God" are, Adam, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad.

Each of these Revealers of God's Wisdom has inaugurated a world embracing religion. Each has delivered an outpouring of the Word of God as a Book of writings containing, admonitions, warnings, and guidance. Each has been both the source and cause of the renewal, enlightenment, and development of humanity.

We shall deal more closely with the meanings hidden within the verses that contain these symbolic Sevens, in a subsequent section entitled: "Glory in the Clouds".

For the moment, we shall cite but two of the many textual proofs concerning this theme.

Revelation 17:9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come...

Seven Kings! The one that is, refers to Jesus, and the one that is yet to come - Muhammad. The five fallen Kings are: Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, and Moses.

Again we shall return for a closer look at the hidden meanings in this particular verse a little later.

The other Biblical proof is quite stunning, and in order to make this astounding discovery we have to quite literally read our Bible backwards. Thankfully we need only read the last two chapters of the Book of Revelation backwards to disclose this great truth; this revelation within a Revelation.

At Revelation 21:9 we read that John of Patmos encounters one of the Seven Angels mentioned throughout the text:

Revelation 21:9 One of the seven angels who held the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke to me. "Come", he said, "and I will show you the bride, the wife of the lamb."

Now this angel - one of the seven of which we have spoken - guides John through the remainder of his visions, but it is not until chapter twenty two, verse twelve, that this angel, who is introduced as being one of seven, reveals his identity!

"I am coming soon, and bringing with me my recompense...I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Now this is amazing, for this, without doubt, is Jesus Himself speaking, the "Alpha and the Omega"; the "first and the last"; the One Who is "coming soon".

A little further on we find the angel's identity even more fully unveiled:

Revelation 22:16 I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the offspring of David, the shoot growing from his oak,

the bright star of dawn."

Now the angel, or messenger, Jesus refers to here is none other than John who has been entrusted with the mission of delivering Christ's message to the seven churches as stated in the opening chapter of Revelation:

Revelation 1:4 John, to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace be to you and peace, from him who is, who was, and who is to come...

So the astonishing truth is laid bare before us. Yet it is only when you trace backwards from the angels announcement that he is the "Alpha and the Omega", Who is "coming soon" that you realise that this very same angel announcing Himself as "I Jesus", is introduced in chapter twenty one as, "one of the seven angels"!

Of course, once we throw aside the battered cloak of tradition, it is plain to see that Jesus is indeed one of Seven Great Messengers. One of the Seven Angels sent to educate us and steer our attentions towards God's "unseen" Kingdom; and Christianity is indeed one of seven Great Religious Dispensations.

Although this discovery stands to rock the very foundation of fundamental Christian belief, it is nonetheless totally in accordance with the text of the Bible, totally in accordance with the mysteries we have thus far unveiled, and totally in accordance with those we are yet to disclose.

We must not allow this rocking of traditional foundations to deter us, for this crumbling of hitherto established truths is precisely what Biblical prophecy states will accompany the Great Day of God; and that Day is the very object of our search. One thing we may be certain of, when traditional belief begins to crumble - we are getting closer to the truth!

Let's return to our theme of God's Great Day.

Each of these Great Messengers of God prophesied concerning the coming of this Great Day of God, a Day when peace and justice will establish a

permanent reign, a Day when God shall inundate the earth with His knowledge. This Day shall come, and the Seventh Seal on the "Scroll of all Knowledge", mentioned in the book of Revelation, will be removed. Then, all the Wisdom contained within the Scroll will be unfolded and revealed.

Each Book delivered by these divine Messengers, the Torah of Judaism; the Bhagavad Gita of the Hindu; the Koran of Islam; the Gospel of Christianity; etc. though mighty revelations in their own right, can be considered as "seals" on the wondrous Scroll of "All Truth". And "All Truth" will be revealed in the Day of the Great Announcement. The Day referred to in all the Books of God's Wisdom.

It will be a Day in which all the secrets, hidden thus far within the mantle of sacred scripture, will be revealed, and the mysterious and beautifully symbolic terminology of God's Word, within each of His revealed Books, will be made evident and clear.

Jesus spoke often of the Day when His essence and reality would return to reveal "All Truth" to the world. A Day in which the Word and the Wisdom of God will take up rulership over God's Heavenly Kingdom - the unseen world of the spirit. A Day in which the essence of Jesus will appear in the guise of yet another Man bearing yet another Name, but this time with a mighty and invincible Revelation from God.

### **THE SCROLL OF ALL KNOWLEDGE**

*But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, [even] the hidden [wisdom], which God ordained before the world unto our glory.*

*1Corinthians2:7*

The Books are sealed, their meanings hidden from us, until the Day dawns whereon that which was hidden may be revealed. On that Day the seals shall be removed and all those in heaven, and all those on earth, shall witness the great opening and unsealing of the Books.

This momentous occurrence is symbolically and majestically portrayed in

the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation, and indeed, this "Revelation" forms the underlying theme of this, the last book of the Bible. Therein we witness each of the seven seals of the scroll of all knowledge being removed.

We previously established the existence of Seven Major Revealers of God's Wisdom - Seven Stars, Seven Trumpets, and Seven Lamps. Each prophesied concerning this Great Day of God. Each revealed a Book of Divine Law and wisdom, and each Book is a Book of sealed and hidden mysteries. In the book of Revelation we see each of these divinely revealed books depicted as a seal on the great Book of "all" knowledge.

Revelation 10:4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

Revelation 5:1-5 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals...And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

The reference to the Lion of Judah from the root of David is a reference to the essence of Jesus - the Word and Wisdom of God. He will return as the "Spirit of Truth" to unseal the Book and pour out the knowledge contained therein.

The seventh and last seal is removed, the sealed Book of the Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad enigmatically, yet prophetically, referred to Himself as the "Seal of the Prophets", thereby alluding to Himself as the last of the Seven Prophets. He was the last to prophesy concerning the promised Day of God. After Muhammad, the cycle of prophecy is complete, and the Promised Day will dawn.

Until that Day - that "Great Day of God" - the hidden mysteries and symbolic meanings within the words of each Book, shall be impenetrable to

the mind of man.

Many learned scholars and religious leaders have tried in vain to interpret them, leading humanity to a myriad divergent and contending beliefs, yet still they remain inviolable and sealed.

Isaiah 29:11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed.

1Corinthians4:1 You should think of us as Christ's servants who have been put in charge of God's secret truths.

1Corinthians2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,[even] the hidden [wisdom], which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Daniel 12:9 Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

1Corinthians4:5 Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who...will bring to light the hidden things of darkness.

Isaiah 29:18 And in that Day shall the deaf hear the words of the Book, and the eyes of the blind shall see.

Daniel 7:9-10 I beheld till the [other] thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit...and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgement was set, and the books were opened.

The theme of our journey thus far, is that this Day has indeed occurred. The old era has ended. The Books have been opened and the knowledge therein, poured out upon humanity.

“At one time We address the people of the Torah...At another, We address the people of the Evangel...At still another, We address the people of the Quran...Know thou, moreover, that We have addressed to the Magians Our

Tablets...We have revealed in them the essence of all the hints and allusions contained in their Books. The Lord, verily, is the Almighty, the All-Knowing.”[-3]

“This is the sealed and mystic scroll, the repository of God's irrevocable Decree...that lay wrapped within the veil of impenetrable mystery, and hath now been sent down as a token of the grace of Him Who is the Almighty...In it have We...written down the knowledge of all things from first to last.”[-2]

Bahá'u'lláh

We shall now go on to discover, in the next section, the easily discernible effect this immense flood of knowledge has had on our world.

### **HERE COMES THE FLOOD**

*Immerse yourselves in this Ocean in whose depths lay hidden the pearls of wisdom and of utterance.[1]*

Bahá'u'lláh

Fabulous pearls of luminous wisdom lay concealed within phrases that appear, to the casual glance, to be comments of little or no consequence; of this the following verses are supreme examples.

Joel 2:28...I will pour out My Spirit on everyone. Your sons will proclaim My message; your old men will have dreams and your young men will see visions.

Genesis 7:4 For yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

Before we can unmask the profound and penetrating reality of the above statements, however, we must define their terms, as encountered within the mysterious context of the Bible.

The Word and Wisdom of God is depicted throughout the Holy Book as living water. The River of Life flowing from Jerusalem and the throne of

God; streams of life giving water pouring forth from the hearts of the believers; the roaring waters of the Voice of God, and floods of spiritual rain pouring from the very clouds of heaven.

John 4:14 Whoever drinks the water I will give him will never be thirsty again.

John 7:38 Whoever believes in Me streams of life giving waters will pour out from his heart...Jesus said this about the Spirit which those who believed in Him were going to receive.

Revelation 22:1 The angel also showed me the river of life, sparkling like crystal, and coming from the throne of God and the lamb...

Revelation 7:17 The lamb, Who is in the center of the Throne, will be their shepherd, and He will guide them to springs of life giving waters.

Revelation 1:15...His voice sounded like a roaring waterfall

Genesis 2:10 A river went out of Eden.

Revelation 22:1 A pure river proceeding out of the throne of God.

Zechariah 14:8 When that Day comes, fresh water will flow from Jerusalem...then the Lord will be King over all the earth; everyone will know Him by the same Name.

Ezekiel 43:2 And the Glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east, and His voice was like the noise of many waters.

Habakkuk 2:14 The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the Lords, and the fullness there-of, the world and they that dwell therein. For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established

it upon the floods.

We should note that in the last excerpt, there is mention of floods in the plural sense. This reference to floods is yet another indication that God has sent more than one outpouring of His Word and Wisdom.

From the above, and elsewhere in the Bible, we have gleaned that river, water, rain, sea, and flood, are symbols of these life-giving outpourings of the Word and Wisdom of God. We have also discovered that a Day greater than any previous will dawn when the Lord will inundate the earth with His infinite knowledge, the Books will be opened, and all truth revealed.

The task we now set ourselves is to examine the history of the world's scientific, artistic and religious development over the last few hundred or so years. For if such a flood of knowledge has inundated the world of humanity, we should, at the very least, be able to discover its traces. Indeed, if such a flood has taken place, it would have left a tremendous and easily discernible effect on the development of the human race.

A British scientist, Sir Lawrence Bragg, during a lecture in Carnegie Hall, conducted just such an examination. This lecture was concerned with the evident rise in scientific discovery around the middle of the nineteenth century. He displayed a graph of scientific achievements that could be seen to remain fairly horizontal until it reached the year 1844. From that year it took a forty-five-degree upturn, and has remained in that direction since. Even if we take a cursory and uneducated glance at our development as a species, a sudden and considerable increase in knowledge is easily discernible over the last 150 years.

A list of the world's development since 1844 would include the following:

- \* The incandescent light bulb.
- \* The telephone.
- \* The telegraph.
- \* Radio transmissions.
- \* The Atlantic cable.

- \* The turret lathe.
- \* The rotary press.
- \* The gas engine.
- \* The fountain pen.
- \* The typewriter.
- \* The automobile.
- \* Photographic film.
- \* Motion pictures.
- \* The airplane.
- \* Steamboats.
- \* Railways.
- \* Canals.
- \* Dynamite.
- \* Rubber.
- \* Television.
- \* Computers.
- \* The transistor.
- \* Integrated circuits.
- \* Calculators.
- \* Microprocessors.
- \* Space flight.
- \* Satellite communications.
- \* The theory of relativity.
- \* Nuclear energy.
- \* Quantum mechanics.
- \* Pasteurisation.
- \* Penicillin.
- \* Anaesthetics.
- \* Antiseptic surgery.

We have, without doubt, experienced an unprecedented flood of knowledge, enabling the human race to take a sudden and very great leap forward in its technological development. And this flood of inspiration is not apparent in the sciences alone. If we look at the worlds artistic, cultural, and philanthropic development, we see the same distinct and upward trend with its origin centred strikingly on the year 1844.

- \* Emerson.
- \* Tolstoy.
- \* Tennyson.
- \* Lowell.
- \* Whitman.
- \* Dickens.
- \* Thoreau.
- \* Dostoevsky.
- \* Lewis Carroll.
- \* Chopin.
- \* Schubert.
- \* Tchaikovsky.

To further human rights we have seen the following:

- \* The first congress of women's rights.
- \* The first congress of universal education.
- \* Measures to abolish child labour.
- \* The emancipation proclamation, freeing black slaves in America.
- \* The edict of toleration, allowing Jews back into the Holy Land.

Our world has leapt from the dark night of middle ages into a new era of communication and light; we surround ourselves with the world's greatest discoveries. We use them every day with a growing indifference, unaware perhaps that a mere one hundred and fifty years ago our world stood in comparative darkness. Now, when night falls we reach for the electric-light-switch; when good or bad news occurs we broadcast to the world in seconds. A journey that took weeks, months, or years, may now be complete within hours or days. A once fatal disease or injury may now be treated and cured. We journey in space. We communicate with our colleagues at the speed of light. An immense network of information is waiting at our fingertips. We experiment with time and energy. We view an occurrence a thousand miles away in the comfort of our living room. We compute in seconds that which would have taken days or weeks.

Perhaps we stand too close to the developments of the last 150 years to fully appreciate the magnitude and effect of this undeniable occurrence. However, a just and inquiring mind can only conclude, even at so close a distance, that the world has experienced an immense and unparalleled flood of inspiration and knowledge.

Surely the incredible events of the last 150 years are depicted in some manner within the Bible?

But how?

It has been common practice (until now) to view the story of Noah's Ark and the Great Flood as being descriptive of an ancient and historic event. Great wrangling debates have taken place concerning the verity of the flood's occurrence in antiquity, not to mention expeditions to discover the very whereabouts of the actual wooden construction of Noah's Ark.

Let's leave all this behind us for a moment. Could not the story of the Great Flood, in keeping with so many of the Bible's depictions contain significance far deeper than that that is readily apparent? What if it were a description, not of an event that had actually taken place, but rather, a description of events yet to happen?

Just as with the case of the hidden number, if we delve beneath the literal surface, we find ourselves - once again - upon the threshold of breathtaking discoveries. Is it mere coincidence that the flood story is a perfect description and resemblance of God inundating the earth with the vast ocean of His knowledge? Is it mere coincidence, that just such a flood of knowledge is discernible with its origin centred precisely on the year of Biblical prophecy?

Can it be mere coincidence that the measurements of Noah's Ark (given in the book of Genesis) are based upon the same number as the measure of God's Temple? Is it also coincidence that the same number identifies His people? Does yet another coincidence lie in the measure of the Name of the promised Revealer?

And finally, should you take the name, Noah, and ascribe a number to each letter thereof according to the ancient method of reckoning, and should you add these numbers together, can it possibly be mere coincidence that once again you are looking at the same number? The number of God's Temple, the number of His people, the number of His Ark, the number of the Name of His ninth Messenger, the number nine!

Let's place this remarkable picture in its frame. God prepared us for this Great Revelation of all knowledge, by sending to earth Seven Great Messengers, Seven Stars, Seven Floods: Adam, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad.

Each had His Day of Revelation. Each His Dispensation. Then, as we shall discover in the next section, the flood gates of God's Wisdom were opened by an eighth Messenger. And then came the "NINTH" messenger of God, Whose Revelation flooded the earth with God's Wisdom for forty years.

Habakkuk 2:14 The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea.

Genesis 7:17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up upon the earth.

Ezekiel 4:6...I have appointed thee each day for a year.

Genesis 7:4 For yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

Surely there can be little doubt, that the astonishing increase in the technological, artistic, and philanthropic development of the human race, has its origin and source inextricably linked with the dawning and manifestation of this Magnificent Day. Similarly, can there be any doubt that the Biblical flood story is a symbolic and accurate description of this immense downpour of God's Wisdom upon humanity.

“Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee and will manifest the people of Baha who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.”[-1]

Bahá'u'lláh

## **THE KEY**

*PRIVATE We spend our lives trying to unlock the secrets of the universe, when there was a prisoner in Akka,.....Who had the key.*

*Leo Tolstoy.*

The very Name of the prisoner, of Whom Tolstoy speaks, is the key to the mystery, thusfar hidden, within the sacred Words through which we have journeyed. I have not as yet mentioned His Name within the main text of this book - though in reality I have not ceased from its mention. It is a Name that is synonymous with the phrase, "The Glory of God". It is a Name, the nine letters of which, resolve to the number nine - by the ancient method of determining. It is a Name, the discovery of which, is the very foundation and purpose of our life's journey.

The Day of the Bearers appearance was announced by all the former prophets and Messengers of God. Indeed, this Day has been the subject and foundation of all hitherto revealed scripture. When, however, He appeared, arrayed with abundant proofs and a weighty testimony of God (immediately visible to those whom God imbued with understanding) He was made an exile and a prisoner.

He appeared in the land of Biblical prophecy - "Elam" - now known as Persia. He was driven across mountains and seas to a terrible prison in the fortified city of Akka - "The Valley of Trouble" - a place situate on the plains of Sharon, and within the gaze of Mount Carmel - God's Holy Mountain - all in fulfilment of Biblical prophecy. During the forty years of His banishment and imprisonment, He revealed a veritable flood of divine Wisdom. The exquisite words of wisdom, contained in some one hundred volumes of His Writings, rained upon the earth for forty years.

Genesis 7:4 For yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

These Writings have heralded, instigated, and sustained a New Era of religious faith and discovery. These Writings have enabled the world of humanity to emerge from the darkness and depression of the middle ages, into a New World of science, wisdom, and light.

Souls burn away in their desire to behold His Face; mountains crumble beneath His feet; kings and stars have fallen in the inevitable obedience of His will, and the world is set ablaze at His behest. He has revealed the Knowledge of all things "from first to last" and fulfilled every opaque and evident prophecy concerned with His appearance. His all-subduing love and wisdom have empowered His people to conquer the scions of injustice and iniquity. To His followers He has conferred the power to hoist aloft the banners of unity, peace, and justice.

To the outward seeking and material eye, He was a prisoner, held captive within the chains of His enemies and adversaries, many of whom are still occupied with dreaming up fresh ways to torment and frustrate His Purpose - the establishment of God's unity and peace. To the inward seeking and spiritual eye, He is the irrefutable and absolute Sovereign of the unseen and spiritual Kingdom of God; come in the "clouds" of heaven, with all His "angels" to judge the world and establish unity amongst its people.

His Name is Bahá'u'lláh - The Glory of God. His appearance was announced by, Adam, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad - the Seven Major Messengers, mentioned within the text of the Bible. An eighth Messenger of God was sent to prepare the way for His arrival - just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus - His Name: The Báb (The Gate). The Báb declared His mission in the year 1844. He brought with Him both a Revelation and an "Announcement" from God. The Báb announced the imminent appearance of God's "ninth" Messenger, a Messenger Whose Revelation would be the crowning purpose and culmination of God's "secret plan". The Báb suffered denial, imprisonment, and torture. On the 9th of July 1850, The Báb was martyred.

At noon in the town square of Tabriz (in Persia), He was suspended from a barracks wall. In the full gaze of a large gathering, He was shot to pieces by seven hundred and fifty bullets, fired from the rifles of three army regiments. The sacred remains of The Báb are now interred in a beautiful shrine on Mt. Carmel in the Holy Land.

One by one the followers of the Báb journeyed to discover the identity of the Promised One, referred to in The Báb's Writings as: "Him Whom God shall make manifest". In a renewed outburst of persecution Bahá'u'lláh was arrested and cast into a dark dungeon some sixty feet below ground. Upon His release He was exiled to Baghdad. During the next seven years Baghdad became a focal point for poets, princes, mystics, religious leaders, and government officials. All were drawn by the irresistible power and beauty of the Writings that poured from the pen of this noble and majestic prisoner. All sought to gain His presence. One royal prince (Zaynu'l-Abidin Khan, the Fakhru'd-Dawlih) exclaimed:

“I know not how to explain it. Were all the sorrows of the world to be crowded into my heart, they would, I feel, all vanish when in His presence. It is as if I had entered Paradise itself.”

The enemies of Bahá'u'lláh were relentless. They hounded the authorities to have Him removed from their midst. The Shah finally sent order that Bahá'u'lláh shall be removed to Constantinople. Prior to His departure, Bahá'u'lláh announced to a select number of His followers, that He was indeed the One to Whom The Báb had referred.

So it was that on April the 21st 1863, Bahá'u'lláh and His companions prepared to leave Baghdad. A great crowd formed. Men threw themselves at His feet. Women wept and laid their Babes in His path. He would gently pick up each child and return it to its mother. The entire city had come to bid farewell to the Object of their devotion, and relish the last moments of His presence amongst them.

Through whatever town, city or village He journeyed upon His exile, the

people appeared in hordes to offer their love and utter devotion. Drums would go on ahead, announcing His arrival. The rooftops would be lined with men women and children, eager to catch but a glimpse of the radiant figure of Bahá'u'lláh.

His enemies would not rest. Twice He was poisoned, and twice again they incited the governments to have Him banished. From Constantinople He was escorted to Adrianople; from Adrianople He was taken to the terrible Prison City of Akka in Israel, again to suffer imprisonment in the most dire circumstances.

His followers have been the recipients of the most barbaric and unspeakable tortures. Many thousands have been martyred in their absolute reluctance to deny their love for Bahá'u'lláh. Yet His enemies were powerless to contain the spread of the fire of His love, the majesty of His wisdom, and the glory of His teachings.

“Behold how in this Dispensation the worthless and foolish have fondly imagined that by such instruments as massacre, plunder and banishment they can extinguish the Lamp which the Hand of Divine power hath lit, or eclipse the Day Star of everlasting splendour. How utterly unaware they seem to be of the truth that such adversity is the oil that feedeth the flame of this Lamp! Such is God's transforming power. He changeth whatsoever He willeth; He verily hath power over all things...”[2]

Bahá'u'lláh

The magnificent and unparalleled story of the spread of His Faith (of which this is but a faint and fleeting sketch) is now embracing the entire globe. Millions pledge their allegiance to the wisdom of His ordinance and the beauty of His Writings, Writings that cause the heart to throb with such awe and wonder, as to leave the earnest reader in no doubt of their source and origin. Indeed, there can be adduced no greater proof of His Station than the power and beauty of His Words and the life He lived whilst delivering them. The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh constitute nothing less than the promised outpouring of the Word and Wisdom of God, the very foundation and goal of our journey through scripture.

Those who embrace and follow His Teachings are called, Bahá'ís - followers of God's Glory. His Writings, immaculately transcribed from the Persian and Arabic of His own hand, are in print and readily available. There are also countless journals dealing with the history and spread of His Faith and its people. As the first phase of our journey of discovery ends, and we stand poised and ready to embark on an immeasurably greater one, I refer you wholeheartedly to them.

We shall leave this section with but a few drops taken from the immense ocean of Bahá'í Scripture. Within this "ocean" swims a wisdom and authority, immeasurably beyond mere human ability.

“O My servants! Through the might of God and His power, and out of the treasury of His knowledge and wisdom, I have brought forth and revealed unto you the pearls that lay concealed in the depths of His everlasting ocean. I have summoned the Maids of Heaven to emerge from behind the veil of concealment, and have clothed them with these words of Mine - words of consummate power and wisdom.”[3]

“The Revelation which, from time immemorial, hath been acclaimed as the Purpose and Promise of all the Prophets of God, and the most cherished Desire of His Messengers, hath now, by virtue of the pervasive Will of the Almighty and at His irresistible bidding, been revealed unto men...The Prophetic Cycle hath, verily, ended. The Eternal Truth is now come.”[4]

“And when the days of Moses were ended, and the light of Jesus, shining forth from the Day Spring of the Spirit, encompassed the world, all the people of Israel arose in protest against Him...

And this for no other reason except that Israel refused to apprehend the meaning of such words as have been revealed in the Bible concerning the signs of the coming Revelation. As she never grasped their true significance, and, to outward seeming, such events never came to pass, she, therefore, remained deprived of recognising the beauty of Jesus and of beholding the Face of God. And they still await His coming!”[5]

“Reflect how Jesus, the Spirit of God, was, notwithstanding His extreme meekness and perfect tender-heartedness, treated by His enemies. So fierce was the opposition which He, the Essence of Being and Lord of the visible and invisible, had to face, that He had nowhere to lay His head. He wandered continually from place to place, deprived of a permanent abode.”[6]

“Know thou that when the Son of Man yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh capacity was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed by all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee...We testify that when He came into the world, He shed the splendour of His Glory upon all created things...We bear witness that through the power of the Word of God every leper was cleansed, every sickness was healed, every human infirmity was banished. He it is Who purified the world. Blessed is the man who, with a face beaming with light, hath turned towards Him.”[7]

“It is clear and evident to thee that all the Prophets are the Temples of the Cause of God...uttering the same speech, and proclaiming the same Faith...”[8]

“These sanctified Mirrors, these Day Springs of ancient glory, are, one and all, the Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe...The beauty of their countenance is but a reflection of His image...these Primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles...Whoso recognizeth them hath recognised God.”[9]

“We dare not, in this Day, lift the veil that concealeth the exalted station which every true believer can attain, for the joy which such a revelation must provoke might well cause a few to faint away and die.”[10]

“Verily I say, this is the Day in which mankind can behold the Face, and hear the voice of the Promised One...The time foreordained unto all the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come.”[11]

“O Jews! 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. Deal with Me as ye wish, for I have vowed to lay down My life in the path of God. I will fear no one, though the powers of earth and heaven be leagued against Me. Followers of the Gospel! If ye cherish the desire to slay Muhammad, the Apostle of God, seize Me and put an end to My life, for I am He, and My Self is His Self. Do unto Me as ye like, for the deepest longing of Mine heart is to attain the presence of My Best-Beloved in His Kingdom of Glory. Such is the Divine decree, if ye know it. Followers of Muhammad! If it be your wish to riddle with your shafts the breast of Him Who hath caused His Book the Bayan to be sent down unto you, lay hands on Me and persecute Me, for I am His Well-Beloved, the revelation of His own Self, though My name be not His name.

I have come in the shadows of the clouds of glory, and am invested by God with invincible sovereignty. He, verily, is the Truth, the Knower of things unseen. I, verily, anticipate from you the treatment ye have accorded unto Him that came before Me. To this all things, verily, witness, if ye be of those who hearken.”[12]

“And if anyone ask them: ‘For what crime were they imprisoned?’ they would answer and say: ‘They, verily, sought to supplant the Faith with a new religion!’ If that which is ancient be what ye prefer, wherefore, then, have ye discarded that which hath been set down in the Torah and the Evangel? Clear it up, O men! By My life! There is no place for you to flee to in this day. If this be My crime, then Muhammad, the Apostle of God, committed it before Me, and before Him He Who was the Spirit of God (Jesus Christ), and yet earlier He Who conversed with God (Moses). And if My sin be this, that I have exalted the Word of God and revealed His Cause, then indeed am I the greatest of sinners! Such a sin I will not barter for the kingdoms of earth and heaven.”[13]

“This is the manifest and hidden secret...immerse yourselves in this Ocean in whose depths lay hidden the pearls of wisdom and of utterance...The Best Beloved is come. In His right hand is the sealed wine of His Name...Let thy soul glow with the flame of this undying Fire that burneth in the midmost heart of the world...Consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of

friendliness and fellowship... O people! I swear by the one true God! This is the Ocean out of which all seas have proceeded, and with which every one of them will ultimately be united..."[14]

"So great is the glory of the Cause of God that even the blind can perceive it, how much more they whose sight is sharp, whose vision is pure...Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding, the breeze that stireth at the break of day, the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll. With the utmost unity, and in a spirit of perfect fellowship...Be ye guided by wisdom in all your doings and cleave tenaciously unto it."[15]

"Only when the lamp of search, of earnest striving, of longing desire, of passionate devotion, of fervid love, of rapture, and ecstasy, is kindled within the seeker's heart, and the breeze of His loving-kindness is wafted upon his soul, will the darkness of error be dispelled, the mists of doubts and misgivings be dissipated, and the lights of knowledge and certitude envelope his being. At that hour will the Mystic Herald, bearing the joyful tidings of the Spirit, shine forth from the City of God resplendent as the morn...Therein he will discern the wonders of His ancient Wisdom, and will perceive all the hidden teachings from the rustling leaves of the Tree that flourisheth in that City."[16]

"The utterance of God is a lamp, whose light is these words: Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one with another with the utmost love and harmony, with friendliness and fellowship."[17]

"Release yourselves, O nightingales of God, from the thorns and brambles of wretchedness and misery, and wing your flight to the rose-garden of unfading splendour. O My friends that dwell upon the dust! Haste forth unto your celestial habitation. Announce unto yourselves the joyful tidings: "He Who is the Best-Beloved is come!"[18]

"The allusions made in the Scriptures have been unfolded, and the signs recorded therein have been revealed."[19]

“This is the sealed and mystic scroll, the repository of God's irrevocable Decree...that lay wrapped within the veil of impenetrable mystery, and hath now been sent down as a token of the grace of Him Who is the Almighty...In it have We...written down the knowledge of all things from first to last.”[20]

Bahá'u'lláh

### **IN THE RESURRECTION**

*We have chosen Thee to be our most mighty Trumpet, Whose blast is to signalise the resurrection of all mankind.[21]*

*Bahá'u'lláh*

The Day of Resurrection; the Great Announcement; the Day of Judgement; the Day of Requit; the New Creation; the New World; the Universal Restoration...All these terms (and many more like them) taken from the pages of revealed Scripture, refer to the “Great Day of God”. The Day when the deaf shall hear and the blind shall see the words of the Book. On that Day the hidden mystery, hitherto “sealed” and hidden from the eyes of men, shall be unveiled. On that Day those whom God in His mercy has chosen, shall rise from their graves of ignorance and heedlessness to lovingly embrace the chalice of light proffered amongst them.

This divine water, this divine light, is the very Word and Wisdom of God revealing itself to the hearts of God's children. To each it conveys the mystery of the eternal life within.

Luke 17:20 The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen...for the Kingdom of God is within you.

The attainment of this Day has been our quest. The flooding of the earth with God's Wisdom is too apparent to warrant any further proof or discussion. The unsealing of the symbolic allusions made in the Bible are, also, now readily discernible to the earnest seeker, for God - through the mighty Pen of Bahá'u'lláh - has revealed the key to understanding every theme and

prophecy contained therein. The infinite ocean of His Revelation has inspired a universal resurrection of science, art, morality, and spiritual awareness.

Before we go on to examine more fully the import and actuality of this, “awakening” of the children of God in this glorious age, let us pause to examine the foundation of the other context in which this term “resurrection” is encountered.

In the doctrine of Christianity the term “resurrection” may also refer to the “spiritual Resurrection” of Jesus three days after His crucifixion.

1Peter 3:18 He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually.

1Corinthians 15:4: He was raised to life three days later as written in the scriptures...

Again if we are to appreciate the real significance and beauty of the resurrection of Jesus, we must hold in our hearts an understanding of His reality. He is the Word of God, the life giving Spirit of God, the glorious Teachings of the Father. Once we accept this essential reality, the meanings of Scripture are revealed and falsehood and superstition fall away.

Jesus referred to the undying “body” of His Words, the eternal “flesh” of His Teachings, the life sustaining “blood” of His utterance. He urged our attentions away from the transitory bodily things, and towards the eternal realities of the unseen worlds of God.

Once we treat the references to His “Body”, His “Blood”, and His “Flesh” as being symbolic allusions to a spiritual reality, then the meaning of His Resurrection is clear.

1Peter 3:18 He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually.

If you take your Bible and look at the Book of the Apostle Mark, which scholars agree is the first of the “Synoptic Gospels” from which Matthew, Luke, and John have taken much of their material and inspiration, and if you

turn to chapter sixteen verse nine you will discover a footnote at the bottom of the page. This footnote reads something like:

“This ending to the Gospel does not appear in some ancient manuscripts.”

Now the import of this is that the traditions concerning the physical appearance of Jesus, after His crucifixion, are later additions to the actual written accounts of His life.

On examination you will find that these “additions” vary quite considerably in such vital details as: who was the first disciple to see Jesus? How many times did He appear? How many saw Him?

Furthermore, if the Resurrection of Jesus was a physical event, how do we explain Peter's statement - “He was put to death physically, but raised to life SPIRITUALLY.”

We are concerned with the reality of His Resurrection, and though these traditions concerning His “physical” resurrection are of some limited value, we must take care that we are not led into a shallow appreciation of a momentous “spiritual” occurrence.

Let's examine an account of the Resurrection of Jesus taken from a section of the Gospel, which is held by Bible scholars and archaeologists to be among the very first accounts of His life and Teachings - the letters of the apostle Paul.

1Corinthians 15:4 ...He appeared to Peter and then to all twelve apostles. Then He appeared to more than five hundred of His followers at once, most of whom are still alive, although some have died. Then He appeared to James and afterwards to all the apostles. Last of all He appeared also to me.

We glean from these inspired words that the manner in which Jesus appeared to His disciples, was identical with the manner in which He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus.

“Last of all He appeared also to me.”

The manner of Paul's vision is described in the book of Acts.

Acts 9.3: As Saul was coming near the city of Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed round him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute Me?" "Who are you Lord?" he asked. "I am Jesus, Whom you persecute," the voice said. "But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do." The men who were travelling with Saul had stopped not saying a word; they heard the voice but could not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes...

Notice that this vision was given to Paul alone, none of those accompanying him saw anything. Also notice that Paul rose from the ground and opened his eyes after experiencing the vision. This suggests, rather strongly, that during the vision his eyes were closed.

From this account it should be clear that this appearance of Jesus was a spiritual reality and not physical. Had Jesus appeared as a physical being all those present would have seen Him and Paul's eyes would not have been closed.

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul, with manifest humility, attempts to describe the wondrous reality of his spiritual vision.

2Corinthians 12.1: I have to boast, even though it doesn't do any good. But I will now talk about visions and revelations given me by the Lord. I know a certain Christian man who fourteen years ago was snatched up to the highest heaven (I do not know whether this actually happened or whether he had a vision - only God knows). I repeat, I know that this man was snatched to Paradise (again, I do not know whether this actually happened or whether he had a vision - only God knows), and there he heard things which cannot be put into words, things that human lips may not speak. So I will boast about this man - but I will not boast about myself...If I wanted to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be telling the truth...But to keep me from being puffed up with pride because of the many wonderful things I saw, I was given a painful physical ailment...I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am

weak, then I am strong.

In order that he should not be accused of blowing his own trumpet, Paul, with great humility and wisdom, refers to himself as “a certain Christian man” however, there can be no doubt that he is referring to his own visions.

We must also appreciate that these visions and appearances, far from being less real than a physical appearance, take place on a level immeasurably above and beyond the plane of physical reality. These are “visions of God” bestowed as a token of bounty upon His spiritual elect. These visions of the “spiritual” reality of Jesus and His Teachings came to each of His followers, enabling them to see that He was far from gone amongst them. In fact His Spirit, and the power and majesty of His words, were now even more manifest amongst them. His reality soared in their hearts and minds, empowering them to rise from their abject loss and promulgate His glorious teachings throughout the world.

To conclude our theme of the Resurrection of the “body” of the Word of God, I would like to present the words of `Abdu'l-Bahá - the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh. On the passing of Bahá'u'lláh in eighteen ninety-two the authority to interpret the divine will, was conferred by Bahá'u'lláh Himself upon none but `Abdu'l-Bahá.

“Therefore, we say that the meaning of Christ's resurrection is as follows: the disciples were troubled and agitated after the martyrdom of Christ. The Reality of Christ, which signifies His teachings, His bounties, His perfections and His spiritual power, was hidden and concealed for two or three days after His martyrdom, and was not resplendent and manifest. No, rather it was lost, for the believers were few in number and were troubled and agitated.”[22]

“The Cause of Christ was like a lifeless body; and when after three days the disciples became assured and steadfast, and began to serve the Cause of Christ, and resolved to spread the divine teachings, put His councils into practice, and arising to serve Him, the Reality of Christ became resplendent and His bounty appeared; His religion found life;”[23]

“His teachings and His admonitions became evident and visible. In other words, the Cause of Christ was like a lifeless body until the life and the bounty of the Holy Spirit surrounded it.”[24]

“Such is the meaning of the resurrection of Christ, and this was a true resurrection. But as the clergy have neither understood the meaning of the Gospels nor comprehended the symbols...”[25]

“The resurrection of the Divine Manifestations are not of the body. All Their states, Their conditions...and Their instructions have a spiritual and divine significance, and have no connection with material things.” [26]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

And now, having covered the spiritual resurrection of Jesus three days after His crucifixion, we journey to the second meaning of the term “resurrection” encountered within Scripture, and that is the “Day of Resurrection.”

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life;

John 11:24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Joel 3:18 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters.

Acts 3:20 Until the time comes for the universal restoration of which God has spoken through His holy prophets.

2Timothy 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

Isaiah 65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

We shall examine the last excerpt more closely in a subsequent section, but for the moment our theme is that of the “Day of Resurrection”. This Day, as we have seen is the purpose and foundation of all revealed scripture, the Day in which the reality of Jesus will return, in the form of “Ekeenos” - “That Man”. On that Day He shall come as the “Word” bearing the “New Name” to revive and judge the inhabitants of the world and establish peace and justice.

“Reflect, can a more precious, a mightier, and more glorious day than this be conceived, so that man should willingly forego its grace, and deprive himself of its bounties, which like unto vernal showers are raining down from the heaven of mercy upon all mankind?”[27]

“Having thus conclusively demonstrated that no day is greater than this Day, and no revelation more glorious than this Revelation, and having set forth all these weighty and infallible proofs which no understanding mind can question, and no man of learning overlook, how can man possibly, through the idle contention of the people of doubt and fancy, deprive himself of such a bountiful grace?”[28]

“Strive, therefore, O my brother, to grasp the meaning of “Resurrection,” and cleanse thine ears from the idle sayings of these rejected people. Shouldst thou step into the realm of detachment, thou wilt readily testify that no day is greater than this Day...One righteous work performed in this Day, equalleth all the virtuous acts which for myriads of centuries men have practiced - nay, We ask forgiveness of God for such a comparison! For verily the reward which such a deed deserveth is immensely beyond and above the estimate of men.”[29]

Bahá'u'lláh

On that Day Jesus states:

John 12:47 If anyone hears my sayings...I do not judge him...the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day.

Perhaps we are judged by our ability to rid ourselves of our sometimes passionate attachment to creeds, traditions, and opinions; perhaps we are judged by our ability to see (with the eyes of a child) the beauty, majesty, simplicity, and meaning of His words. This is that which shall separate, judge, and give life.

In short, a New World of understanding shall commence and a new creation beckon the army of His faithful followers; and on that “Day of Days” the reality of Jesus, shall return to be seen by all, coming in the clouds with power and great glory. On that Day the reality and splendour of His faithful servants shall likewise return. This glorious happening constitutes nothing less than the Resurrection of the generation of Jesus, and the Resurrection of the generation of Muhammad; a veritable army of chosen servants who will then carry forward the general Resurrection of all humanity. These people, these messengers of the Kingdom of God on earth, these followers of the Glory of God, are the subject of the next section.

“Salutations, blessings, and welcome to that Universal Reality, that Perfect Word, that Manifest Book, that Splendour which hath dawned in the highest heaven, that Guide of all nations, that Light of the world - the billowing ocean of Whose abounding grace hath flooded all creation, in such wise that the waves thereof have cast upon the sands of this visible world their shining pearls. Now hath the Truth appeared, and falsehood fled away; now hath the day dawned and jubilation taken over... for the Day of Resurrection hath come to pass.”[30]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

### **ANGELS OF FIRE AND SNOW**

*PRIVATE The hearts that yearn after Thee, O my God, are burnt up with the fire of their longing for Thee, and the eyes of them that love Thee weep sore*

*by reason of their crushing separation from Thy court... Methinks they are like the angels which Thou hast created of snow and of fire..[31]*

*Bahá'u'lláh*

The word “angel” comes to us from the Greek “angelos” which translates into English as: “a messenger”.

When we encounter this term in the text of the Bible, it refers more specifically to a messenger of God.

Now it would appear that there are many degrees and stations of “angelship”. We glean from the Bible that a definite distinction exists between those designated as “Arch-Angels” (of which there is mention of but one - Michael) and all other degrees. However, we are always referring, in one sense or another, to a messenger bearing news of God's Kingdom.

In the greater sense the term refers to those Great Messengers and Educators of humanity: the Seven Angels of Revelation, Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. In the lesser sense the term may refer to any “lesser” being occupied with distributing the message of these Arch-Educators; and it matters not whether we encounter these beings in dreams, visions, or physical reality. If they come bearing a heavenly message they are heavenly messengers and therefore - angels.

The Apostles of Jesus for instance, who diligently bore aloft the message of Jesus, are messengers of His Kingdom. They are, therefore - angels. Any person bearing the message of the presence of the Kingdom of God can similarly be termed an angel of His Kingdom.

So, let's disrobe ourselves from the tired cloak of popular tradition, which states something like: “Angels are cherub like beings with feathery wings, a heavenly species created to be eternally separate from humanity, and abiding in a separate sphere of existence.” Let's discover the reality and majesty of the term - angel.

Hebrews 12:18 It is not to the tangible blazing fire of Sinai that you have

come...no, you have come to Mount Zion, the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to myriads of angels, to the full concourse of and heavenly assembly of the first born who are enrolled in heaven.

Exodus 4:22...Thus says the Lord, Israel is my first-born son.

Isaiah 44:1...Israel whom I have chosen.

1 Timothy 1:6 Before God and Christ Jesus and the angels who are His chosen.

Notice the mention in the above verse of myriads of angels who are the first born enrolled in heaven. Notice also in the following verse the mention of Israel, representing God's chosen people, as the first born.

From the above it should be clear that those whom God has chosen to promulgate His message (referred to in the Bible as the “first born” and “chosen”) are His heavenly army, chosen to broadcast His message throughout the nations, in short, angels of His Kingdom.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him.

The theme of our journey is that this Day has indeed occurred, at the time and place prophesied - Elam/Persia - 1844/1260. He has come in the form of the human temple, bearing aloft the New Name - Bahá'u'lláh. He has come with a myriad angels; His host; His army; messengers of His Sovereignty; messengers of His glorious Kingdom.

“This is the Day whereon the All-Merciful hath come down in the clouds of knowledge, clothed with manifest sovereignty...and the angels of God are seen descending.”

“The allusions made in the Scriptures have been unfolded, and the signs recorded therein have been revealed...and the angels have appeared rank on rank, before Us.”

“By Angels is meant those who, reinforced by the power of the spirit, have consumed, with the fire of the love of God, all human traits and limitations, and have clothed themselves with the attributes of the most exalted Beings and of the Cherubim...And now, inasmuch as these holy beings have sanctified themselves from every human limitation, have become endowed with the attributes of the spiritual, and have been adorned with the noble traits of the blessed, they therefore have been designated as angels.”[32]

Bahá'u'lláh

“The meaning of “Angels” is the confirmations of God and His celestial powers. Likewise Angels are blessed beings who have severed all ties with this nether world have been released from the chains of self and the desires of the flesh and anchored their hearts to the heavenly realms of God.”[33]

“I hope you may be quickened and vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Then shall ye indeed become the angels of heaven whom Christ promised would appear in this Day to gather the harvest of divine planting. This is my hope. This is my prayer for you.” [34]

“For I say unto you that He has chosen you to be His messengers of love throughout the world.”[35]

“Become angels of heaven and travel and teach through all these regions.”[36]

“Ye are the angels, if your feet be firm, your spirits rejoiced, your secret thoughts pure, your eyes consoled, your ears opened, your breasts dilated with joy, and your souls gladdened, and if you arise to assist the Covenant, to resist dissension and to be attracted to the Effulgence!”[37]

Abdu'l-Bahá

From the beauty and majesty of these writings, the station and responsibility of being a “messenger of love” should be clear.

Those, whom God has chosen to disseminate this magnificent Revelation, are so transformed and invigorated by the tremendous outpouring of His

Love and Wisdom in this golden age, that, though their feet tread the soil, in reality they exist in the unseen heaven of His Words.

“Those souls that in this day enter the divine kingdom and attain everlasting life, although materially dwelling on earth, yet in reality soar in the realm of heaven, their bodies may linger on the earth but their spirits travel in the immensity of space. For as thoughts widen and become illumined they acquire the power of flight and transport man to the kingdom of God.”[38]

“For these divine injunctions tame every ferocious beast, transform the creeping insect into a soaring bird, cause human souls to become angels of the Kingdom, and make the human world a focus for the qualities of mercy.”[39]

“Now is the time that you may divest yourselves from the garment of attachment to this phenomenal realm...become angels of heaven and travel and teach through all these regions.”[40]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

If you gain inspiration from the heaven of God's Word in this Day of Days, if you seek to enlighten your neighbour by your goodly deeds, actions, and words, then you are a messenger of love - an angel!

### **A LILY AMONG THORNS**

*Like the lily among thorns is my love among the daughters.*

*Song of Solomon 2:2*

*The Pen of the Most High is unceasingly calling; and yet, how few are those that have inclined their ear to its voice![41]*

*Bahá'u'lláh*

In the previous section we encountered the theme of God's chosen messengers of love, His “host” of angels in this Day of Resurrection. It can be seen from the Sacred Text of the Bible that this “chosen” people, this “peculiar race” (represented symbolically as - God's Holy Nation “Israel”) have been chosen from amongst all humanity to guide the world and

establish its peace and security.

Isaiah 44:1 Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:

1Peter 2:9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few [are] chosen.

James 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

These “heirs of the Kingdom” are they that shall inherit the earth and gain eternal existence in God's Kingdom. These “peculiar people” will recognise and promote the Word of God, made manifest in the glorious Revelation of His Ninth Messenger - Bahá'u'lláh. It is this “chosen generation” who shall gather from among the scattered nations, the children of the One True God. It is they who possess the innate, God-given ability, to see the majesty, depth, and simplicity of God's Word.

To these people, the amazing proofs and prophecies we have thus far examined, are but circumstantial evidence; for their hearts have beheld the manifest beauty of their Lord in the radiant faces of His loved ones.

This is the dawning of a Revelation Whose light is so manifest that even the blind in heart may perceive, and gain from, its splendour. If you are still with us at this point on our journey of discovery, the chances are that YOU, are one of these “chosen few”.

In the Book of Revelation we encountered them referred to as the 144,000. We have discovered this to be the number by which they may all be identified - the people of the number “NINE”.

We have further discovered that number to be the “measure” of the New Name under which the Great Day of God (and, therefore, the return of the reality of Jesus) will appear. And we have discovered that Name to be, Bahá'u'lláh.

This chosen race, is represented in another important way in the Bible. They are spoken of as being enrolled in heaven, in a book, referred to as the “Book of Names” or the “Scroll of the Living”.

Daniel 12:1...And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been...but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose names shall be found written in the book.

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him Who sat upon it; from His presence earth and sky fled away...and books were opened. Also another book was opened which is the book of life...and if any ones name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful.

Revelation 21:27 But nothing unclean shall enter it, (The City of God)...but only those who are written in the lambs book of life.

The book of life here represents God's inscrutable knowledge, inscrutable, that is, to all save Him.

Yet another interesting theme that occurs in the many phrases that refer to God's chosen people, is that they have been known to Him from the beginning.

2Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

Revelation 17:8...and the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world...

This is an amazing realisation. Those whom God has chosen “before ever they were” to find salvation in this Day of the magnificent Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh, are known to Him.

This constitutes divine preordnance, celestial predestination, inscrutable to the human mind. For the knowledge of just who is of the chosen is with God, and He is not to be asked of His doings. The pot does not rebuke the potter for making it a pot to be passed from hand to hand while another was chosen for special occasion.

Romans 9:20 ...A clay pot does not ask the man who made it, “Why did you make me like this?” After all the man who makes the pots has the right to use the clay as he wishes, and to make two pots from the same clay, one for special occasions and the other for ordinary use. And the same is true of what God has done.

God, the Divine Potter, knows His children better than they know themselves. Within each He has placed the ability to perceive, with their own hearts, their own minds, and their own eyes, the wonders of His Mighty Revelation in this blessed century. And in order that we might seek and discover, of our own volition, His love dwelling within, He has bestowed upon us a free will.

Ours is the choice to either seek or slumber. If we seek and discover this Revelation then we have fulfilled the purpose of our physical existence.

“The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and attain His presence...Whoso hath failed to recognise Him will have condemned himself to the misery of remoteness which is naught but utter nothingness...”[42]

“His purpose, however, is to enable the pure in spirit and the detached in heart to ascend, by virtue of their own innate powers, unto the shores of the Most Great Ocean, that thereby they who seek the Beauty of the All-Glorious may be distinguished and separated from the wayward and perverse.”[43]

“Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting.” [44]

Bahá'u'lláh

Again, by detachment from those disabling weights of blind tradition, doctrine, creed, and opinion, we purify our inner reality, and ascend unto that Ocean of God's Wisdom that has so flooded our world. Then are we reborn, God's children, His chosen people, His messengers of love.

“Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding, the breeze that stirreth at the break of day, the soft flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll.”[45]

“Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Baha who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.”[46]

Bahá'u'lláh

“Regarding the word Israel, this is the title of Jacob himself and not that of his children...Afterward the word Israel was used to denote the “people of God” as is mentioned in the Bible, i.e., the nations of God. Thus it was gradually generalised as to denote all the souls who accepted the religion of God.”[47]

“His Holiness Christ - may my spirit be His sacrifice! - saith in the Gospel, “Many are called but few are chosen” That is many have been invited to faith but few chosen for guidance.”[48]

“But the discerning faith which consists of true knowledge of God and the comprehension of divine words, of such faith there is very little in any age.

That is why His Holiness Christ said to His followers, ‘ Many are called but few are chosen.’”[49]

“Consider how there are thousands of heedless souls who are asleep, while there is one who is conscious and awake! Even as His Holiness Christ has said, the friends of God are the salt of the earth, and the salt is but a little part of the whole. Undoubtedly the friends of God have been endowed with ability and capacity, on which account they become of the “chosen” and not of the ‘called’”.[50]

“The flame of the fire of love in this world of earth and water, comes through the power of attraction and not by effort and striving. Nevertheless, by effort and perseverance, knowledge, science and other perfections can be acquired; but only the light of the Divine Beauty can transport and move the spirits through the force of attraction. Therefore it is said ‘Many are called but few are chosen’”.[51]

“Know that immortality belongs to such souls as have been imbued with the spirit of life. Besides them all the others are lifeless - they are dead, as Christ explained in the Gospel.”[52]

“He whose eyes the lord hath opened will see the souls of men in the stations they will occupy after their release from the body. He will find the living ones thriving within the precincts of their Lord, and the dead sunk in the lowest abyss of perdition.”[53]

“Even as Christ declared, “Many are called but few are chosen” Verily God has chosen you for His love and knowledge; God has chosen you for the worthy service of unifying mankind; God has chosen you for the purpose of investigating reality and promulgating international peace; God has chosen you for the progress and development of humanity.”[54]

“For I say unto you that He has chosen you to be His Messengers of love throughout the world.”[55]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

## IN THE NAME OF THE SON

PRIVATE *On the human level he was the descendant of David, but on the level of the spirit he was proclaimed the Son of God.*

*Romans 1:3*

This verse taken from Paul's letter to the Romans, is an important key to understanding the problematic phrase, "Son of God".

There exists in Christian society a very strong persuasion that Jesus was - ON THE PHYSICAL LEVEL - the "Only begotten Son of God", even though this persuasion has very little grounding in the written text of the Bible.

If we examine for ourselves the occurrence of this phrase within the Bible, we cannot but reach a somewhat different understanding of the designation: "Son of God".

Romans 8:16 Those who are led by God's spirit are God's sons.

Straightaway we encounter the idea that more than one being may be deserving of the title: "Son of God".

1John 3:1 What manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Romans 9:4 They are God's people; He made them His sons and revealed His glory to them.

John 1:12 As many as received Him to them gave He power to become sons of God.

Romans 8:19 All of creation waits with eager longing for God to reveal His sons.

Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers for they sons of God shall be called.

Luke 20:36 They will be like angels and will never die, they are the sons of God because they have risen from death.

It must be understood that the designation “Son of God” is a symbolic allusion to a descendant of the Light of Wisdom, a righteous person, and an offspring of Spirit. It cannot imply a physical descent from that which is God, for that which is God is far, immeasurably far, beyond the physical.

So when this term is applied to Jesus, it is essential to understand it as a reference to His essence - His reality as the Word and Wisdom of God. The Word and Wisdom descends from God, it may, therefore, be rightly termed, “The Son of God”.

Indeed in Biblical times it was common practice - if a person was seen to show forth attributes of kindness, benevolence and wisdom - to refer to that person as: “a son of God”. In much the same way we would say: “Isn't he a righteous man?”, or, “Truly, he is a man of God”.

From the excerpts listed above we note (with some excitement.) that reference is made to the existence of these “sons of God”, in the plural, who will inherit the earth.

Whilst we accept that “Sons of God” with a capital “S” refers distinctly to the Major Messengers of God, it can be seen that “sons of God” (little “s”) refers to God's children in general - His chosen people.

This notion is firmly established in the Old Testament.

Exodus 5:22 Israel is My first born son. I told you to let my son go.

Here Israel, God's chosen people, are designated, God's first born, and His son.

These are the chosen people of God. They have been revitalised by the beauty of His Word and Wisdom. They have been enabled to discover the true meanings of His Scriptures. They have been enabled to discover the flood of His Wisdom in the writings of the Great Messenger Who has established the Great Day of God. They have been enabled to discover the secret Name of that Great Messenger. They are serving God in the establishment of world peace and justice. They adore and follow the teachings of the “Glory of God”. They are God's children. They are the “sons of God” for whom the whole of creation has been eagerly waiting.

So why, throughout the long and tumultuous history of Christianity, has so much debate and misunderstanding surrounded this rather simple allusion? And from where did the confusion originate?

Well certainly a great deal of wrangling took place - during the early establishment of the church - concerning the exact nature of Jesus. Some held that He was God, some held that He was a God besides God. From this misunderstanding of the reality of Jesus (dealt with in a previous chapter) there developed a famous conference of Bishops held at Nicea in 325 AD. This conference agreed upon an authoritative statement, thereafter referred to as: “The Nicean Creed”.

*“We believe in one God, the Father the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one being with the Father.”*

Obviously it would much benefit the Church if Jesus were established as the only possible Son of God. This would place beyond question His ascendancy, and, therefore, the authority and power of the church would be absolute.

The text of the Bible was not, at that time, available for ordinary people to examine for themselves, and it would have required the actions of a lunatic to question the authority of the church. Therefore, the tradition that the

“person” of Jesus is the only begotten Son of God has persisted without challenge, though the Bible itself clearly states the contrary.

To King David, God, concerning his son Solomon, speaks these words:

2Samual 7:12 When you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will make one of your sons king and will keep his kingdom strong. He will be the one to build a temple for Me...I will be his Father and he will be My son.

Also, in Luke's list of the generations of Adam, Adam himself is identified as the Son of God.

Luke 3:38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

To this we must add the case of Melchizedek, whose story is related in Hebrews chapter 7 and Genesis chapter 14. It is clearly stated that Melchizedek had neither mother nor father, nor is there any record of his ancestors. He is like the son of God and remains a priest forever.

Jesus was the promised Messiah; descended from David; King of the Jews. He was the Holy Representative of Israel, and as Israel had been designated “God's Son”; and as a descendant of David had been designated “God's Son”; and as the anointed high priest was traditionally designated “God's Son” - then Jesus was surely deserving of the same title.

It is essential, if we are to dispel the centuries-old mist of deception surrounding this designation, to understand just what the term “Son of God” signifies.

Returning to our analogy of a mirror, reflecting the image and light of the sun, it could be said that the image in the mirror possesses all the attributes of the source. It reflects the glory of the sun. The image can, therefore, be referred to as a descendant of its source - in this case the sun. It is not, after all, surprising to see the attributes of a father reflected in his offspring. The attributes of the father are in the son. “The Father is in the Son”.

It would be a mistake, however, to suggest that the mirror is the only begotten physical offspring of the sun. Obviously the mirror and the sun differ considerably in essence and reality. It is only on the level of the image within (the reflected attributes) that they may be considered the same. With this understanding it is quite acceptable to call the image an offspring of the sun. We must accept, however, that if another mirror is placed before the sun, it will also reflect the sun's image, and that image will also be a descendant of the sun.

And so we return to our previous theme of the “Light” within, the “Image of God” within, the “Wisdom and the Word of God” within, this is the reality and essence of Jesus - a reality that can be seen within all the Great Messengers of God. So if we refer to one of them as the Son of God, we must refer to them all in the same manner.

“These sanctified Mirrors, these Day Springs of ancient glory, are, one and all, the Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe, its Essence and ultimate Purpose. From Him proceed their knowledge and power; from Him is derived their sovereignty. The beauty of their countenance is but a reflection of His image, and their revelation a sign of His deathless glory. They are the Treasuries of Divine knowledge, and the Repositories of celestial wisdom. Through them is transmitted a grace that is infinite, and by them is revealed the Light that can never fade...These Tabernacles of Holiness, these Primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles.

By the revelation of these Gems of Divine virtue all the names and attributes of God, such as knowledge and power, sovereignty and dominion, mercy and wisdom, glory, bounty, and grace, are made manifest. These attributes of God are not, and have never been, vouchsafed specially unto certain Prophets, and withheld from others. Nay, all the Prophets of God, His well-favored, His holy and chosen Messengers are, without exception, the bearers of His names, and the embodiments of His attributes. They only differ in the

intensity of their revelation, and the comparative potency of their light.”[56]  
Bahá’u’lláh

This “Light” of God's Wisdom is the first emanation from God. It is the “Image” within the mirror of all His Divine Messengers. Whoever is enabled to receive this Light is a descendant thereof and one of God's children.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit makes you God's children. God's Spirit joins Himself to our spirit to declare that we are God's children.

“We know and we see the light, we go close to it, are warmed by it, and reflect its rays on others; This is real faith, and thus we receive power to become the eternal sons of God.”[57]

'Abdu'l- Baha.

### **THE GUISE OF SHEPHERDS**

*Wherefore do ye wear the guise of shepherds, when inwardly ye have become wolves, intent upon My flock? Ye are even as the star, which riseth ere the dawn, and which, though it seem radiant and luminous, leadeth the wayfarers of My city astray into paths of perdition.[58]*

*Bahá’u’lláh*

We have journeyed to a very difficult crossing upon the exacting path of our quest. Here we must confront an issue that has long been an instrument of bloodshed and dissension throughout the sustained history of our development. This is an issue that has ingrained itself, to some lesser or greater extent, within the conscious mind of each and every one of us - and that is the issue of Satan, the Devil.

Whichever term we may prefer, “Satan”, “Lucifer”, “Old Nick” “Beelzebub”, the “Devil”, it matters not, we are personifying evil; that is, we are attributing all the evil thoughts and deeds that exist in the world, to the influence of one very sinister being.

The belief that a malevolent and scheming beast has pledged unremitting

war against our Creator and His people, is both a popular and very ancient conviction. It is even suggested that God Himself created this heinous beast for no other purpose than of tempting, testing, and perfecting His people.

Whatever the truth may be, one thing is certain. If we are to establish the reality of this concept, then once again it is imperative that we place to one side preconceived opinions, myths, legends and traditions, and with an uncluttered mind, examine the substance of these ideas - as they appear in the Holy Text.

The first thing we should note (and this runs contrary to the traditional notions of evil spirits) is that God created no thing, being, or substance, which could enter in upon a person and defile their thoughts, their character, or their deeds.

Mark 7:15-16 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 9:4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

Mark 7:18-23 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, [it] cannot defile him; And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

Matthew 12:35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil

things.

Now this is hard to reconcile with the idea of an external manifestation of wickedness that is responsible for suggestions of evil intent. Indeed if we attach any credence to the Holy Text, it would appear that our evil thoughts and deeds come from within us - our own hearts, our very own inclinations prompt us to commit evil!

Actually this is not such a difficult plum to swallow. Imagine you are faced with a decision whereupon acting one way would result in a great benefit and luxury for yourself but hardship and depravation for one other than yourself. If, after deliberation, you decide to do it anyway then the selfish act belongs to you, it is the product of your contemplation. You have thought it out and acted according to the promptings of your own desire, the murmurings of your own basic instinct; accordingly, the greedy thought belongs to non-other than your not-so-good self.

Is this not precisely what Jesus is saying? Read again the excerpts above - it is from our own hearts that evil deeds have their origin. And yet still there exists a monstrous tradition that would ascribe our base desires and evil suggestions to the external promptings of an evil god - Satan!

How can we begin to reconcile this fierce and haunting tradition with the Holy Text itself?

Well first off we must examine the origin and usage of some rather specific terms - terms that have come to represent this, "Personification of Evil" within history, legend, folk-lore, and tradition.

One of the most common designations for the "Evil One" within the Bible is, "Satan".

This word is derived from the ancient Hebrew word "Satanus" meaning: adversary, accuser, false prosecutor, or, he who lies in wait. It is from the Greek rendition of this: "Diabolos" (the accuser) that we derive such terms as: "Devil" and "Diabolical".

From a perusal of the original usage of these terms, within their proper context (in the Bible) the intended meaning becomes clear. The terms “Adversary” and “Accuser” are used to signify human beings who, due to their selfish and earthly desires, become the enemies and accusers of God's people. They lie in wait intent on trapping them; they prosecute them at religious tribunals; they deny and massacre them - in short, they are adversaries, satans.

So there is no real reference (within the Bible at least) to one evil being, to one Devil; rather this term is used to signify the evil intentions within humanity. Perhaps a more correct inference would be that each one of us has a little devil within, each one of us has the task of resisting the promptings of our selfish desire. Perhaps it might be said that the “enemies” or “adversaries” of God are those who, far from attempting to subdue their own desires, give full reign to the evil promptings of their own selves.

Another popular tradition worthy of study would have that Satan, or the Devil, is a god (in his own right) at war with the God of creation and His people. Once again, however, on examination we find this idea has little or no grounding in scripture.

Isaiah 43:10 Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me.

Isaiah 44:6 I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God.

Isaiah 44:8 Is there a God beside Me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

Isaiah 4:22 Look unto Me, and be ye saved...for I am God, and there is none else.

In the New Testament we find the following.

Mark 12:32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

Ephesians 4:6 One God and Father of all, who [is] above all, and through all, and in you all.

So, if the evil inclination in man is not due to the external influence of an evil god or being, what then is the purpose (and there surely must be one) of the existence of evil thoughts and deeds? For without such a phenomenon in the world, a state of perfection would be easily attainable by all humanity.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these [things].

Now we have stumbled upon a startling and revolutionary truth. If we believe what the Scriptures are saying, it is God Himself Who has ordained that evil shall exist. Moreover, He has ordained that it shall exist - not as a separate entity, god, person, being, or thing - but as an inclination in the hearts of men.

What, therefore, can be the divine reasoning and purpose of the existence of evil in the world?

In order that we may gain an understanding of this important and abstruse theme, we must lay an important foundation upon which to build an understanding.

If we accept that we have been created to seek, find, know, and love God, and if we accept that we are given a free will so that our intention may be discerned, then it necessarily follows that for good to be distinguished from bad, bad must exist - otherwise the distinction is impossible.

“The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and attain His presence...His purpose...is to enable the pure in spirit and the detached in heart to ascend, by virtue of their own innate powers, unto the shores of the Most Great Ocean, that thereby they who seek the Beauty of the All-Glorious may be distinguished and separated from the wayward and perverse.”[59]

“Meditate profoundly, that the secret of things unseen may be revealed unto you, that you may inhale the sweetness of a spiritual and imperishable fragrance, and that you may acknowledge the truth that from time immemorial even unto eternity the Almighty hath tried, and will continue to try, His servants, so that light may be distinguished from darkness, truth from falsehood, right from wrong, guidance from error, happiness from misery, and roses from thorns.” [60]

Bahá'u'lláh

For light to be seen it must shine in darkness. Indeed this physical world of ours is a place of many opposites.

Light and dark; hot and cold; rich and poor; peace and war; life and death - the list is endless. But of one thing we may be certain, for one to be distinguished from the other, the other must exist; and so it must be that for the friends of God to be distinguished, the enemies of God must exist.

This indeed is a profound subject, with many abstruse and wondrous implications.

However, if we would but adopt this simple view, we begin to see the world and its infinite situations as a great workshop, wherein our spirits are quite literally hammered into shape. By means of a series of personal trials, temptations, errors, tribulations and victories, we are purified and prepared for an eternal existence in God's unseen Kingdom.

This process of maturation is patently not confined to the individual. It is quite plain that humanity as a whole has had to endure severe trials, distractions, and historic lessons on its way to perfecting a harmonious existence. These trials and lessons must continue until peace and justice becomes firmly established.

But take heart, all is not troubles, darkness, and misery - for the victory is at

hand - this is the Great Day of God; the Day of Resurrection; the Day in which God's people triumph over the ancient adversary. This is a Day that shall not give way to the darkness of error and wrongdoings; the Day in which the adversary shall fall.

But, returning to our theme, just who on earth, in this Day, is the adversary?

“Wherefore do ye wear the guise of shepherds, when inwardly ye have become wolves, intent upon My flock?” [61]

Bahá'u'lláh

It is none other than the self acclaimed “guides” of humanity, the religious leaders of the day in “the guise of shepherds” who incite their people to deny and resist the emergence of the new Faith. Indeed some are not content with mere denial, they will even religiously urge their followers to hunt down and massacre the true and innocent seekers of God's Wisdom.

The chief opponents of each Great Religion, as it sheds its dawning light upon humanity, are the followers of the previous Revelation. The followers of Moses persecuted and denied Jesus; the Followers of Jesus and Moses persecuted and denied Muhammad; the followers of Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad persecuted and denied the Revelation of The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

In this strangely recurring phenomenon is concealed a great wisdom and purpose, far beyond human design and imagination. For these acts of blind denial and adversity, constitute the very instrument by which the true light of God is discerned and promulgated. As Bahá'u'lláh Himself proclaims:

“Behold how in this Dispensation the worthless and foolish have fondly imagined that by such instruments as massacre, plunder and banishment they can extinguish the Lamp which the Hand of Divine power hath lit, or eclipse the Day Star of everlasting splendour. How utterly unaware they seem to be of the truth that such adversity is the oil that feedeth the flame of this Lamp!”[62]

Bahá'u'lláh

“Pray that My enemies become multiplied...”[63]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

This strange turnabout that has inevitably occurred within the form of each religion (as the bright star of its ordinances and the lamp of its teachings become besmirched with human notions) is depicted prophetically within the Holy Text as the “Fall from Grace”. This fall, which appears to have been the fate awaiting each of the seven revealed religions, is represented in symbolic, yet clear terms within Scripture.

We have encountered each of the Seven Great Religions: Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, depicted as Seven Stars in the right hand of the One Who sits on the throne. If we study the rise and decline of each of these Great Religions, it does indeed resemble the rise and fall of a star.

Gradually the foundations of each have become encrusted with the dust of misinterpretation, schism, power, and greed - the Star of each Religion has fallen from its high place in God's heaven. We encounter this sad phenomenon depicted in many verses of the Bible.

Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Mark 13:25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

Revelation 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth.

Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

This last verse warrants some careful investigation. It is the only instance in

the whole Bible where you will encounter the name “Lucifer” - a name that many ascribe to be the personal name of the Devil. It is, therefore, surprising to learn that this title does not appear anywhere within the original text of the Bible. Lucifer found his way into the Bible much later. However, the way in which “Lucifer” became the accepted name of the Devil is of some interest.

The original text of Isaiah 14:12 refers to “Venus” the “bright morning star” falling from heaven. Now, Venus rises just before dawn, hence the title, “bright morning star”. Ancient navigators would sight this “star” to plot their ship's courses. This method of navigation could be something of a hit and miss affair and ships would frequently run aground. Therefore, this star became associated with wrongful guidance.

Secondly, Venus, in Greek mythology was associated with the God Phosphorus, the light bearer. Phosphorus is depicted as a youth with winged heels bearing aloft a blazing torch.

Now, the Latin for light is “Lux” and to bear is “Fer”. When the original text of the Bible was translated into Latin, Venus - the “light bearer” - translates as “Luxifer”, from this stems our present-day Lucifer.

Perhaps of even greater interest is the reference to the “morning star”, for this is an oft-repeated theme in the Bible. Indeed Jesus Himself assumes this title.

Revelation 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, [and] the bright and morning star.

Now we can unfold the pattern.

Jesus, or more correctly His church, Christianity, is the bright morning star seen to fall from its high place in the heaven of God's Revelation, a fate that befell each of the Seven Stars, the Seven Churches, the Seven Religions.

Revelation 17:10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, [and]

the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

The One Who “is” refers to Jesus (the above verse was written during the dispensation of Jesus). The five fallen Kings are the former Dispensations of Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, and Moses. The One to come refers to Muhammad, Whose Revelation will continue to shine for a “short space”.

History will amply testify that the enemy of each new Revelation is the previous Revelation. A Revelation whose followers have fallen from their once high place of grace, and for no other reason than to maintain earthly ascendancy, attack the followers of the new Faith.

The established religious powers of each era, have been only too keen to sustain the fantastic traditions of horned gods, demons, Lucifer, hellfire, and possession. Such legends have an obvious persuasive power, and can be put to great effect in rallying people against any new faith. What the established religious regimes are totally ignorant of in their sometimes fanatical blindness, is that it is to them (and to any individual or organisation that follows the promptings of selfish and worldly desires) that the Bible refers, with such terms as Satan, the Devil, the “adversary” of God's people. This same blindness urges them to point the accusatory finger at other religions and say: “It is they, not us, who have followed the prompting of Satan.”

And their followers, except for a discerning few, are led into darkness and away from the renewal of God's Wisdom amongst them.

And so it shall be that in this Great Day of God, the stars of each Great Religion, its leaders (and the great majority of their followers) will fall from the high place they once occupied in God's heaven. They will deny the very manifestation of the Word and Wisdom of God and His servants.

Luke 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

We shall examine, more fully in a later section, the way in which Jesus symbolically alludes to this successive denial. Here we shall scan but one of

the important incidences involving the apostle Peter. The importance of Peter lies in his designation, by Jesus, as the “rock” upon which His church would stand. This statement established Peter as the symbol of the Church of Christianity.

Matthew 16:23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

This pronouncement that Peter was behaving like the enemy, can be seen as a symbolic and prophetic reference to the Church, denying and opposing the Word of God in each of its subsequent Revelations. Peter was called the “rock” upon which Jesus would build His church. Now this can have two distinct meanings. One is that Peter's faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah is immovable as a rock and such steadfast faith shall be the foundation of the church. The other meaning is that a firm rock is intransigent, uncompromising, rigid, reluctant to change and, therefore, the cause of much stumbling. It could even be said that the stubborn, rock like attitudes of the church, and its inability to shed traditions and move on, are the very cause of its downfall; the very rock upon which its feet stumble.

Perhaps it was to this very inability of His church to accept new truth that Jesus prophetically referred when He told Peter (the rock) “Get thee behind Me Satan!”

It should now be clear that evil, ignorance, and darkness, can claim no real existence of its own. Darkness is merely the lack of light; stillness is the lack of motion; evil is the lack of good; pride is the lack of humility.

But we do not mean to suggest that evil is not a real force, for evil thoughts and deeds exert a very real influence in the world. However, should even the vilest of thoughts be replaced with a good and righteous one, then immediately darkness gives way to light and the darkness can gain no ascendancy over it. The power of light is such that if the whole universe were suddenly immersed in darkness, and a single candle lit, the universe of darkness would be powerless to extinguish the flame.

Psalms 18:28 For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

Ecclesiastes 2:13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

John 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 12:46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

1Thessalonians 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Despite the evident power of wisdom and light, we will still be hindered from detecting the true radiance of each candle of the worlds Great Religions. For each candle becomes surrounded by the darkness of pride, arrogance, ignorance, and greed. Jesus refers to this fall from original principles when He addresses the Seven Churches of Revelation.

Revelation 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

But this is a Day that shall not be followed by darkness. Though many will be led astray by these fallen stars (the leaders of previous Dispensations) eventually all shall see the evident brightness of this Day, a Day that is the fulfilment, desire, and essence, of all previous Revelations. Then will that ancient enemy of God's children, creed, dogma, blind tradition, and ignorance (represented in Scripture as Satan and Babylon the Great) fall in its entirety.

Revelation 18:2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the

hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

In short, the Sun of truth has dawned. It shall soon shine from its zenith with such radiance that the stars of falsehood shall vanish from sight.

Let's leave this section with a brief selection of the Bahá'í Writings on this vast subject.

“Know verily that knowledge is of two kinds: Divine and Satanic. The one welleteth out from the fountain of divine inspiration; the other is but a reflection of vain and obscure thoughts. The source of the former is God...the latter the whisperings of selfish desire.”[64]

“Every good thing is of God, and every evil thing is from yourselves.”[65]

“Watch over yourselves, for the Evil One is lying in wait, ready to entrap you...The Evil One is he that hindereth the rise and obstructeth the spiritual progress of the children of men.”[66]

Bahá'u'lláh

“As to the question, “That `Abdu'l-Bahá hath said to some of the believers that evil never exists, nay rather, it is a non-existent thing”: This is but truth, inasmuch as the greatest evil is (man's) going astray and being veiled from Truth. Error is lack of guidance; darkness is lack of light; ignorance is lack of knowledge; falsehood is lack of truthfulness; blindness is lack of sight; and deafness is lack of hearing. Therefore, error, blindness, deafness, and ignorance are non-existent things. If we say that according to the text of the Bible, “God hardened Pharoeh's heart that he might not believe in Moses”, this signifies that, verily, He did not soften his heart.

And when we wish to say that God hath not guided a certain one of His servants, that this would be interpreted (by people) that God led him astray.

The darkness spoken of in the Bible as being created by God signifieth that, verily, God hath not caused light to shine; inasmuch as there is no light, there will be darkness; where there is no sight, there will be blindness; where

there is no life, there will be death; where there is no riches, there will be poverty; and where there is no knowledge, there will be ignorance.”[67]

“Consequently, it is proven by indisputable argument and clear explanation that, verily, evils are non-existent, but people have not understood the meaning of the verses of the Bible.”[68]

“The evil spirit, Satan or whatever is interpreted as evil, refers to the lower nature in man. This baser nature is symbolised in various ways...God has never created an evil spirit; all such ideas and nomenclature are symbols expressing the mere human or earthly nature of man.”[69]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

## **GLORY IN THE CLOUDS**

*This is the Day whereon the all-Merciful hath come down in the clouds of knowledge, clothed with manifest sovereignty...The heaven of every religion hath been rent, and the earth of human understanding been cleft asunder, and the angels of God are seen descending.*[70]

*Bahá’u’lláh*

Anything that obscures the reality of the gleaming sun is nothing more than a cloud - a nebulous council of wandering gas. However, the dark clouds of obscuration form little impediment to those with the vision to perceive the return of the Word and Wisdom of God in His new attire. But, for the heart that remains blinded by tradition and doctrine, the Day of God is a Day of thick darkness and dense clouds.

Amos 5:18 Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end [is] it for you? the day of the LORD [is] darkness, and not light.

Amos 5:20 [Shall] not the day of the LORD [be] darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

Joel 2:2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness.

Zephaniah 1:15 That day [is] a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.

To the followers of Moses the appearance of the promised Messiah in the human temple of Jesus, was a dense cloud that obscured the reality of their Savior. No fair-minded investigation would now suggest that Jesus was not the promised fulfillment and return of the Mosaic Revelation. Yet at the time of His appearance few indeed were endowed with the capacity to recognise Him. The intent, meaning, and source of His words remained, therefore, hidden from the vast majority.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the Mosaic Revelation, which stated He would come from a place unknown to them. His deniers, in manifest blindness, stated: “We know Jesus has come to us from Nazareth, therefore, He cannot possibly be the fulfillment of the prophecy that clearly states: He shall come from a place unknown to us.” They even mocked that nothing good has ever come out of Nazareth.

These people, holding themselves to be the most learned and readily acquainted with God's prophecies, failed to see beyond a literal interpretation; pride in their own learning blinded their eyes to the real intent of the prophecy. Jesus had come to earth from the heaven of God's Wisdom, a place they, by reason of their blind hearts, knew not.

John 8:23 ...You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.

1Corinthians3:19 For the wisdom of this world is folly with God...He catches the wise in their craftiness.

As the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh explain, the cloak of God's word is a revelation to those who perceive its light, but to the blind in heart, it forms a dense “cloud” of concealment.

“The Revelation of the Divine Reality hath everlastingly been identical with its concealment and its concealment identical with its revelation.”[71]

The Báb

“We have moreover, ordained that its veil of concealment be non other except its own self.”[72]

Bahá'u'lláh

This “veiled” appearance of the Word of God was more than adequately announced by Jesus.

Matthew 26:64...Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds

To the beclouded intellect, the Words of God appear only in their outer more literal and uninspired sense. To the unclouded mind of the earnest seeker, however, the inner meanings and reality of the Words of God shine like the sun in a clear blue sky. If we have the ears to hear and the eyes to see, the hidden meanings are apparent. If not, the words form their own concealment. This must surely be the judgement to which Jesus refers when he says:

John 12:47 If anyone hears my sayings...I do not judge him...the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day.

In other words, it is by our own efforts and our own ability to purify ourselves from vain imagination and tradition, and recognise the inner meanings of God's Word, that we are judged.

To God's chosen the literal interpretations that have so dogged the progress and acceptance of religion, are non-existent. The inner meanings of the Holy Text are conveyed silently from heart to heart. For this is a truth beyond the murmuring of words and syllables. God's children recognise His Voice, and

understand His meanings - intuitively. But, to the ever-present multitude lacking this simple unassuming meekness and purity of heart, everything is a parable, a hidden mystery:

Matthew 13:13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

Matthew 13:34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all [these] things are done in parables.

These parables and figures of speech form an essential part of all revealed Scripture. Our purpose is to discover, as far as we are able, their inner significance, and decipher the ancient and hidden mysteries of God's Wisdom.

“Know verily that the purpose underlying all these symbolic terms and abstruse allusions, which emanate from the Revealers of God's Holy Cause, hath been to test and prove the peoples of the world; that thereby the earth of the pure and illumined hearts may be known from the barren and perishable soil. From time immemorial such hath been the way of God amidst His creatures and to this testify the records of the sacred Books.”[73]

Bahá'u'lláh

So, let's look again at some of those mysterious allusions and the figures of speech we have thus far encountered, and with the aid of the all seeing eye of this enlightened era, strip away the obscuring clouds of tradition.

WATER, TREES, ISRAEL, DARKNESS, RIVERS, LEAVES,

JERUSALEM, GOATS, RAIN, FRUIT, ZION, DOGS, STREAMS,  
SHEPHERDS, VIPERS, WELLS, SHEEP, BEASTS, SEAS, THE-TRUE-  
VINE, DRAGONS, DAYS, TEMPLES, DEMONS, LIGHT, THE SUN,  
SATAN, BREAD, LUCIFER, LOAVES, CLOUDS, WINE.

We have encountered seven:

STARS, LAMPS, TRUMPETS, THUNDERS, PILLARS, EYES,  
SHEPHERDS, STREAMS, WELLS, WOMEN, SEALS, HORNS,  
CHURCHES, ANGELS, SPIRITS, WOES, PLAGUES, BOWLS-OF-  
ANGER, DAYS, HILLS, KINGS, PILLARS, TORCHES, MOUNTAINS,  
HEADS.

We may now avail ourselves of the inner significance of these terms. With an unclouded eye we see light, bread, water, and wine, as the light, bread, water, and wine of God's Wisdom. We interpret darkness as distance from the "Lamp" of God's Wisdom; we interpret a cloud as being anything that intervenes between us and the recognition of God's Messenger.

We see Israel as God's chosen people; His beloved sons; His messengers of love; His host of angels; His victorious servants, dressed in white. It is they who have won the victory from the Devil of pride, the Satan of self, and the Babylon of attachment to the earth of tradition.

We see the Seven Angels; the Seven Spirits; the Seven Trumpets; the Seven Women; as the Seven Great Announcers of God's Wisdom, Who, when they first appear (to those who are keen of vision) are Stars, Lamps, Shepherds, and Kings. To the blind of heart, however, they represent Seven Plagues; Seven Woes; Seven Floods; and Seven Days of terrible darkness.

However, this Day - the promised Day of God - will not acquiesce to the onset of darkness, and soon those dense clouds of human fancy will flee from the resplendent face of the dawning Sun of Revelation.

"Ere long the veil shall be lifted from your eyes at the appointed time. Ye

shall then behold the sublime remembrance of God, unclouded and vivid.”[74]

The Báb

“The day is approaching when the intervening clouds will have been completely dissipated.”[75]

Bahá'u'lláh

Let's take something of a peek through some of those dark clouds that have so obscured the hidden beauty of God's illustrious Wisdom.

Proverbs 9:1 Wisdom has built her house, she has set up her seven pillars.

We have previously encountered this enthralling femininity of the Word and Wisdom of God. (See Chpt-2)

Proverbs 3:18 She [is] a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy [is every one] that retaineth her.

Proverbs 9:3 She [Wisdom] hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city,

Isaiah 4:1 And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, “We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach.”

The Seven Heavenly Maids of Wisdom are here representative of the Seven Great World Embracing Religions of: Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. (See Chpt-7)

The above verse suggests a day when the worlds Seven Great Religions will unite under the banner of one Great Name - the Day of “one fold” , “one shepherd”.

John 10:16 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.

They may continue to “eat their own bread” and “wear their own apparel”, because the original teachings of their Prophets (bread from the heaven of God's Wisdom) still remain pure and unsullied. Their names, their leaders, and a goodly number of their followers, however, have become besmirched with obstinacy, tainted with blood, and shamed; hence the request: “...take away our reproach.”

Isaiah 65:15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

In the next excerpt from the book of Revelation we can clearly see the real significance of the Seven Women, the Seven Mountains, the Seven Heads, the Seven Crowns, and the Seven Kings.

Revelation 17:9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come...

We find mention of these Great Mountains of God's Revelations in the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomy 33:2...The Lord came from Sinai, and dawned from Sier upon us; He shone forth from Mount Paran...

Mt Sinai is, of course, associated with the Revelation of Moses. Sier is a mountain in Judah, associated with the Revelation of Jesus. Mt Paran is a mountain in Arabia, associated with the Revelation of Muhammad.

But wait! let's look deeper into that verse from Revelation:

Revelation 17:9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come...

Mention is made of Seven Kings. Five have fallen, one is, and one is yet to

come.

The five fallen Kings represent the fallen principles of the Revelations of Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, and Moses. The King that “is”, refers to Jesus [His Revelation was the current Dispensation at the time of John's Revelation] and the one that is yet to come is the seventh King - Muhammad.

The reference to these Kings falling suggests they have fallen from the high place they once occupied in the heaven of God's Revelation. This is the fall from grace that we dealt with in the previous section.

And what is it that falls from heaven?

Stars!

Mark 13:25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

Revelation 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, [and] the bright and morning star.

Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

Revelation 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.

Revelation 1:16 In his right hand [The One Who sat on the throne!] he held seven stars.

Revelation 1:20 As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in right hand, and the seven gold lamp-stands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lamp-stands are the seven churches.

So these Seven Great Luminaries, these Seven Religions in the Heaven of God's Wisdom, have, one and all, fallen from the high place they once occupied. This subject is dealt with in full in the chapter entitled: "In the Guise of Shepherds". This "fall" of each revealed religion is the meaning of the prophecy concerning the falling of the stars on the Great Day of God.

Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

"O concourse of bishops! Ye are the stars of the heaven of My knowledge. My mercy desireth not that ye should fall upon the earth. My justice, however, declareth: "This is that which the Son (Jesus) hath decreed." And whatsoever hath proceeded out of His blameless, His truth-speaking, trustworthy mouth, can never be altered....The stars of the heaven of knowledge have fallen...When I came unto them, in My majesty, however, they turned aside from Me. They, verily, are of the fallen. This is what the Spirit (Jesus) prophesied when He came with the truth, and the Jewish doctors cavilled at Him..."[76]

Bahá'u'lláh

Note also the mention, in the verse from Matthew, of the sun being darkened and the moon no longer giving forth her light. If we avail ourselves of the symbolic use of "the sun" to represent the source of spiritual enlightenment, and if we are familiar with the usage of "the moon" to denote the reflected light of His laws and ordinances, the meaning becomes clear.

Malachi 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

Revelation 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars...and his countenance [was] as the sun shineth in his strength.

Jeremiah 31:35 Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, [and] the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts [is]

his name:

Mark 13:24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light.

Amos 8:9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

Joel 3:15 The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

Ezekiel 32:7 And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.

The Spiritual Sun of each Revelation diminishes in brightness as the dust and malice of the age serve to becloud its former splendour. The Moon of its ordinances and the Stars of its guidance, ultimately, loose their pristine lustre.

Such has been the destiny of each of the great prophetic religions; for just as the physical sun must set to rise again another day, so it is with the Spiritual Sun.

But this Day, is the Promised Day, the Day that will precipitate the final decline of the scions of deception and injustice. A Day in which that ancient enemy of God's religion - fanatic tradition and creed - symbolised in the Bible as "Babylon the Great", shall slide irretrievably and irrevocably from her high place, dragging down her "seven fallen maids" with her.

Again we encounter the fascinating femininity of God's Revelations - the feminine Wisdom of God Who graces the pages of the Old Testament, the Seven Women or Seven Maids of Heaven.

We should also note the marked use of feminine terms to represent the "fallen" states of God's religions. Indeed, the fallen religions are represented

in their entirety by one fallen woman - "Babylon the Great".

With the aid of this knowledge we should appreciate that any reference, within the Holy Writ concerning defilement by women, refers to association with these "fallen" women, these "fallen" religions. Further to this, any reference concerning the station of the elect, who have refused to render themselves "unclean" by "association" (note that some translations prefer the term: "intercourse") with "women", is most definitely not a reference to the feminine species as a whole, or indeed in part.

These references to non-association with women have a spiritual and symbolic significance; our creator is not prescribing celibacy.

Clearly these are one and all references to the fallen principles of the once great religions - religions whose leaders have fallen into disrepute and unclean ways. Blessed is the man that does not associate with them.

Revelation 14:4 It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste...

It must be clear, however, that no impurity can be found in the original teachings of the Seven Great Revealers of God's Wisdom. The impurity and corruption that inevitably became associated with each Dispensation, is entirely of human invention.

Also it is evident that just as the term "fallen women" is used to represent the fallen principles of each Great Religion, "chaste or virginal women" represent the untainted and pure strain of each religious Dispensation. These are the Seven Heavenly Maids.

It was the pure, untainted, and virginal beauty of the Heavenly Maid of Judaism that gave birth to Christianity.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Jeremiah 31:21...turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

Jeremiah 31:4 Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

Lamentations 2:13 ...what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion?

Jeremiah 8:19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: [Is] not the LORD in Zion? [is] not her king in her?

Jeremiah 9:1 Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Now, compare the above selections of praise for the virginal purity of the Heavenly Maids with the following:

Jeremiah 18:13...the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.

Isaiah 22:4 Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

Lamentations 3:48 Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Amos 5:2 The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; [there is] none to raise her up.

Revelation 14:8..."Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion."

She - the Babylon of tradition, blind imitation, and doctrine - has contrived

to mix an impure draught of her own invention. This she has done to seduce and deceive the nations. But not God's chosen nation; not Israel; not God's children, those with whom He is pleased, for they will refuse to associate with her.

All who divest themselves of her jaded attire, will gather as one flock from among all nations, all religions, and with the mighty sword of truth and reason, expose her shame and ignorance. Thus, this Day, she shall fall irretrievably from her high place.

Again we can but marvel at the beauty and delicacy of the Words of God. This theme of womanly beguilement is mystically portrayed throughout the Bible, most famously, of course, in the story of the Garden of Eden. Here we see Adam, representing mankind, tempted by the already fallen woman - Eve.

She offers him the fruit of human knowledge, he accepts, and in choosing the fruit of earthly knowledge, debars himself from the fruit of the Tree of heavenly wisdom - the "Tree of Life".

As a natural consequence of accepting the fruit of worldly knowledge, he earns expulsion from the wondrous garden of God's Wisdom.

This is a timeless event. Eve (representing the powerful pull of opinion, tradition, self, and earthly gain) repeatedly and continuously proffers her fruit to humanity. If we accept her blind and literal interpretation of God's Word, we are un-remembered in the beautiful garden of God's mystery.

This wondrous theme is revisited in Jesse's parable of the ten virgins.

Prior to Jesus there had been five Manifestations of the Wisdom of God - five "Maids of Heaven". With this in mind we can see that the allusion to five "wise" maids in the parable of the ten virgins, refers to the true seekers of God's Wisdom - within the ranks of each of the five revealed religions. It is they who are prepared and recognise the next manifestation, represented in the parable as the "Bridegroom".

The five “unwise” virgins did not gain admittance to the wedding feast. Their spiritual lamps had failed them. Had their lamps remained burning with the oil of Wisdom, they would still be lit.

Again we encounter the same symbols - “light” and “lamps” - yet the obvious meanings will always escape us, until we free ourselves from those disabling weights of tradition.

To conclude, to those whom God has imbued with the ability to discern truth from falsehood, light from darkness, the Words of the Messengers of God are light, bread, oil, and life, and the evidence of this wondrous Revelation complete.

The interposing clouds of opinion and misunderstanding are dispersed to reveal, in the fullness of Her heavenly splendour, the Maid of Heaven shining as radiant as the midday sun.

“Cry out before the gaze of the dwellers of heaven and of earth: I am the Maid of Heaven, the Offspring begotten by the Spirit of Baha. My habitation is the Mansion of His Name, the All-Glorious...I was wrapt within the veil of an inviolable security, and lay hidden from the eyes of men...Should they hide Me away in the depths of the earth, yet would they find Me riding aloft on the clouds, and calling out unto God, the Lord of strength and of might.” [77]

Bahá'u'lláh

### **THREE DAYS TO REMEMBER**

*After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up.*

*Hosea 6:1-2*

In this, the penultimate section of our journey, we examine the wonders inherent in the phrase, “three times” or “three days”.

John 2:19...”Destroy this temple, and in three days I shall raise it up.”

Mark 14:58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with

hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

Revelation 8:13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

Acts 11:10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

Matt 26:34..."Truly I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.

Matt 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Hosea 6:1-2 After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up.

In all the above references there is a hidden and divine significance, a significance far beyond the obvious and literal.

We have made much mention of the Seven Great Messengers, the Seven Angels, each of Whom prophesied concerning this Great Day of God. If we look again at that list we see that Jesus is the sixth in succession: Adam, Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad. After Muhammad there appeared an eighth Messenger of God - The Báb.

The Báb (Himself the Bearer of a great Revelation) was the Herald of that immense flood of God's Wisdom inherent in the Dispensation of God's ninth Messenger - Bahá'u'lláh.

The essence and reality of Jesus - the Word of God - became manifest in the Revelation of Muhammad, the Revelation of The Báb, and the mighty Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. Three manifestations of the Word and Wisdom of

God, three Angels, three Dispensations - THREE DAYS!

With this understanding can we fully appreciate the beauty and depth of Jesus' remarks concerning the Temple of God's Word. Jesus knew the power hungry divines would bring His Religion down and submerge His truth beneath the dust of sedition, schism, and disrepute.

However, He - the Wisdom of God - would raise it again in three dispensations, three Days. In that promised third Day, the Great Day of God, the banner of peace and justice would be held aloft with such strength, that none would ever again be able to bring down or corrupt the mighty edifice of God's Word.

The Bahá'í Revelation contains explicit safeguards against the corruption and schism that was an inevitable by-product of former Revelations. The original Writings of Bahá'u'lláh are extant and easily referred to.

Bahá'u'lláh would both write and seal the Tablet in His own hand, or dictate to an amanuensis and seal the document after careful inspection.

Bahá'u'lláh's original Writings are kept in a beautiful archives building on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land, where they are meticulously translated into every language. No longer is it possible to wrangle over what might have been the original wording; no longer is it possible to add or take anything away from the original text of the holy Word.

Furthermore, although individual investigation is of paramount importance in the Bahá'í Faith, no individual believer has the right to pronounce upon or interpret authoritatively any aspect of the Writings, and to this end there is no hierarchy or priest-hood in the Faith. In His will and testament Bahá'u'lláh conferred the authority to interpret and expound upon His Writings upon His eldest son, `Abdu'l-Bahá. Indeed the authority devolved upon `Abdu'l-Bahá was such that His Writings, along with those of The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, form the holy text of Bahá'í Scripture.

Subsequently, in His will and testament, `Abdu'l-Bahá conferred the "Guardianship" of the Bahá'í Faith upon His grandson, Shoghi Effendi.

After Shoghi Effendi the divine institution of the Universal House of Justice and the supreme Administrative Order of the Bahá'í Faith was brought into effect. All the members of this divine and world embracing institution are elected, democratically and by secret ballot, from amongst the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. All are chosen for their spiritual qualities, and as one of the qualities required to serve in God's new order is humility, no pre-election campaigning, nomination, or canvassing can exist.

A paramount purpose of this Administrative Order, is to safeguard and promote the Bahá'í Revelation. In this way Bahá'u'lláh has inaugurated a divine system that will both, establish the peace and security of all nations, and unfalteringly ensure the purity of His Great Work. It was to this divine and incorruptible structure that Jesus referred when He said:

John 2:19...Destroy this temple, and in three days I shall raise it up.

For in this third Day corruption has no place in the beautiful Temple of God's Word.

Matt 26:34...Truly I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.

A cock crows ere the dawning of the day. If we apply our previous formula to this verse, a great significance to Peter's three denials of the Word of God is evident.

As previously established, Peter, through his designation as the rock of Christianity, is an accepted symbol of the church of God's Word. His three denials of Jesus point prophetically to the denials leveled by the church at the three subsequent manifestations of the reality of Jesus.

Three times the Divine Messenger heralded the dawning of a new Day; three times the church denied them. They denied Muhammad, they denied The Báb, and they denied Bahá'u'lláh.

Mark 14:37-41 And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter,

“Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation....And again he came and found them sleeping....And he came the third time, and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come....”

Three times the reality of Jesus returned as Muhammad, The Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh, to find the church asleep. Despite His repeated admonitions to keep watch and remain awake, He discovered them in the deep slumber of their ignorance and heedlessness.

John 21:15-17 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep...”

Three times Jesus admonished the church to love Him and feed his sheep. Three times the established church of Christianity denied His reality and led their followers away from the three Manifestations of God's Wisdom in their midst - Muhammad, The Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh.

Other instances of this theme occur in the text of the Bible. All these references to “three days” and “three times” foreshadow the events that Jesus knew would inevitably come to pass. Even the spiritual resurrection of Jesus after three days in the “heart of the earth” foreshadowed the greater resurrection of His Teachings in this third day - the Great Day of God - the Day of Bahá'u'lláh.

“O concourse of Christians! We have, on a previous occasion, revealed Ourselves unto you, and ye recognize Me not. This is yet another occasion vouchsafed unto you. This is the Day of God; turn ye unto Him...The Beloved One loveth not that ye be consumed with the fire of your desires.

Were ye to be shut out as by a veil from Him, this would be for no other reason than your own waywardness and ignorance. Ye make mention of Me, and know Me not. Ye call upon Me, and are heedless of My Revelation....O people of the Gospel! They who were not in the Kingdom have now entered it, whilst We behold you in this day, tarrying at the gate.”[78]

“O concourse of priests! The Day of Reckoning hath appeared, the Day whereon He Who was in heaven hath come. He, verily, is the One Whom ye were promised in the Books of God, the Holy, the Almighty, the All-Praised. How long will ye wander in the wilderness of heedlessness and superstition? Turn with your hearts in the direction of your Lord, the Forgiving, the Generous.”[79]

“Read ye the Evangel and yet refuse to acknowledge the All-Glorious Lord? This indeed beseemeth you not, O concourse of learned men!...The fragrances of the All-Merciful have wafted over all creation. Happy the man that hath forsaken his desires, and taken fast hold of guidance.”[80]

Bahá'u'lláh

Indeed these were three days we should have remembered.

### **AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING**

*We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all subduing sovereignty. We have then called into being a new creation.[81]*

*Bahá'u'lláh*

And so we must end our journey together, but the end is really a beginning.

The creation story, recounted in the first book of the Bible, has eluded interpretation for thousands of years. It is only now that we can look back with the eye of discernment and encounter the real and obvious significance of the “Seven Days” of Creation.

If we ascribe to the traditional interpretation, we are hampered with the conclusion that the world, and all therein was created in seven days, or seven stages. If we choose seven days, each of 24 hours duration, we experience a conflict with scientific evidence, not to mention common sense. It would appear from rational investigation that our planet has evolved over periods of billions of years. This conflicts heavily with the scale of time mentioned in the Bible. And if we ascribe to the notion that the seven days were not days as we know them - but much longer periods - though far more appealing to the scientific mind, this argument likewise bears little or no fruit.

Let's once again endeavour to look beyond the literal, and seek a deeper significance. Let's look at the creative power of the Word of God.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God...all things were made through Him...

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible.

Revelation 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.

Revelation 21:5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

Now we are to make another of those giant leaps together. This New Creation, this Great Day of God, the recognition of which has been the quest, the foundation, and the very theme of our journey through scripture, was prepared in Seven Stages, Seven Revelations, Seven Dispensations, Seven Days! The Day of Adam, the Day of Krishna, the Day of Buddha, the Day of Zoroaster, the Day of Moses, the Day of Jesus, and the Day of Muhammad.

There have been Seven Revelations of the essence and reality of Jesus;

Seven Dispensations of the Word and Wisdom of God, through which has come this New Era of the Bahá'í Revelation.

The creative power and glory of God's Word is such that we have witnessed, in this radiant century, the death of the old world and the birth of a new world - and this miraculous creation has taken place before our very eyes.

Again the truth of this occurrence is hidden beautifully and majestically within the text of the Bible in a way that only a vast and supreme intelligence could devise. Try as we may (and we did try) humanity was powerless to decipher the text, powerless, that is, until our Creator had fulfilled His plan to open the Books and deliver the key to the hidden meanings that for centuries lay hidden in His Words. That key is the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

There can be no more glaring an example of our inability to understand the great themes of the Bible - prior to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh - than in the creation story of Genesis.

As with the story of Noah's Ark and the Great Flood, we fell helplessly and headlong into the trap of viewing the creation story as a happening that took place in antiquity. The simple "key" to the mystery is that it is describing a future event. What is being described in the first book of the Bible is not the creation of the old world, but the creation of God's "New World".

Once we adopt this startling new view everything falls neatly, amazingly, and beautifully into place. No longer do we find a conflict with scientific investigation, and the fruits are abundantly clear.

If we lift ourselves from the blind imitation of traditional belief, and gaze around us with an independent and understanding eye, we cannot but conclude that the world of humanity has emerged from the darkness of the middle ages into a new era of enlightenment. It has been stated that we stand too close to this luminous century to fully appreciate its magnitude. Only future historians will possess the vantage-point with which to look back at this age and fully appreciate what a momentous occurrence took place.

Habakkuk 1:5 I will work a work in those Days that you will not believe though it be told you

Isaiah 29:18 And in that Day shall the deaf hear the words of the Book, and the eyes of the blind shall see.

Isaiah 11:19 The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea.

“We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all subduing sovereignty. We have then called into being a new creation.”[82]

“Behold how, in this Day, the beginning is reflected in the end.”[83]

“Great is thy blessedness O Yahya (Vahid) inasmuch as thou didst fulfil thy pledge in the Day when the heavens and earth were created...” [84]

Bahá'u'lláh

We have witnessed and are witnessing the birth of a New World, and pains inevitably accompany birth. Such have been the terrible times of troubles we have encountered, which as Jesus said, would be the most terrible the world has ever seen. Indeed His words have reached fulfilment in the ravages and pains of wars the like of which, the world has never before experienced.

But now, as our world slowly emerges from the agony of those times we detect a gentle yet irreversible breeze and the lights of a new day are dawning.

Humanity has reached a stage of maturity and transition whereby we seek an end to disturbances, we seek peace, security and justice; homes and food for the starving millions; reconciliation and unity between the diverse races and religions; an end to war and bloodshed.

“The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.”[85]

Bahá'u'lláh

Never before, throughout the vast expanse of human evolution, has there been a time such as this. Jesus refers to the glory of this Day when he says:

Luke 7:28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

And Bahá'u'lláh Himself states:

“He that enters in upon the Kingdom of God's Word in this Day shall excel all others.” [86]

“No day is greater than this Day...One righteous work performed in this Day, equalleth all the virtuous acts which for myriads of centuries men have practiced - nay, We ask forgiveness of God for such a comparison! For verily the reward which such a deed deserveth is immensely beyond and above the estimate of men.”[87]

Bahá'u'lláh

We communicate at the speed of light with our neighbours across vast oceans. If an injustice occurs on the other side of the globe, within seconds, we can view it in our living rooms. Their suffering is our suffering. At no other time in the history of our species have we had the advantage of such facilities.

Now each of us can bear witness that there is no glory or honour to be found in war, and no pride in beholding the emaciated bodies of our starving children.

Accompanying this vast, world illuminating flood of technology, is an even more irresistible force. A Spirit is encircling the globe; it is the Spirit of love, attraction and awareness; the Spirit of compassion and unity. Like lightening from the east this Spirit is the motivating force and prime impulse of this century of human enlightenment. The Word and Wisdom of God, manifest in the glorious Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, is swiftly embracing all the peoples

of the world.

“The proof is clear and the evidence is complete! If anyone looketh with the eyes of justice he shall be struck with wonder and amazement and will testify that all the peoples sects and races of the world should be glad, content and grateful for the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh.”[88]

“He has created us in this radiant century, a century longed for and expected by all the sanctified souls in past periods. It is a blessed century; it a blessed day. The philosophers of history have agreed that this century is equal to one hundred past centuries. This is true from every standpoint. This is the century of science, inventions, discoveries and universal laws. This is the century of the revelation of the mysteries of God. This is the century of the effulgence of the rays of the Sun of Truth. Therefore you must render thanks and glorification to God that you were born in this age. Furthermore you have listened to the call of Bahá’u’lláh...You were asleep; you are awakened. Your ears are attentive; your hearts are informed. You have acquired the love of God. This is the breath of the Holy Spirit.”[89]

“O ye beloved of God! O ye children of His Kingdom! Verily, verily, the new heaven and the new earth are come. The Holy City, New Jerusalem, hath come down from on high in the form of a Maid of Heaven, veiled, beautiful, and unique, and prepared for reunion with her lovers on earth. The angelic Company of the Celestial Concourse hath joined in a call that hath run throughout the universe, all loudly and mightily acclaiming: ‘This is the City of God and His abode, wherein shall dwell the pure and holy among His servants. He shall live with them for they are His people and He is their Lord.’”[90]

“Do you appreciate the day in which you live? This is the century of the Blessed Perfection! This is the cycle of the light of His beauty! This is the consummate day of all the prophets!”[91]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

“Great indeed is this Day! The allusions made to it in all the sacred Scriptures as the Day of God attest its greatness. The soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous

Day.”[92]

“The time foreordained unto all the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled. Out of Zion hath gone forth the Law of God, and Jerusalem, and the hills and land thereof, are filled with the glory of His Revelation.”[93]

“All glory be to this Day, the Day in which the fragrances of mercy have been wafted over all created things...He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come!”[94]

“The Divine Springtime is come...This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendours of the Light that shineth from the face of thy Lord...This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: “Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the foot stool of thy God”[95]

“The promised hour is now come. Beware lest ye fail to apprehend its import and be accounted among the erring.”[96]

“The Best-Beloved is come. In His right hand is the sealed wine of His Name...The waters of everlasting life have, in their fullness, been proffered unto men...Draw near, and tarry not, though it be for one short moment...On this Day the Kingdom is God's!” [97]

Bahá'u'lláh

We have graced these pages with but a sprinkling from the vast ocean of His Words. That which we have been able, by the grace of God, to discover within the inexhaustible and boundless text of the Bible, is but a faint glimmer of the radiance of the full Sun of His Revelation. Soon that Sun shall rise to its zenith and, again in fulfilment of Biblical prophecy, be seen by everyone.

I urge you, as our journey ends, to turn your full attention to the magnificent Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, which to the understanding heart, is naught but

the revelation of “all truth”, from “first to last”.

And so here we really must end our journey upon the tempestuous waves of the sacred Words of God. Have we achieved the goal and destination of our quest? Have we discovered the source of the unseen world? Have we bathed in its light? Have we discovered the return of the reality and essence of Jesus - the Word and Wisdom of God? This you must judge for yourself, for as Bahá'u'lláh states:

“Every man hath been, and will continue to be, able of himself to appreciate the Beauty of God, the Glorified. Had he not been endowed with such a capacity, how could he be called to account for his failure?...the faith of no man can be conditioned by any one except himself.”[98]

As our journey ends I am left feeling somewhat unfulfilled, for this ocean is vast beyond imagining, so much more lies hidden in wondrous depths. However, the end is not only nigh it is also here. However, as we have seen, the beginning is reflected in the end, and the end is reflected in the beginning; for we die to tradition but we are born a new creation. Once we were dead, now we are alive; once we were deaf, now we hear; once we were blind, but now we can see - for we have seen visions of God.

“The mystic and wondrous Bride, hidden ere this beneath the veiling of utterance, hath now, by the grace of God and His divine favour, been made manifest even as the resplendent light shed by the beauty of the Beloved. I bear witness, O friends! that the favour is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest, and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavours in the path of detachment will reveal. In this wise hath the divine favour been fully vouchsafed unto you and unto them that are in heaven and on earth. All praise to God, the Lord of the Worlds.”[99]

Bahá'u'lláh