

PROOFS

FROM THE HOLY QUR'ÁN
(REGARDING THE ADVENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH)

by

PROF. DR. ŞÁBIR ÁFÁQÍ
(Ph.D.)

MIR'ÁT PUBLICATIONS
P. O. BOX 4273
NEW DELHI 110048 - INDIA

Note: The spelling of the Oriental words and proper names used in this book is according to the system of transliteration established at one of the International Oriental Congresses.

© Prof. Dr. Şábir Áfáqí

November 1993

All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be translated in any language or reproduced in any form without the written permission of the copyright owner.

To
LATE SIYYID MAḤFÚZU'L-ḤAQQ 'ILMÍ
A Famous Bahá'í Scholar of Indo-Pak Sub-Continent

Contents

Preface.....	ix
Proofs from the Holy Qur'án	xv
The Qur'án	xvii
1. The Holy Qur'án says	1
2. From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh	2
3. Progressive Revelation.....	21
4. Some clarifications.....	30
5. Qiyámah—The Day of Resurrection.....	49
6. Why did they deny?.....	61
7. Why another Manifestation of God?.....	70
8. The criterion	81
9. Bahá'u'lláh	90
10. The Báb	137
11. 'Abdu'l-Bahá.....	155
12. Shoghi Effendi.....	158
Bibliography.....	162

Preface

The advent of a Manifestation of God is a very significant event in history. It is a milestone in the evolutionary progress of the human society. In fact, the Manifestation of God is a spiritual Sun which gives spiritual life to mankind. He revives the foundation of Faith and belief in God. He bestows new capacities and explores new potentialities of men, and thus, actually, He creates a new race of man.

The physical sun is a proof of its own self and does not require any outside proof for its validity. Even those who cannot see the sun can, at least, perceive it by its heat. Likewise, the Spiritual Sun does not require any outside evidence to prove its validity. No one else but a Manifestation of God Himself is able to show the quality of life, character and influence required of such a high station.

Apart from the evidences shown through His life and teachings there is another proof of His validity which is equally important for Him to show—proofs from the Books of the past Manifestations. Thus He has to satisfy the hearts as well as the minds.

Bahá'u'lláh has satisfied both of the above-mentioned requirements. Thousands of Muslims, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs have recognised Bahá'u'lláh as the one promised in their respective Holy Books and Scriptures. On the other hand, those who did not believe in any religion are also entering the fold of Bahá'u'lláh by accepting Him as a Manifestation of God and Redeemer of mankind.

The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh has followed the period of Islám and most of its early adherents and martyrs were from a Muslim background and they have written many books in oriental languages, regarding the validity of His claim according to the Qur'án and the traditions of various sects of Islám.

Since these works are scattered in various volumes and very few of them are accessible to English readers, I felt that a book containing the Quranic proofs regarding the advent of Bahá'u'lláh was much needed in English—both for the deepening of the knowledge of the friends and as a preparation for anticipated mass-scale teaching among the Muslims. So in 1985, I wrote about this idea to Dr. Peter Khán. He liked it very much and encouraged me to work on this project. I had an opportunity of meeting him in New Delhi in 1986 and sharing with him my ideas regarding this work. He again encouraged me and guided me to use the English translation of the Holy Qur'án made by 'Abdu'lláh Yúsun 'Alí, because he is an authentic translator and there is no dispute regarding His translation. In the meanwhile, I received the following words from the beloved International Teaching Centre:

“... regarding your plan to prepare a compilation of Quranic proofs to assist with teaching the Faith among the Muslims in Asia and Africa. This is an excellent idea and we look forward to receiving a copy.”
(21 August 1986)

Charged with these loving appreciations and encouragements I set on my task. I decided to limit myself only to Quranic proofs for two reasons. Firstly, because there are many traditions and all the Muslims do not accept all the traditions. Secondly, because there are ample proofs in the Qur'án itself regarding, not only the advent of Bahá'u'lláh, but also regarding the appearance of the Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and these will suffice to satisfy any ardent Muslim seeker. I have included nine verses from the Holy Qur'án in this book which stress that investigation of truth is incumbent upon every one. I have also included a compilation from Bahá'u'lláh's Writings regarding His own station and several articles to clarify some terminologies used in religious scriptures and to remove their misunderstandings.

I feel it necessary to express my deep and loving thanks to my dear daughter, Táhirih, who has helped me a lot in collecting relevant verses from the Qur'án and arranging other materials. Also I must express my loving appreciation for my dear co-worker, Shamshír 'Alí, Auxiliary Board member, who has helped

me in writing and typing of the manuscript. Also I would like to thank all those individuals and institutions who have helped me in materialising my dream. My deepest thanks are to the beloved International Teaching Centre and to Dr. Peter Khán for the guidance which they have shown me in the compilation of this book. I am also highly indebted to Dr. Peter Smith who has reviewed the manuscript.

Şabir Áfáqí

Say: Perused ye not the Qur'án?
Read it, that haply ye may find the
Truth, for this Book is verily the
Straight Path. This is the Way of God
unto all who are in the heavens and
all who are on the earth.

Bahá'u'lláh

Proofs from the Holy Qur'án

Dr. Şábir Áfáqí's scholarly study of the connection between the prophetic statement of the Qur'án and the Bahá'í Faith is a valuable contribution to an important subject. It will be of interest to all who are interested in the relationship of the various great religions of the world, and most especially to those who regard the Qur'án as divine revelation and who approach the Bahá'í Faith in a spirit of inquiry and with a mind unfettered by prejudice and preconceived ideas.

This book leads its reader to a more profound study of the Qur'án, and to a deeper appreciation of its limitless wisdom. It casts new light on the intimate and indissoluble relationship between the Qur'án and the Bahá'í Revelation, and resolves any misconceptions which might exist about the attitude which Bahá'ís hold toward Islám.

Much of the material presented in this book had previously been inaccessible in the English language. This volume is enhanced by the systematic approach that Dr. Áfáqí has adopted, and by the breadth of learning with which he is able to illuminate the wide range of subjects treated therein.

Peter Khán

The Qur'án

The Qur'án is full of symbolic materials, contrary to what is thought by those Sunní interpreters who consider all *mutashábih* verses in the Qur'án as temptation. For instance, in Qur'án 7:53: “Do they just wait for its (the Qur'án's) interpretation (*ta'vil*)? But on the day in which the interpretation will come, they ... will say ...”

Thus, according to the scripture, at the end of the world there will occur that symbolic interpretation of the Qur'án, the end of the time of Muḥammad.

Every end of the world is tied to a holy Book. In Qur'án 13:38, is said: “We did send apostles before thee, and appointed for them wives and children, and it was never the part of an apostle to bring a Sign except as God permitted. For each end of a period there is a Book (*li-kulli ajalín kitábun*).”

Those who refuse to accept here ajal (in the sense of the end of a period, end of a prophetic cycle, fixed term in the life, or end of an *umma*, a sense clearly indicated by parallel passages) are compelled to declare this passage incomprehensible or to force the obvious sense of *ajal*. In reality, the only explanation is that Muḥammad felt the coming of the Prophet at a period of the end of the preceding *umma*, to be a judgement on this *umma*.

Dr. Alessandro Bausani
Italy

The Holy Qur'án says

“And when Our clear verses are recited to them those who have no hope of meeting with us say: bring a Qur'án other than this or change it ...”
(Qur'án, 10:15)

“Surely this Qur'án guides to that which is most upright and gives the glad tiding to the believers who work deeds of right courses, that they shall have a magnificent reward.”
(Qur'án, 17:9)

“And We have explained to man, in this Qur'án, every kind of similitude: yet the greater part of men refuse (to receive it) except with ingratitude!”
(Qur'án, 17:89)

“Say: whether ye believe in it or not, it is what those who were given knowledge beforehand, when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration, and say; glory to our Lord, truly the promise of our Lord was to be fulfilled!”
(Qur'án, 17:107–108)

“Then the Apostle will say; O my Lord truly my people treat this Qur'án as a forsaken thing ...”
(Qur'án, 25:30)

“Those who, when they are admonished with the Revelations of their Lord, droop not down at them as if they were deaf or blind:”
(Qur'án, 25:73)

“Alláh faileth not His promise, but most of mankind know not.”
(Qur'án, 30:6)

“Those who listen to the Word, and follow the best (meaning) in it: those are the ones whom Alláh has guided, and those are the ones endued with understanding.”
(Qur'án, 39:18)

“These are the verses of Alláh which we recite to thee with truth. In what announcement will they then believe after Alláh and His signs.”
(Qur'án, 45:6)

From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

O followers of the Bayán! Fear ye the All-Merciful. This is the One Who hath been glorified by Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, and before Him by the Spirit (Jesus) and yet before Him by the One Who discoursed with God (Moses). This is the Point of the Bayán calling aloud before the Throne, saying: By the righteousness of God, ye have been created to glorify this Most Great Announcement, this Perfect Way which lay hid within the souls of the Prophets, which was treasured in the hearts of the chosen ones of God and was written down by the glorious Pen of your Lord, the Possessor of Names. (WOB,* p. 221).

I am the one, O Lord, whose heart and soul, whose limbs, whose inner and outer tongue testify to Thy unity and Thy oneness, and bear witness that Thou art God and that there is no God but Thee. Thou didst bring mankind into being to know Thee and to serve Thy Cause, that their station might thereby be elevated upon Thine earth and their souls be uplifted by virtue of the things Thou hast revealed in Thy Scriptures, Thy Books and Thy Tablets. (WOB, p. 225)

O Lord! The tongue of my tongue and the heart of my heart and the spirit of my spirit and my outward and inmost beings bear witness to Thy unity and Thy oneness, Thy power and Thine omnipotence, Thy grandeur and Thy sovereignty, and attest Thy glory, loftiness and authority. I testify that Thou art God and that there is none other God besides Thee. From everlasting Thou hast been a treasure hidden from the sight and minds of men and shalt continue to remain the same for ever and ever. The powers of earth can never frustrate Thee, nor can the might of the nations alarm Thee. Thou art the one who hath unlocked the door of knowledge before the faces of Thy servants that they may recognize Him Who is the Day-Star of Thy Revelation, the Dawning-Place of Thy signs, the Heaven of Thy manifestation and the Sun of Thy divine beauty. (WOB, p. 227)

* Writings of Bahá'u'lláh—a compilation, published by Bahá'í Publishing Trust, India.

Vain imaginings have withheld them from Him Who is the Self-Subsisting. They speak as prompted by their own caprices, and understand not. Among them are those who have said: ‘Have the verses been sent down?’ Say ‘Yea, by Him Who is the Lord of the heavens!’ ‘Hath the Hour come?’ ‘Nay, more; it hath passed, by Him Who is the Revealer of clear tokens! Verily, the Inevitable is come, and He, the True One, hath appeared with proof and testimony. The Plain is disclosed, and mankind is sore vexed and fearful. Earth-quakes have broken loose, and the tribes have lamented, for fear of God, the Lord of Strength, the All-Compelling.’ Say: ‘The stunning trumpet-blast hath been loudly raised, and the Day is God’s, the One, the Unconstrained.’ And they say: ‘Hath the Catastrophe come to pass?’ Say: ‘Yea, by the Lord of Lords!’ ‘Is the Resurrection come?’ ‘Nay, more; He Who is the Self-Subsisting hath appeared with the Kingdom of His signs.’ ‘Seest thou men laid low?’ ‘Yea, by my Lord, the Most High, the Most Glorious!’ ‘Have the tree-stumps been uprooted?’ ‘Yea, more; the mountains have been scattered in dust; by Him the Lord of attributes!’ They say: ‘Where is Paradise, and where is Hell?’ Say: ‘The one is reunion with Me; the other thine own self, O thou who dost associate a partner with God and doubtest.’ They say: ‘We see not the Balance.’ Say: ‘Surely, by my Lord, the God of Mercy! None can see it except such as are endued with insight.’ They say: ‘Have the stars fallen?’ Say: ‘Yea, when He Who is the Self-Subsisting dwelt in the Land of Mystery (Adrianople). Take heed, ye who are endued with discernment!’ ‘All the signs appeared when we drew forth the Hand of Power from the bosom of majesty and might. Verily, the Crier hath cried out, when the promised time came, and they that have recognized the splendours of Sinai have swooned away in the wilderness of hesitation, before the awful majesty of thy Lord, the Lord of creation. The trumpet asketh: ‘Hath the Bugle been sounded?’ Say: ‘Yea, by the King of Revelation! when He mounted the throne of His Name, the All-Merciful.’ Darkness hath been chased away by the dawning light of the mercy of thy Lord, the Source of all light. The breeze of the All-Merciful hath wafted, and the souls have been quickened in the tombs of their bodies. Thus hath the decree been fulfilled by God, the Mighty, the Beneficent.

(WOB, p. 229)

In response to thy request the Pen of Glory hath graciously described the stations and grades of the Most Great Infallibility. The purpose is that all should know of a certainty that the Seal of the Prophets (Muḥammad)—may the souls of all else but Him be offered up for His Sake—is without likeness, peer or partner in His Own station. The Holy Ones (The Imáms)—may the blessings of God be upon them were created through the potency of His Word, and after Him they were the most learned and the most distinguished among the people and abide in the utmost station of servitude. The divine Essence, sanctified from every comparison and likeness, is established in the Prophet, and God’s inmost Reality, exalted above any peer or partner, is manifest in Him. This is the station of true unity and veritable singleness.
(WOB, p. 232)

Blessing and peace be upon Him (Muḥammad) through Whose advent Baṭḥá (Mecca) is wreathed in smiles, and the sweet savours of Whose raiment have shed fragrance upon all mankind—He Who came to protect men from that which would harm them into the world below. Exalted, immensely exalted is His station above the glorification of all beings and sanctified from the praise of the entire creation. Through His advent the tabernacle of stability and order was raised throughout the world and the ensign of knowledge hoisted among the nations. May blessings rest also upon His kindred and His companions through whom the standard of the unity of God and of His singleness was uplifted and the banners of celestial triumph were unfurled. Through them the religion of God was firmly established among His creatures and His Name magnified amidst His servants. I entreat Him—exalted is He—to shield His Faith from the mischief of His enemies who tore away the veils, rent them asunder and finally caused the banner of Islám to be reversed amongst all peoples.

Thy letter from which the fragrance of reunion was inhaled hath been received. Praised be God that following the firm decree of separation, the breeze of nearness and communion hath been stirred and the soil of the heart is refreshed with the waters of joy and gladness. We offer thanksgiving unto God in all circumstances and cherish the hope that He—exalted be His glory—may

through His gracious providence guide all who dwell on earth towards that which is acceptable and pleasing unto Him.

(WOB, p. 251)

Say, God is my witness! The Promised One Himself hath come down from heaven, seated upon the crimson cloud with the hosts of revelation on His right, and the angels of inspiration on His left, and the Decree hath been fulfilled at the behest of God, the Omnipotent, the Almighty. Thereupon the footsteps of everyone have slipped except such as God hath protected through His tender mercy and numbered with those who have recognized Him through His Own Self and detached themselves from all that pertaineth to the world.

(WOB, p. 262)

Know thou moreover that in the Day of His Manifestation all created things besides God shall be brought forth and placed equally, irrespective of their rank being high or low. The Day of Return is inscrutable unto all men until after the divine Revelation hath been fulfilled. He is in truth the One Who ordaineth whatsoever He willeth. When the Word of God is revealed unto all created things whoso then giveth ear and heedeth the Call is, indeed, reckoned among the most distinguished souls, though he be a carrier of ashes. And he who turneth away is accounted as the lowliest of His servants, though he be a ruler amongst men and the possessor of all the books that are in the heavens and on earth.

(WOB, p. 264)

O Shaykh! I swear by the Sun of Truth Which hath risen and shineth above the horizon of this Prison! The betterment of the world hath been the sole aim of this Wronged one. Unto this beareth witness every man of judgement, of discernment, of insight and understanding. Whilst afflicted with trials, He held fast unto the cord of patience and fortitude, and was satisfied with the things which have befallen Him at the hands of His enemies, and was crying out: 'I have renounced My desire for Thy desire, O my God, and My will for the revelation of Thy Will. By Thy glory! I desire neither Myself nor My life except for the purpose of serving Thy Cause, and I love not My being save I may sacrifice it in Thy path'.

(WOB, p. 320)

O, King of Paris! Tell the priest to ring the bells no longer. By God, the True One! The Most Mighty Bell hath appeared in the form of Him Who is the Most Great Name, and the fingers of the will of Thy Lord, the Most Exalted, the Most High, toll it out in the heaven of Immortality, in His name, the All-Glorious. Thus have the mighty verses of Thy Lord been again sent down unto thee, that thou mayest arise to remember God, the Creator of earth and heaven in these days when all the tribes of the earth have mourned, and the foundations of the cities have trembled, and the dust of irreligion hath enwrapped all men, except such as God, the All-knowing, the All-Wise, was pleased to spare. Say: He Who is the Unconditioned is come, in the clouds of light, that He may quicken all created things with the breezes of His Name, the Most Merciful, and unify the world, and gather all men around this Table which hath been sent down from heaven. Beware that ye deny not the favour of God after it hath been sent down unto you. Better is this for you than that which ye possess; for that which is yours perisheth, whilst that which is with God endureth. He, in truth, ordaineth what He pleaseth. Verily, the breezes of forgiveness have been wafted from the direction of your Lord, the God of Mercy; whoso turneth thereunto, shall be cleansed of his sins, and of all pain and sickness. Happy the man that hath turned towards them, and woe betide him that hath turned aside.

(WOB, pp. 324–25)

“O Czar of Russia! Incline thine ear unto the voice of God, the King, the Holy, and turn thou unto Paradise, the Spot wherein abideth He Who, among the Concourse on high, beareth the most excellent titles and Who, in the kingdom of creation, is called by the name of God, the Effulgent, the All-Glorious. Beware that nothing deter thee from setting thy face towards thy Lord, the Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

(WOB, p. 329)

O Shaykh! Every time God the True One—exalted be his glory revealed Himself in the person of His Manifestation, He came unto men with the standard of “He doeth what He willeth, and ordaineth what He pleaseth.” None hath the right to ask why or wherefore, and he that doth so, hath indeed turned aside from God, the Lord of Lords.

(WOB, p. 334)

O Shaykh! Peruse that which Isaiah hath spoken in His Book. He saith: “Get thee up into the high mountain, O Zion, that bringest good tidings; lift up Thy Voice with strength, O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings. Lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: ‘Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him.’ This Day all the signs have appeared. A Great City hath descended from heaven, and Zion trembleth and exulteth with joy at the Revelation of God, for it hath heard the Voice of God on every side. This Day Jerusalem hath attained unto a new Evangel, for in the stead of the sycamore standeth the cedar. Jerusalem is the place of pilgrimage for all the peoples of the world, and hath been named the Holy City. Together with Zion and Palestine, they are all included within these regions. Wherefore, hath it been said: “Blessed is the man that hath migrated to ‘Akká.”

Amos saith: “The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter His Voice from Jerusalem, and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.” Carmel, in the Book of God, hath been designated as the Hill of God, and His Vineyard. It is here that, by the grace of the Lord of Revelation, the Tabernacle of Glory hath been raised. Happy are they that attain thereunto; happy they that set their faces towards it. And likewise He saith: “Our God will come, and He will not be silent.”

O Shaykh! Reflect upon these words addressed by Him Who is the Desire of the world to Amos. He saith: “Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, for, lo, He that formeth the mountains and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord, the God of Hosts, is His name.” He saith that He maketh the morning darkness. By this is meant that if, at the time of the Manifestation of Him Who conversed on Sinai anyone were to regard himself as the true morn, he will, through the might and power of God, be turned into darkness. He truly is the false dawn though believing himself to be the true one. Woe unto him, and woe unto such as follow him without a clear token from God, the Lord of the worlds.

Isaiah saith: “The Lord alone shall be exalted in that Day.” Concerning the greatness of the Revelation He saith: “Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty.” And in another connection He saith: “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the splendour of our God.” (WOB, p. 368)

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 advent of such a Revelation hath been heralded in all the sacred Scriptures. Behold how, notwithstanding such an announcement, mankind hath strayed from its path and shut out itself from its glory. (WOB, p. 388)

This is the Day in which God’s most excellent favours have been poured out upon men, the Day in which His most mighty grace hath been infused into all created things. It is incumbent upon all the peoples of the world to reconcile their differences, and with perfect unity and peace, abide beneath the shadow of the Tree of His care and loving-kindness. (WOB, p. 388)

This is the Day whereon the Ocean of God’s mercy hath been manifested unto men, the Day in which the Day-Star of His loving kindness hath shed its radiance upon them, the Day in which the clouds of His bountiful favour have overshadowed the whole of mankind. Now is the time to cheer and refresh the down-cast through the invigorating breeze of love and fellowship, and the living waters of friendliness and charity. (WOB, p. 389)

Behold, how the divers peoples and kindreds of the earth have been waiting for the coming of the Promised One. No sooner had He, Who is the Sun of Truth, been made manifest, than, lo,

all turned away from Him, except them whom God was pleased to guide. 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. (WOB, p. 390)

Verily I say, this is the Day in which mankind can behold the Face, and hear the Voice, of the Promised One. The Call of God hath been raised, and the light of His countenance hath been lifted up upon men. It behoveth every man to blot out the trace of every idle word from the tablet of his heart, and to gaze, with an open and unbiased mind, on the signs of His Revelation, the proofs of His Mission, and the tokens of His glory.

Great indeed is this Day! The allusions made to it in all the sacred Scriptures as the Day of God attest its greatness. The soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous Day. All the divers kindreds of the earth have, likewise, yearned to attain it. No sooner, however, had the Day-Star of His Revelation manifested itself in the heaven of God's Will, than all, except those whom the Almighty was pleased to guide, were found dumbfounded and heedless. (WOB, p. 390)

O Ḥusayn! Consider the eagerness with which certain peoples and nations have anticipated the return of Imám-Ḥusayn whose coming, after the appearance of the Qá'im, hath been prophesied, in days past, by the chosen ones of God, exalted be His glory. These holy ones have, moreover, announced that when He Who is the Dayspring of the manifold grace of God manifesteth Himself, all the Prophets and Messengers, including the Qá'im, will gather together beneath the shadow of the sacred Standard which the Promised One will raise. That hour is now come. The world is illumined with the effulgent glory of His countenance.

(WOB, p. 391)

The time fore-ordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled. Out of Zion hath gone forth the Law of God, and Jerusalem, and the hills and land thereof, are

filled with the glory of His Revelation. Happy is the man that pondereth in his heart that which hath been revealed in the Books of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Meditate upon this, O ye beloved of God, and let your ears be attentive unto His Word, so that ye may, by His grace and mercy, drink your fill from the crystal waters of constancy, and become as steadfast and immovable as the mountain in His Cause. (WOB, p. 391)

All glory be to this Day, the Day in which the fragrances of mercy have been wafted over all created things, a Day so blest that past ages and centuries can never hope to rival it, a Day in which the countenance of the Ancient of Days hath turned towards His holy seat. Thereupon the voices of all created things, and beyond them those of the Concourse on high, were heard calling aloud: “Haste thee, O Carmel, for lo, the light of the countenance of God, the Ruler of the Kingdom of Names and Fashioner of heavens, hath been lifted upon thee.” (WOB, p. 392)

Bestir yourselves, O people, in anticipation of the days of Divine justice, for the promised hour is now come. Beware lest ye fail to apprehend its import and be accounted among the erring. (WOB, p. 393)

Consider the past. How many, both high and low, have, at all times yearningly awaited the advent of the Manifestations of God in the sanctified persons of His chosen Ones. How often have they expected His coming, how frequently have they prayed that the breeze of Divine mercy might blow, and the promised Beauty step forth from behind the veil of concealment, and be made manifest to all the world. And whensoever the portals of grace did open, and the clouds of divine bounty did rain upon mankind, and the light of the Unseen did shine above the horizon of celestial might, they all denied Him, and turned away from His face—the face of God Himself ... (WOB, p. 393)

By Him Who is the Great Announcement! The All-Merciful is come invested with undoubted sovereignty. The Balance hath been appointed, and all them that dwell on earth have been gathered together. The Trumpet hath been blown, and lo, all eyes have

stared up with terror, and the hearts of all who are in the heavens and on the earth have trembled, except them whom the breath of the verses of God hath quickened, and who have detached themselves from all things.

This is the Day whereon the earth shall tell out her tidings. The workers of iniquity are her burdens, could ye but perceive it. The moon of idle fancy hath been cleft, and the heaven hath given out a palpable smoke. We see the people laid low, awed with the dread of thy Lord, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. The Crier hath cried out, and men have been torn away, so great hath been the fury of His wrath. The people of the left hand sigh and bemoan. The people of the right abide in noble habitations: they quaff the Wine that is life indeed, from the hands of the All-Merciful, and are, verily, the blissful.

The earth hath been shaken, and the mountains have passed away, and the angels have appeared, rank on rank, before us. Most of the people are bewildered in their drunkenness and wear on their faces the evidences of anger. Thus have We gathered together the workers of iniquity. We see them rushing on towards their idol. Say: None shall be secure this Day from the decree of God. This indeed is a grievous Day. We point out to them those that led them astray. They see them, and yet recognize them not. Their eyes are drunken; they are indeed a blind people. Their proofs are the calumnies they uttered; condemned are their calumnies by God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. The Evil One hath stirred up mischief in their hearts, and they are afflicted with a torment that none can avert. They hasten to the wicked, bearing the register of the workers of iniquity. Such are their doings.

Say: The heavens have been folded together, and the earth is held within His grasp, and the corrupt-doers have been held by their forelock, and still they understand not. They drink of the tainted water, and know it not. Say: The shout hath been raised, and the people have come forth from their graves, and arising, are gazing around them. Some have made haste to attain the court of the God of Mercy, others have fallen down on their faces in the

fire of Hell, while still others are lost in bewilderment. The verses of God have been revealed, and yet they have turned away from them. His proof hath been manifested, and yet they are unaware of it. And when they behold the face of the All-Merciful, their own faces are saddened, while they are disporting themselves. They hasten forward to Hell Fire, and mistake it for light. Far from God be what they fondly imagine! Say: Whether ye rejoice or whether ye burst for fury, the heavens are cleft asunder, and God hath come down, invested with radiant sovereignty. All created things are heard exclaiming: “The Kingdom is God’s, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” (WOB, pp. 403–404)

The thing that must come hath come suddenly; behold how they flee from it! The inevitable hath come to pass; witness how they have cast it behind their backs! This is the Day whereon every man will fly from himself, how much more from his kindred, could ye but perceive it. Say: By God! The blast hath been blown on the trumpet, and lo, mankind hath swooned away before us! The Herald hath cried out, and the Summoner raised His voice saying: “The Kingdom is God’s, the Most Powerful, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.”

This is the Day on which all eyes shall stare up with terror, the Day in which the hearts of them that dwell on earth shall tremble, save them whom thy Lord, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise, pleaseth to deliver. All faces have turned black except those to whom the God of Mercy hath vouchsafed a radiant heart. Drunken are the eyes of those men that have openly refused to behold the face of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised.

Say: Perused ye not the Qur’án? Read it, that haply ye may find the Truth, for this Book is verily the Straight Path. This is the Way of God unto all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth. If ye have been careless of the Qur’án, the Bayán cannot be regarded to be remote from you. Behold it open before your eyes. Read ye its verses, that perchance ye desist from committing that which will cause the Messengers of God to mourn and lament.

Speed out of your sepulchres. How long will ye sleep? The second blast hath been blown on the trumpet. On whom are ye gazing? This is your Lord, the God of Mercy. Witness how ye gainsay His signs! The earth hath quaked with a great quaking, and cast forth her burdens. Will ye not admit it? Say: Will ye not recognize how the mountains have become like flocks of wool, how the people are sore vexed at the awful majesty of the Cause of God? Witness how their houses are empty ruins, and they themselves a drowned host. (WOB, p. 405)

Know thou of a certainty that the Unseen can in no wise incarnate His Essence and reveal it unto men. He is, and hath ever been, immensely exalted beyond all that scan either be recounted or perceived. From His retreat of glory His voice is ever proclaiming: “Verily, I am God; there is none other God besides Me, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. I have manifested myself unto men and have sent down Him Who is the Dayspring of the signs of My Revelation. Through Him I have caused all creation to testify that there is none other God except Him, the Incomparable, the All-Informed, the All-Wise.” He Who is everlastingly hidden from the eyes of men can never be known except through His Manifestation, and His Manifestation can adduce no greater proof of the truth of His Mission than the proof of His own person. (WOB, p. 407)

The Bearers of the Trust of God are made manifest unto the peoples of the earth as the Exponents of a new Cause and the Revealers of a new Message. In as much as these Birds of the celestial Throne are all sent down from the heaven of the Will of God, and as they all arise to proclaim His irresistible Faith, they, therefore, are regarded as one soul and the same person. For they all drink from the one Cup of the love of God, and all partake of the fruit of the same Tree of Oneness. (WOB, p. 408)

It is evident that every age in which a Manifestation of God hath lived is divinely ordained, and may, in a sense, be characterized as God’s appointed Day. This Day, however, is unique, and is to be distinguished from those that have preceded

it. The designation “Seal of the Prophets” fully revealeth its high station. The Prophetic Cycle hath, verily, ended. The Eternal Truth is now come. He hath lifted up the Ensign of Power, and is now shedding upon the world the unclouded splendour of His Revelation. (WOB, p. 412)

The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and to attain His Presence. To this most excellent aim, this supreme objective, all the heavenly Books and the divinely-revealed and weighty Scriptures unequivocally bear witness. Whoso hath recognized the Dayspring of Divine guidance and entered His holy court hath drawn nigh unto God and attained His Presence, a Presence which is the real Paradise, and of which the loftiest mansions of heaven are but a symbol. Such a man hath attained the knowledge of the station of Him Who is “at the distance of two bows,” Who standeth beyond the Sadratu’l-Muntahá. Whoso hath failed to recognize Him will have condemned himself to the misery of remoteness, a remoteness which is naught but utter nothingness and the essence of the nethermost fire. Such will be his fate, though to outward seeming he may occupy the earth’s loftiest seats and be established upon its most exalted throne. (WOB, p. 417)

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 Muḥammad, 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 you 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. (WOB, p. 430)

Say: This is the Day when every ear must needs be attentive to His voice. Harken ye to the Call of this wronged One, and magnify ye the name of the one true God, and adorn yourselves with the ornament of His remembrance, and illumine your hearts

with the light of His love. This is the key that unlocketh the hearts of men, the burnish that shall cleanse the souls of all beings. He that is careless of what hath poured out from the finger of the Will of God liveth in manifest error.

(WOB, p. 476–477)

O kings of the earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting. Worship none but God, and, with radiant hearts, lift up your faces unto your Lord, the Lord of all names. This is a Revelation to which whatever ye possess can never be compared, could ye but know it.

(WOB, p. 479)

This is the Day in which He Who held converse with God hath attained the light of the Ancient of Days, and quaffed the pure waters of reunion from this Cup that hath caused the seas to swell. Say: By the one true God! Sinai is circling round the Dayspring of Revelation, while from the heights of the Kingdom the Voice of the Spirit of God is heard proclaiming: “Bestir yourselves, ye proud ones of the earth, and hasten ye unto Him.” Carmel hath, in this Day, hastened in longing adoration to attain His court, whilst from the heart of Zion there cometh the cry: “The promise is fulfilled. That which had been announced in the holy Writ of God, the most Exalted, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved, is made manifest.”

(WOB, p. 479)

Ye are but vassals, O kings of the earth! He Who is the King of Kings hath appeared, arrayed in His most wondrous glory, and is summoning you unto Himself, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Take heed lest pride deter you from recognizing the Source of Revelation, lest the things of this world shut you out as by a veil from Him Who is the Creator of heaven. Arise, and serve Him Who is the Desire of all nations, Who hath created you through a word from Him, and ordained you to be, for all time, the emblems of His sovereignty.

(WOB, p. 479)

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem,

and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements. (WOB, p. 480)

The Great Being saith: O ye children of men! The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship amongst men. Suffer it not to become a source of dissension and discord, of hate and enmity. This is the straight Path, the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength, nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure. (WOB, p. 481)

I am but a servant of God Who hath believed in Him and in His signs, and in His Prophets and in His angels. My tongue, and My heart, and My inner and My outer being testify that there is no God but Him, that all others have been created by His behest, and been fashioned through the operation of His Will. There is none other God but Him, the Creator, the Raiser from the dead, the Quickener, the Slayer. I am He that telleth abroad the favours with which God hath, through His bounty, favoured Me. If this be My transgression, then I am truly the first of the transgressors. (WOB, pp. 486–487)

O Dhabih! The Tongue of Grandeur saith: By Myself that speaketh the truth! In this most mighty Revelation all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest and final consummation. Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation after Him, such a man is assuredly a lying imposter. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will no doubt forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will assuredly send down one who will deal mercilessly with him. He, verily, is the Almighty, the Most Powerful. (WOB, p. 494)

O Kings of Christendom! Heard ye not the saying of Jesus, the Spirit of God, "I go away, and come again unto you"? Wherefore, then, did ye fail, when He did come again unto you in the clouds of heaven, to draw nigh unto Him, that ye might behold His face, and be of them that attained His Presence? In another passage He saith: "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." And yet, behold how, when He did bring the truth, ye refused to turn your faces towards Him, and persisted in disporting yourselves with your pastimes and fancies. Ye welcomed Him not, neither did ye seek His Presence, that ye might hear the verses of God from His own mouth, and partake of the manifold wisdom of the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise. Ye have, by reason of your failure, hindered the breath of God from being wafted over you, and have withheld from your souls the sweetness of its fragrance. Ye continue roving with delight in the valley of your corrupt desires. Ye, and all ye possess, shall pass away. Ye shall, most certainly, return to God, and shall be called to account for your doings in the presence of Him Who shall gather together the entire creation. (WOB, p. 495)

O ye rulers of the earth! Wherefore have ye clouded the radiance of the Sun, and caused it to cease from shining? Hearken unto the counsel given you by the Pen of the Most High, that haply both ye and the poor may attain unto tranquillity and peace. We beseech God to assist the kings of the earth to establish peace on earth. He, verily, doth what He willeth. (WOB, p. 498)

The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Day spring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof, hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. (WOB, p. 532)

This is the Day, O my Lord, which Thou didst announce unto all mankind as the Day whereon Thou wouldst reveal Thy Self, and shed Thy radiance, and shine brightly over all Thy

creatures. Thou hast, moreover, entered into a covenant with them, in Thy Books, and Thy Scriptures, and Thy Scrolls, and Thy Tablets, concerning Him Who is the Dayspring of Thy Revelation, and hast appointed the Bayán to be the Herald of this Most Great and all-glorious Manifestation, and this most resplendent and most sublime Appearance. (WOB, p. 663)

Progressive Revelation

Human society is progressive. So is the religion of God and His Revelation. The progressive revelation of God has been, and will ever remain to be, the most effective tool for the guidance of society.

The Almighty God has mentioned in the Holy Qur'án, His irrevocable Law, that when an 'ummah' (nation) refuses and rejects a Messenger of God and indulges in sin, cruelty and injustice, a new 'ummah' is raised to replace it. One may ask that how this changeover was effected in the past. How an 'ummah' was destroyed? It looks that it had never been a total annihilation of a people from the surface of the earth. Rather they were caught by disunity, passiveness and indulgence which gradually crept into the ranks and files of that 'ummah'

The Holy Qur'án narrates many types of divine chastisements which befell the rebellious 'ummah'. Some of them were disunity, the formation of sects, war and fighting, ignorance, mistrust, misunderstanding between people, fear of each other, rejection of God's Messengers, pride and cruelty, lust and greed, murder, plundering, materialism, prejudice, revenge, superstition, hypocrisy, and blind imitation.

No one who has had even a cursory glance of the present-day Muslim society can deny the fact that each one of the signs of divine chastisements mentioned above, nay even more than those signs, can be seen in it. What an irony that none of the Muslims will accept that these are divine chastisements. He will say that when the divine chastisement fell upon the past nations the faces of the people were mutilated, lightning fell upon them all of a sudden, they sank into the earth or they were turned into monkeys. Then they will say that we are the followers of Muḥammad, therefore no such atrocity can befall us. Thus they claim an exception for themselves. However it is not at all reasonable and fair according to the Holy Qur'án. In fact, neither the past nations suffered from any unnatural devastation, nor are the Muslims

exempted from a similar fate to that of the past nations when they fell from the Straight Path. The Holy Qur’án answers very clearly such questions: Why the past nations were cursed by God. How the Divine chastisement befell them. And how they met their doom. The Qur’án declares that an ‘ummah’ faces divine chastisement when:

1. It, instead of establishing of a just economic order, indulges in luxury, laxity and immorality;
“... but We destroyed those who transgressed beyond bounds.” (Qur’án, 21:9)
2. It rejects a Manifestation of God and disregards the bounty;
“As to those who reject faith, I will punish them with terrible agony ...” (Qur’án, 3:56)
3. It indulges in hypocrisy;
“That Alláh may reward the men of truth for their truth and punish the hypocrites if that be His Will.” (Qur’án, 33:24)
4. It turns back from the Divine Call;
“... And he who turns back, (Alláh) will punish him with a grievous penalty.” (Qur’án, 48:17)
5. It shows arrogance;
“But those who are disdainful and arrogant, He will punish (them) with a grievous penalty.” (Qur’án, 4:173)
6. It transgresses the limits;
“After this whoever exceeds the limits shall be in grave penalty.” (Qur’án, 2:178)
7. Its people become wrong-doers;
“How many populations have We destroyed, which were given to wrong doing! They tumbled down on their roofs.” (Qur’án, 22:45)

“Such were the populations We destroyed when they committed iniquities; ...” (Qur’án, 18:59)

8. It indulges in vice and sins;

“See they not how many of those before them did We destroy? ... for their sins We destroyed them,..” (Qur’án, 6:6)

9. It rejects the new Manifestation of God;

“So they rejected him (Húd), and We destroyed them. Verily in this is a sign; but most of them do not believe.” (Qur’án, 26:139)

10. It commonly commits crimes;

“And those who were before them, We destroyed them because they were guilty and sinners ...” (Qur’án, 44:37)

11. It creates sects and differences;

“Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving Clear Signs: for them is a dreadful penalty.” (Qur’án, 3:105)

12. It loses hope in the mercy of God;

“Those who reject the signs of Alláh and the meeting with Him, it is they who shall despair of My mercy: it is they who will (suffer) a most grievous penalty.” (Qur’án, 29:33)

13. It commits terrorism and violence;

“The blame is only against those who oppress men with wrong-doing and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice: for (those) such there will be a penalty grievous.” (Qur’án, 42:42)

In the light of above-quoted verses, it is easy to decide whether or not all the above-mentioned signs are present in the present-day Muslim society. Undoubtedly they are present. Then how is it that this society is not being subjected to the same infamy and chastisement as was inflicted upon the past nations under similar conditions? As a matter of fact, they are engulfed from head to

toe in the above-mentioned chastisements. But they have lost the sense of realisation and think that everything is all right and that they are immune of atrocities, beloved of God and will remain such for ever:

“The Jews and the Christians say: ‘we are sons of Alláh and his beloved.’ Say: ‘Why then Both He punish you for your sins?’”
(Qur’án, 5:20)

In the past ages God has ruined and annihilated many nations. People think that a sudden lightning fell upon them and all the people vanished. It is not correct, however. By ‘annihilation’ is meant that a nation becomes spiritually dead and morally bankrupt. Then a new nation, which is better than the previous one—in respect of knowledge, practices, and struggle of life—takes its place. The Holy Qur’án calls this process ‘Istikhláf’, (Law of Succession of Prophets). It began, according to the Holy Qur’án, with the advent of Adam and has continued ever since. None of the nations is an exception in this regard. If a Muslim exempts himself from this law, he actually rejects the Holy Qur’án:

“... or have ye covenants with Us on oath, reaching to the day of judgement that ye shall have whatever ye shall demand?”
(Qur’án, 68:39)

Another term for ‘Istikhláf’ is ‘Al-Qiyámah’ (resurrection). When a nation attains to its spiritual death and becomes the recipient of divine chastisement, God bestows His mercy on some of the people from the same nation and from other nations. They are guided to believe in His new Manifestation and thus become better and pious. It is in this way that a new creation is brought into being and a new nation is raised. Thus when a nation completes its period and reaches its end—a new one begins to take shape. The following verses of the Holy Qur’án explain this phenomenon very clearly:

“And for their sins We destroyed them, and raised in their wake fresh generation (to succeed them) ...”
(Qur’án, 6:6)

“We did reveal to Moses the Book after We had destroyed the earlier generations ...” (Qur’án, 28:43)

And what a clear warning is served to the Muslims that God will bring a new nation in its (Muslims’) place whenever He will like:

“Thy Lord is Self-sufficient, full of Mercy: if it were His Will, He could destroy you, and in your place appoint whom He will as your successors, even as He raised you up from the posterity of other people.” (Qur’án, 6:133)

The Muslims normally argue that by ‘rising up’ is meant that the dead bodies will be raised up from their graves at the time of resurrection. However, this meaning contradicts the following verse of the Holy Qur’án:

“... He (Şálih) said: ‘O people! worship Alláh: ye have no other God but Him. It is He Who hath produced (raised) you from the earth and settled you therein: ...” (Qur’án 11:61)

It is obvious that the people of ‘Thamúd’ were not raised (produced) from the earth as the plants. In another verse of the Holy Qur’án it is thus mentioned:

“... He knows you well when He brings you out of the earth, and when ye are hidden in your mother’s wombs ...” (Qur’án, 53:32)

Here, as well, by raising out of the earth is meant a new birth in a Dispensation and after the advent of a new Manifestation of God. As the earth becomes fresh and green after coming of spring season, so is the case with the hearts and minds of men in the day of the advent of a Manifestation of God. The earth of the heart and spirit of man becomes fertilized and joyful. Therefore the Holy Qur’án compares the latter with the former and says that God is He Who brings men out of the earth:

“And Alláh has produced you from the earth, growing ...”
(Qur’án, 71:17)

Literarily speaking, God has never raised or produced any people out of the earth like vegetables. Hence the meaning of ‘raising up’ (K^hurúj) is the same as stated above. Every ‘ummah’ has gone through its resurrection which was brought about through the advent of a new Revelation from God. The Muslims have also experienced similar resurrection and they are aware of it:

“And ye know already the first form of creation: why then do ye not celebrate His praises? ...” (Qur’án, 56:62)

If it was meant, as the exponents of Qur’án claim, raising out of earth like vegetable, then God would have never said that ‘you know it.’

There have been two situations in which divine chastisement has befallen any nation. One is when they commit minor mistakes and sins and seek forgiveness of God, as soon as they realise it. God forgives such shortcomings out of His mercy:

“We did deliver aforetime the children of Israel from humiliating punishment ...” (Qur’án, 44:30)

“He was not going to send it (punishment) whilst they could ask for pardon.” (Qur’án, 8:33)

The second situation being that when the whole nation, collectively, indulges in such atrocities and crimes that invite the wrath of God. Among such grave sins is that the nation jokes and mocks at the new Messenger of God and rejects His Proclamation, teases Him and declares Him a false One. This is an unforgivable sin. When a nation commits such a sin, God takes away from it the leadership of people and replaces it with a new people. The greatest of the chastisements of God is that a nation be deprived of their leadership of the nations and lose the trust of God.

When humanity forgets its creator and the purpose of life in

this world and indulges in materialism, God sends, out of His mercy, a Manifestation to awaken it and to provide it with a chance to return to God. The people who accept the Manifestation of God and correct themselves receive salvation and those who reject Him and insist on their own ideas, become engulfed in hardships and are punished severely. This is but evident divine justice. If they were punished without warning, given by a Manifestation of God, they would say that if God had warned us we would have corrected ourselves:

“And if We had inflicted on them a penalty before this (warning), they would have said, ‘our Lord! if only Thou hadst sent us an Apostle, we should certainly have followed Thy signs before we were humbled and put to shame’ ...”
(Qur’án, 20:134)

Therefore God, the Lord of all the worlds, has chosen that unless He sends a Messenger, He does not send chastisement: “... nor would We visit with Our wrath until We had sent an apostle ...”
(Qur’án, 17:15)

Thus coming of divine chastisement is conditioned with the advent of a Messenger of God. Hence when the people asked Prophet Muḥammad that when the divine chastisement will befall i.e. when a new Messenger of God will make appearance. God replied that it will come in one day which is, according to the Islamic calendar, equal to one thousand years:

“... yet they ask thee to hasten on the punishment! But Alláh will not fail in His promise. Verily a Day in the sight of thy Lord is like a thousand years of your reckoning ...”
(Qur’án, 22:47)

The history bears witness that just following the advent of Bahá’u’lláh, during the mid nineteenth century and the following century, the nations of the world have been afflicted with divine chastisements one after another. They have seen the devastations of two world wars, during the same period. Still the nations of the

world are engulfed in various types of hatred, disunity, wars, terrorism, lawlessness, conspiracy, famine, poverty, deprivation, ignorance, illiteracy, agitations, prostitutions of all types, luxury, laxity, materialism and lust for power and many more of such chastisements and wrath of God. They will remain prey to these atrocities until they rise to the Divine Call of the Saviour of the world, Bahá'u'lláh, and adjust their lives according to His Teachings, Laws and Ordinances.

We conclude from the above arguments and verses of the Holy Qur'án that the only way of salvation of all the peoples and nations is to follow the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Some clarifications

Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all Scriptures including the Holy Qur'án. When this glad-tiding is shared with the Muslims, they make many objections. These objections are, of course, not new. Muḥammad had also to face many similar questions from the people.

In this chapter we have attempted to clarify some of the main objections raised by the Muslims. We will explain them in the light of the Quranic teachings, point by point:

1. Protection of Al-Dhikr (Qur'án)

“We have, without doubt, sent down the Message (Al-Dhikr) and we will assuredly guard it.” (Qur'án, 15:9)

In the light of the above verse the Muslims say that when God has Himself promised to protect the Holy Qur'án, it is safe for all times. No new Book is then needed. However a sincere study of the Holy Qur'án reveals that the Book of Moses has also been called ‘Al-Dhikr’:

“In the past We granted Moses and Aaron, the criterion (Furqán) and a light (Ḍiyá) and a Message (Al-Dhikr) for those who would do right.” (Qur'án, 21:48)

The above verse makes it clear that the term ‘Message’ or ‘Al-Dhikr’ is not an exclusive term for the Qur'án only. Moreover it says that the Book of Moses was criterion, light and Al-Dhikr. But another Book was revealed by Christ after that of Moses. By what logic the same God cannot reveal another Book after the Qur'án?

God is Almighty and All-Powerful. No one can frustrate His Will. He can reveal a Book even if there is no prophecy at all. But He has shown mercy to His creatures. Out of this mercy He has given many promises in all the revealed Books that He will

reveal, in the future, Books to guide the human society. He has fulfilled this promise by revealing the Kitáb-i-Aqdas through Bahá'u'lláh.

God Himself declares in the Holy Qur'án that the revealing of Books has been a practice of God (Sunnat'u'lláh) and that He does not change His practice:

“(Such has been) the practice of Alláh already in the past; no change wilt thou find in the practice of Alláh”.
(Qur'án, 48:23)

The question arises as to whether, by the revelation of a new Book, the promise of protection is dishonoured? The answer is, simply, not at all. To grasp the full significance of this answer we will have to keep two points in mind. Firstly both the old as well as the new Book is a work of God Himself. None of them is a man-made idea. Therefore they are basically complementary to each other and do not oppose each other. Thus the promise of God that He will protect His Book is fulfilled by revelation of a new Book, according to the need of the time, by Himself. Thus we witness that during the thirteen centuries since the revelation of Qur'án, no one could change even a single verse of that Book. Neither the great kings, scholars, divines, priests, mujtahids and Imáms could dare to bring even a sentence to have similar influence and power as that of the Qur'án. Nor is it ever possible. None of them were authorised to bring any change in the Quranic Laws because God Himself had promised to guard them. However at the appointed time, God Himself revealed, through Bahá'u'lláh, new Laws and Ordinances. Therefore, the promise of God that no one can change His Book and that He Himself will guard it was fulfilled.

Secondly all the Manifestations of God, from Adam to Bahá'u'lláh, are one. They come from the same source, they represent the same God, they reveal the truth of the same Almighty. Therefore, there is no strangeness, animosity or rivalry between them. There is complete harmony, similarity and amity in their revealed Books. This is why it has been said regarding the Qur'án

that it was in the Books of Moses and Abraham:

“And this is in the Books of the earliest (Revelations)”
(Qur’án, 87:18–19)

If we consider, the above-mentioned verse in the light of the realities of time and space—it is quite unimaginable. But we can understand it by the example of a seed. When a seed grows into a mighty tree—it is its progress. It does not vanish. Rather it attains its zenith and glory in the tree, flowers and fruits. Similarly a student learns a certain fact in a class. When he moves over into a new class it is not that whatever he has learnt is spoiled. Rather new knowledge will be now added to his basic one acquired in the previous class. Is not God a protector of each one of us and all the things—known and unknown? Does it imply that things will not die or things do not change? God protects all things till an appointed hour:

“There is no soul but has Protector over it.”
(Qur’án, 86:4)

2. Perfection

The Muslims say: Islám, the religion of God, has been completed by God. The Holy Qur’án is complete code of life and we do not need any new Law from God:

“This day have I perfected your religion for you,
completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islám
as your religion.”
(Qur’án, 5:4)

The Bahá’ís believe that every religion, every Book and each Law of God is perfect and complete. Each of them were a complete code of life for the people of their respective ages and places. Islám was also complete for its day, and for today the Bahá’í Faith is complete too.

As God is Perfect, none of His deeds, acts, words or laws can ever be imagined imperfect. Before the revelation of the Laws

and Ordinances of the Holy Qur'án, the non-believers used to taunt the Muslims that your religion is not perfect. They used to say that in the Books of the past more details, regarding 'Ḥalál' and 'Ḥarám', were found. However in the verses just preceding the above-quoted verse, God revealed the name of eleven things which were forbidden. Thus the Arabs became hopeless. Therefore God said that today these people (who make objections) have become hopeless.

In the verse under reference two terms are used which are worth pondering upon. One refers to 'perfection' and the other to 'completion'. By perfection (Takmíl), is meant that the objectives underlying the revelation of Islám were fulfilled. However it does not mean God will never change the Islamic Laws.

According to the changes in the society its requirements also change. God changes His Laws according to the new needs of the society. Let us consider this example. A ten-year-old boy receives a perfect and complete set of clothes from his parents. He is told, "These are your 'perfect' clothes and fit you well. They are complete for you." What does it mean? Does it imply that the boy will wear these clothes for ever? That he will not grow bigger in the future and that these perfect and complete clothes of his today will also satisfy the needs of his grown-up body of the future? Certainly not. He will need another perfect and complete set of clothes according to the needs of his grown-up body. The same is the case of Islám. It was tailored for a 'yum' (One day) of 1,260 years.

The law of God revealed through the Qur'án was perfect and complete for that particular period of human evolution. When the society advanced further, new Laws of God were needed and the Bahá'í Revelation has fulfilled that need.

Now what is 'Ni'mat' (favour of God)? It is according to the Qur'án, a revelation, a law of God, love, the truth, victory etc. For example the Qur'án says:

"He was no more than a servant: We granted Our favour

to him, and We made him an example to the children of Israel.”
(Qur’án, 43:59)

In this verse the term ‘favour’ is used to represent ‘revelation’ and ‘truth’.

The terms ‘Takmil-i-Dín’ (perfection of religion) and ‘Itmám-i-Ni‘mat’ (completion of favour) give the same meaning. Of course these terms have been used for Islám but it does not imply that the revelations of God, before Islám, were not complete or they were imperfect. Neither does it mean that God has not bestowed His favours on the past nations. Those who cherish such ideas and beliefs act against the teachings of the Holy Qur’án. The following examples from the Qur’án will clarify how the people in the past were also the recipients of perfect and complete religions:

God had revealed, in the Tablets of Moses, every detail of the Laws and Ordinances and had completed His religion:

“And We ordained Laws for him in the Tablets in all matters, both commanding and explaining all things.”
(Qur’án, 7:145)

The Qur’án refers to the Book of Moses as a complete One having details of all things and all favours:

“Moreover, We gave Moses the Book, completing (Our favour) to those who would do right, and explaining all things in detail, and as a guide and a mercy.”
(Qur’án, 6:154)

Similarly God had completed His favours on Joseph, on the children of Jacob, on Abraham and on Isaac:

“and perfect his favour to thee and to the posterity of Jacob—even as He perfected it to their fathers Abraham and Isaac aforetime.”
(Qur’án, 12:6)

Likewise God has completed His favour upon the children of Israel as a reward for their patience:

“The fair promise of thy Lord was fulfilled for the children of Israel.”
(Qur’án, 7:137)

Is not the claim, that only the Muslims have received complete code of life from God nullified as baseless in the light of the above-quoted verses!?

3. The better people (Khairu’l-Ummah)

The Qur’án calls the Muslims as ‘the better people’:

“Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind.”
(Qur’án, 3:110)

In the above verse the Arabic term ‘Khairu’l-Ummah has been translated as ‘the best of peoples’. This translation is not correct. The word ‘Khair’ is not a superlative word. It simply means peace, good deeds, wealth, well-being. Hence the Muslim interpretation of this verse that they are the best of all the nations of the past and those of the present is superficial. Rather this verse gives the understanding that the Muslims are also a good nation like those of the past. On the other hand God had called other nations in even higher and superior terms. For example He had bestowed upon the children of Israel a station superior to that of all the worlds:

“O children of Israel! call to mind the (special) favour which I bestowed upon you, and that I preferred (you) to all others.”
(Qur’án, 2:47)

Thence why this ummah, the children of Israel, did not remain for ever and why Prophets after Prophet had been coming after Moses. Why the revelation of God and formation of new nations did not stop after Him. Therefore it is established that if a nation is given preference or is called better, it does not mean that no other nation will be raised by God and that God will not reveal Laws according to the needs of changed circumstances. As regards the superiority of the children of Israel let’s study the following verses also:

“O Children of Israel! Call to mind the special favour which I bestowed upon you, and that I preferred you to all worlds.”
(Qur’án, 2:122)

Also God says, in the following verses, that He had preferred and bestowed superiority to Ismá‘íl, Elisha, Jonas and Lot over all the world:

“And Ismá‘íl, and Elisha, and Jonas, and Lot: and to all We gave favour above the nations;”
(Qur’án, 6:86)

Therefore the verse under review proves only that the Muslims were a better Ummah and no more. Then how can the claim be justified that there will be no more revelation after the Muslims?

The Muslims give another reason to support their claim that they are the best of the peoples. They say that God has commissioned us to call the people to righteousness (Ma‘rúf) and stop them from wrong-doing (Munkir). Therefore whenever a wrong is done or will be done in the future, our religious scholars and reformers will guide the people by rectifying and correcting the wrongs. Hence no new Messenger of God is needed any more. This point is also invalid and does not prove that the Laws of Islám are everlasting. The Qur’án itself says that at the time of its revelation a group of pious and active people was present amongst the Jews and Christians. They believed in God, recited His verses and prayers during the nights, recognised the Day of judgement, called the people to the right path and stopped them from doing wrong and did pious deeds:

“Not all of them are alike; of the people of the Book are a portion that stand; they rehearse the verses of Alláh all night long and they prostrate themselves in adoration.”
(Qur’án, 3:113)

Nevertheless, God, the Almighty, sent Prophet Muḥammad to the earth. In the light of the above verse even if there are present amongst the Muslims one or several religious or political

groups of such peoples, what is the difference? How will their presence stop a Manifestation of God from coming?

4. Alteration (Taḥríf) in sacred text

The Muslims reject Bahá'u'lláh by saying that God had sent Prophet Muḥammad because the people of the past had altered the words of the Holy Books. The Qur'án is not susceptible to any such change or alteration till the Day of Judgement (Qiyámah). Therefore there is no need for any new revelation from God till that Day.

The Muslims have developed this idea for apparently two reasons, both of them major misunderstandings. One is that they think that the past Scriptures are the changed Ones. The second misunderstanding is that a new Book is revealed by God only if the Previous One was changed by the people.

The question is whether the texts of the previous Holy Scriptures were actually changed? There are four verses in the Qur'án which deal with the subject of 'Change in the Books' (i.e. Taḥríf). It can not be proved by any of these verses that the people had changed the actual text of their Scripture. Rather they point out that the people used to misinterpret the Holy Texts:

“Can ye entertain the hope that they will believe in you?
Seeing that a party of them heard the Word of Alláh, and
perverted it knowingly after they understand.”

(Qur'án, 2:75)

The Muslims are warned in this verse against a group of the people who listened the Word of God, the Holy Qur'án, understood it and then interpreted it according to their own wishes and thus changed the original meaning of the Book. Those who interpreted knew well that the original meaning of the verses was something else. Are not the Muslims still engaged in similar acts of misinterpreting the Word of God (i.e. the Qur'án) according to their own desires? Otherwise why are so many thousands of

interpretations of the Holy Qur'án? Another verse is this:

“Of the Jews there are those who displace words from their (right) places, and say: ‘We heard and we disobey.’”
(Qur'án, 4:46)

The meaning of this verse is clear, namely, that there were only some Jews, not all of them, who used to change the meaning of the words and to use them out of context. It is also clear that those who were guilty did not change the whole Book, but only displaced words from their contexts. This was done in the time of Prophet Muḥammad, as the present tense has been used in the Qur'án to describe this fact. Now how can the Muslims validate their objection that the whole Book was altered? The Muslims' claim, that the people changed their Books at the time of the advent of Muḥammad so that His claims could not be proved by their Holy Texts, is also not valid. The Qur'án says that they ‘displace words’ in the present time, i.e. in the time of the advent of Muḥammad when the Qur'án was being revealed. The point to ponder here is what could they have gained by this alteration in the Texts of their Holy Books? The other point is where is the original Text which has been changed? Can the Muslims produce even a single version of the original Text of the Books which were changed? No. Then how can they prove their claim? The Bible was, after all, a Book which was not confined in the Arab towns of Mecca and Medina. It was spread all over the continents in thousands. How was it possible to change the text of it in all of its copies throughout the world? Therefore it is proved that the Qur'án does not say that the Bible's Text was altered but it refers to the wrong interpretations of some of its verses. The Muslim clergy have also engaged in such interpretation of their Book since the very early age of Islám. They are even doing this today. The third verse in this context is also very clear and does not say that the Text of Book was changed:

“But because of their breach of their Covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts grow hard; they change the Words from their (right) places and forget all good part of the Message

that was sent them.”

(Qur’án, 5:14)

The fourth verse is this:

“As (they) come to thee, they change the Words from their (right) times and places: they say; ‘If ye are given this take it’ but if not, beware.”

(Qur’án, 5:44)

In this verse only this much is said that the Jews listen to the vain talks very attentively but do not seek guidance from the Prophet Muḥammad Himself. Neither did they investigate the truth. They used to change the Words from their right places and context. That is to say that they misinterpreted the verses.

Thus in the light of the above four verses it has been proved that the Muslim belief regarding change of the Text of the past Books is not valid.

Of course there may be some contradictions found in different versions of some revealed Books. It is not the Words of God which contradict each other, but the statements of the people who record them which sometimes contradict. The Words of God are of course different from those of the recording persons.

5. Blasphemy

The Muslims say that Bahá’u’lláh was neither appointed by God nor did He receive any Revelation from God. Therefore His Words were not the Words of God. On the contrary the Qur’án proclaims:

“Who can be more wicked than one who inventeth a lie against Alláh, or saith, ‘I have received inspiration’, When he hath received none, or (again) who saith, ‘I can reveal the like of what Alláh revealed.”

(Qur’án, 6:93)

It is clear that such a person is an imposter. Now let us see what is the punishment, ordained by God, for an imposter? God hath ordained for him an eternal wrath, a great loss and misfortune:

“At length will be said to the wrong-doers: ‘taste ye enduring punishment! ye get but the recompense of what ye earned!’”
(Qur’án, 10:52)

“And We shall say to the wrong-doers, ‘taste ye the penalty of the fire.’”
(Qur’án, 34:42)

“And whoever among you does wrong, him shall We cause to taste of a grievous penalty.”
(Qur’án, 25:19)

Revelation of a Book and Promulgation of a code of Laws of God is not an ordinary event. God Himself warns that even if a Messenger of God add a single word, of Himself, in the Holy Text—the word will not show any influence and will not prosper. On the contrary, God has promised to catch hold of such a liar and to cut off his vein of life:

“And if the apostle were to invent any sayings in Our name, We should certainly seize him by his right hand, and We should certainly then cut off the artery of his heart; nor could any of you withhold him (from Our wrath)”
(Qur’án, 69:44–47)

An imposter has never succeeded in his designs in the past nor will any succeed in the future. One of the proofs of the validity of a true. Manifestation of God is that whenever He appears He is severely opposed from all quarters. But God dispels all the oppressors and renders His manifestation triumphant:

“Never did We send an apostle or a prophet before thee, but, when he framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) in his desire.”
(Qur’án, 22:52)

God has given an example. When the rain falls on the ground a layer of scum collects on the earth. But soon the scum disappears. The water sinks deep into the soil and causes the tree and vegetation to grow. In this example the water represents the Truth, the new revelation and the new laws and ordinances of God. On the other hand, the scum represents the falsehood, the

evil and man's own thoughts and words. A society is never formed by such scum:

“For the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth.”

(Qur'án, 13:17)

When the Bahá'í Message is shared with a Muslim he argues that 'Islám' is the only religion in the sight of God. He quotes this verse from the Qur'án:

“The religion before Alláh is Islám (submission to His Will)”

(Qur'án, 3:19)

The literary meaning of the word 'Islám' is to obey and to bow down in obedience. Each and every creature in the universe is under the biddings of the One True God—the Omnipotent. Therefore the religion of every thing in all the kingdoms of God is Islám. All the religions, from Adam to Bahá'u'lláh, were revealed by God. Therefore each one of them is 'Islám'. The Holy Qur'án, itself, refers to the religions revealed by Moses, Abraham and Jesus as Islám:

“He has named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation) that the apostle may be a witness for you, and ye be witness for mankind.”

(Qur'án, 22:78)

God has chosen this very religion for mankind and commanded it to follow this very path. In fact the Bahá'í Faith is objected to by those people who think that it is a religion other than Islám. The Bahá'ís believe that there is only One God. It is only He Who sends His Messengers and reveals Books through Them. The One True God has guided people throughout the ages and in all lands by sending His Messengers.

Moreover, all the Manifestations of God are also one in Their station. There is no estrangement or differences between Them or Their Holy Books. All of Them represent the same God—the Supreme Law-Giver. The Laws of God are always in

conformity. There is no other power or God but the God. Therefore we can not justify calling some of the religions as Islám and others something else.

Bahá'ís believe that Bahá'u'lláh did not utter a single word from Himself and that did not promulgate a single Law but through the Will of God. Therefore, in the true sense, the religion brought by Bahá'u'lláh is also 'Islám'. However, just as the Laws and Ordinances of Islám, revealed by Muḥammad, differed from those of the past, the Laws and Ordinances of the Bahá'í Faith also differ from those of the Holy Qur'án. Like many religions of the past, which were called after the names of their Great Founders, the Bahá'í Faith also derives its name from the Name of its Founder—Bahá'u'lláh. It is worth clarifying that when a Muslim becomes a Bahá'í, he is not required to give up his faith in the Unity of God, in the validity of the station of Muḥammad, the Prophet of God, or in the Holy Qur'án. On the other hand, today many thousands of people from all religious backgrounds are accepting Bahá'u'lláh. All those who believe in Bahá'u'lláh also confess their faith in Prophet Muḥammad, His Book and His Faith. Thus it may be said that in a way the progress of the Bahá'í Faith is the progress of Islám Itself. People, who did not recognise Prophet Muḥammad and His Faith before becoming Bahá'ís, start proclaiming His truth just after their conversion to the Bahá'í Faith. As the Bahá'ís believe in the validity of all the Prophets of God, in fact, the triumph of this Faith is the triumph of all the religions and the fulfilment of the dreams of all the Prophets of God. Thus Moses, while giving the glad tiding of this age, had foretold that His commandments will rule; Lord Krishna had prophesied that 'Ram Raaj' (Kingdom of God) will be established; Buddha had announced that the Laws given by 'Amit-Bha' will be obeyed; Zoroaster had promised that 'Dín-i-Bahí' will envelop the whole earth; Jesus had said that the Laws and Ordinances of the Bible will be implemented and Muḥammad had declared that Islám will become the Universal religion. As an Arabic proverb goes:

“Our words differ, but your beauty is one.”

All the Prophets of God have foretold the advent of Bahá'u'lláh.

7. Ijtihád

Another obstacle in the way of our Muslim friends is the so-called provision for 'Ijtihád' in Islám. They think that by using the provision of '**Ijtihád**' they can solve all their problems until the Day of Resurrection. We have explained, elsewhere in this book, that the Day of Resurrection is the Day of the Advent of a Manifestation of God. Before the advent of Bahá'u'lláh the Muslims could have benefited from this provision. And they have done so. But now a new Revelation and new Laws and Ordinances of God have come. Therefore the provision of 'Ijtihád' will benefit them no more. Only a Manifestation of God is authorised by God to proclaim such basic changes and pronounce a new code of life.

God has solved all our present-day problems through Bahá'u'lláh. He has guided us in all our steps. Therefore why should we reject His infallible guidance and be in a doubtful condition due to the '**ijtihád**' of some fallible '**mujtahids**' and learned men.

8. A Messiah without new laws and ordinances

The Promised One Who was to come in the Last Day to establish unity of mankind, justice and peace is called by different names in different religious Scriptures. In the Book of Zoroaster He is named as 'Sháh Bahrám'; Lord Krishna mentions His name as 'Kaki Avatara'; He has been mentioned in the Old Testament as the 'Lord of the Hosts'; in the New Testament, He is called 'the Son of Man', Lord Buddha calls Him as 'Amit-Bha' and in the Holy Qur'án He is referred to as the 'Greatest News' (Naba'-i-'Azim).

In the Islamic Holy Traditions (Hādith) the Promised One is called the 'Messiah'. Although our intention is to discuss, in this

book, only the Quranic prophecies, we will also discuss some of the traditions (Ḥadīth) regarding the advent of the ‘Messiah’. The Bahá’ís believe that the advent of Bahá’u’lláh has been referred to in the Holy Traditions of Islām as the advent of the ‘Messiah’. The Muslims reject this belief by saying that the same Jesus the Christ, who was crucified by the Jews, will return from the sky.

The Bahá’ís believe that Jesus the Christ lived His natural life and died. The belief that He was taken into the sky and that He will return from there is not acceptable to any one of reason. Firstly because of the fact that the sky is not a material thing and no one can live on an imaginary sky. Secondly, there seem to be no reason behind keeping anyone alive for such a long time in the sky. What is the wisdom behind it? Therefore the advent of Bahá’u’lláh is the second coming of Christ. It means another person with Christ-like personality, greatness, qualities and station has appeared in the Person of Bahá’u’lláh. His Mission is the same as that of the Christ.

Another argument of the Muslims in rejecting Bahá’u’lláh as the second coming of Christ, is that Christ will return as one of the followers of Prophet Muḥammad. Hence, He will neither receive any new Revelation nor will He bring any new Book of God. And He will not promulgate a new Law for the people. However, in His first advent, Christ was a full-fledged Messenger of God. He received a Revelation from God, He revealed a Book and promulgated new Laws and Ordinances for men. He thus raised a nation of His followers and finally sacrificed His life in the path of the good-pleasure of God. Why then should He now be degraded from His disposition and station in His second advent to a mere follower of Prophet Muḥammad? Can it be proved from the past history of the Prophets of God that a Prophet of God was ever demoted to the position of a mere follower of any Prophet? Is it a reward? If yes, what a surprise! If this be a punishment, why?

On the other hand the Muslims cite quotations from the

Traditions (Ḥadīth) that the Promised Messiah will change some of the Islamic Laws. For example it is said that He will abolish the Law of ‘Holy War’ (Jihād), gather the five obligatory prayers together, abandon the religious taxes like ‘Kharāj’ and ‘Jizyah’ (taxes realised by non-Muslim governments and citizens respectively for their protection). Is it possible that a man without any authority can change such major Laws of the Holy Qur’án? The Muslims have no satisfactory answers to these questions. Moreover, the question arises that if the Promised Christ, according to the general belief of Muslims, will not receive any revelation from God then whether He will speak His own words through His own will? If so, what influence will it have on the people? Are not the Muslim clergy busy, every moment, in writing such words—devoid of any influence? If the Promised Christ is also an ordinary Muslim, then are not the Muslim clergy and scholars in a better position to guide the nation? Then what is the necessity of the second coming of Christ?

Due to the passage of time and progress in the fields of science and technology, society has undergone a dramatic change. It is a new era and it requires new code of life revealed by God. The old religions have no answer to the current problems. Today a Christ is needed. A Christ Who can solve the problems of this age, Who can speak with the authority of God and can reveal the Will of God to mankind. Bahá’u’lláh has answered this cry and fulfilled this need. He has done so not as an ordinary man but as a full-fledged Manifestation of God.

It is worth mentioning that in all the authentic Traditions of Islám details regarding the appearance of the Promised One are given. It is recorded in these prophecies that He will bear a white-rosey complexion, He will be of medium stature, His hair will be so shining that it will look always wet—as if water is dropping from it, etc. Bahá’u’lláh showed all these signs. The Islamic Traditions foretell that the Promised Christ will accomplish eleven major tasks. Let us review all of them one by one:

i. He will bring justice and order

Bahá'u'lláh appeared as a judge to settle the disputes between the nations and as a 'Ḥakam' to maintain order in the society. He called upon all the rulers of the world and all the nations to adopt justice. He established justice and equity among His followers and ordained to establish Houses of Justice at local, national and inter national levels.

ii. He will break the cross

When a Christian embraces the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh he no longer uses the sign of cross as a religious symbol. Thus Bahá'u'lláh has broken the cross and has established the Oneness of God and His creatures.

iii. Abolition of Jihád (holy war)

Bahá'u'lláh has forbidden all sorts of war. He taught disarmament and has exhorted human beings to relinquish all prejudices and to establish peace.

iv. He will gather the five obligatory prayers together

Bahá'u'lláh has ordained three obligatory prayers and thus He has gathered together the obligatory prayers.

v. He will abrogate the laws of 'Jizyah' and 'Kharáj'

Under the Islamic Laws a non-Muslim citizen has to pay a special tax to the government called 'Jizyah'. This assures his protection in the Islamic Society. Likewise, non-Muslim Governments are required to pay 'Kharáj' to the Muslim Government and get their protection. Bahá'u'lláh has abolished this Law. Similarly Bahá'u'lláh has also abolished the terms like 'káfir' or 'dhimmí'" and has proclaimed the Oneness of mankind. No clergy or learned could ever have dared to do this.

vi. *He will promote Islám and reject all other religions*

As has been explained elsewhere in this chapter, taking the literary meaning of Islám, the Bahá'í Faith is Islám today. Therefore the Bahá'í Faith is uniting all the diverse religions and their followers into one universal religion—into one Faith. Thus a new nation is being created.

vii. *He will be alive for forty years:*

Bahá'u'lláh received His revelation in the Síyáh-Chál, of Tíhrán, in 1852. Since then He was banished from Tíhrán, to Baghdád and from there to different places in Turkey and finally to 'Akká—the penal colony of the Ottoman Empire. He died in 1892. Thus His Ministry was for forty years. He remained alive for forty years after the declaration of His Mission.

viii. *He will kill the 'Dajjál'*

The embodiments of vice and deceit, the opposers of the Truth e.g. Násiri'd-Dín Sháh, Mírzá Áqásí and Yahyá Azal were the 'Dajját' of this age.

Yahyá Azal, the treacherous half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, was the one who followed Bahá'u'lláh from Tíhrán to Adrianople, tried several times to poison Him, instigated the people and the government officials against Bahá'u'lláh and at last was sent to Cyprus—called the Island of Satan. In this Island of Satan he died a shameful death. The treachery of Yahyá Azal could not reach beyond the last town of Syria called 'Afeeq' and thus virtually he got entrapped in the town 'Afeeq' and was defeated there. The Holy Traditions say that the 'Dajjál' will be defeated in 'Afeeq'.

ix. *He will descend near the white minaret at the gate facing Damascus*

Bahá'u'lláh was brought, as an exile from Adrianople to

‘Akká, on a ship. He was disembarked from the ship at the city’s gate. This gate is called ‘Damashqí Gate’ (Gate facing Damascus). This gate is situated near a mosque, in ‘Akká, which has a white minaret. Bahá’u’lláh had entered the city of ‘Akká through that very gate facing Damascus near the white minaret.

x. *He will defeat the ‘Dajjál’ at the door of the place called ‘Lúd’*

Bahá’u’lláh has passed through this place called ‘Lúd’ while He was being taken from Alexandria through Jaffá. He had reached ‘Akká with all glory and triumph. All His enemies were defeated. Even the king of Irán and Sultán of Turkey could not defeat His purpose or cause Him any harm.

xi. *There will be a single Kalima (word) for whole world:*

The Bahá’ís throughout the world have a single goal and mission i.e. the establishment of the oneness of mankind. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself testifies that if there was a ‘Kalima’ for the Bahá’ís it would be, “consort with people of all religions in utmost spirituality and unity.”

It is so clear, from the above examples, that the prophecies given by Prophet Muḥammad, regarding the Promised Christ, have been totally realised. In the presence of all these proofs who can deny the validity of the claims of the Promised One of all the religions—**Bahá’u’lláh?**

Qiyámah—The Day of Resurrection

The Arabic term ‘Qiyámah’ means “to arise”. It is resurrection or revival of a people through a Manifestation of God. It is mentioned in the Holy Books that the Words of God are revealed at the time of Qiyámah. The period, during which the Manifestation of God reveals His Laws and gathers the people to arise as a new nation is called the day of Qiyámah. Thus on the day of Qiyámah, a new Book is revealed, a new nation is raised and a new Manifestation of God settles all the disputes between the nations. The nations receive their rewards or punishments in accordance with their collective deeds and the judgement of the new Manifestation.

Therefore the advent of each of the Manifestations of God in the past was a day of Qiyámah. According to the Qur’án there are three types of Qiyámah. The Lesser Qiyámah is the separation of the soul from the human temple i.e. the material death of a person. With this death his material progress comes to an end. The body decomposes and its constituent elements join similar elements in the nature. The soul which is released due to this separation never returns to this body. Nor does it go to any other material temple. It remains as an individual soul and faces its rewards or punishments according to the deeds of the person in this material world. It receives its reward or punishment immediately after its separation from the body and does not have to wait for a day of judgement, as normally believed by the Muslims.

The second type of Qiyámah is called the medium one. It is the end of an Era and termination of the period appointed for a particular people. The people hand over the reign of the Cause of God to incompetent persons. These worldly persons lead the people away from the truth and the nation meets its spiritual death—the medium Qiyámah.

The third type of Qiyámah is referred to as the Major Qiyámah. The people believe that, “that will be the day of

judgement and reward and punishment in the next world". They say it is the end of the world. However, this concept of major Qiyámah is not reasonable or valid. Every soul receives its reward or punishment right on the day when it is separated from its body, i.e. on the day of Lesser Qiyámah.

Another term used for the Major Qiyámah is 'Al-Sá'a' i.e. the appointed hour. The appointed hour strikes with the advent of a new Manifestation of God. It will come all of a sudden and without the knowledge of anyone. The Major Qiyámah is also referred to in the Qur'án as 'the last day'. It is a very simple fact that each of the Manifestations of God is the Last one as compared to His Predecessors and His Day or Age is, similarly, the last Day. Hence to believe in the last Day means to believe in the Manifestation of God for that Day. All the past Manifestations of God have foretold that an Age of great revolutions and immeasurable changes is sure to come. When that Age is Come—it is the time of Major Qiyámah.

In this connection the Bahá'í Writings explain two very basic facts. One is that whenever a Manifestation of God has appeared in this world it was a Qiyámah (resurrection). Hence the advent of all the Messengers of God, like Adam, Moses, Christ, Muḥammad, Krishna, Buddha, etc., was a Qiyámah for their respective ages. And the Qiyámah promised by all the Holy Books of the past has come to pass with the advent of Bahá'u'lláh.

The second thing is that, like all other religions, Bahá'í also believe in judgement, reward and punishment, heaven and hell, etc. Then why do the Muslim scholars not agree with the Bahá'í explanation of the term 'Qiyámah'? This question requires a sincere and earnest investigation.

In fact the Holy Qur'án can be divided into three sections according to its text. In the first part we find the stories of the past. How a people progressed after accepting a Messenger of God or became the recipients of the wrath of God by rejecting One. In the second part we can gather such verses of God which proclaim, according to the need of the age, laws and exhortations.

In these two sections, consisting of the history and laws, everything is very clear and cannot be misunderstood. In the Quranic terminology these sections together consist of verses which are ‘Muḥkamát’ i.e. established truths. The third part of the Quranic subjects deal with future events and consists of verses called in the Qur’án, ‘Mutashábihát’, i.e. allegories. God, in His divine wisdom, has sealed the meanings of such verses and asked the people to refrain from pondering upon them and explaining them till the next advent. Without the knowledge of the next Manifestation of God no one could understand the true meaning of such verses—the Mutashábihát.

The verses relating to the questions like; “What is Qiyámah?” or “what are its signs and effects?” fall into the category of allegories. The Qur’án instructs its followers to read them and have belief in them, but not to indulge in elaboration and explanation of these verses. It promises that these verses will be explained by a divine Manifestation of God.

All the divine Scriptures contain such allegories which have been kept sealed for a specific period:

“Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” (Daniel, 12:9–10)

The people present in the time of a Manifestation of God cannot grasp the full significance of an event which is yet to come after a long time in the future. This is why that the meaning of the term “Qiyámah” has remained hidden to the expounders of the Holy Qur’án. Today the twin Manifestations of God—the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh—have explained the true meaning of these verses. Now new vistas of meanings and knowledge have opened themselves to the people and a new world of understanding has been unveiled.

The Holy Qur’án warns us regarding ‘Muḥkamát’ and ‘Mutashábihát’ in these words:

“He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book; in it are verses basic or fundamental (of established meanings), they are the foundation of the Book; others are allegorical. But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical, seeking discord, and searching for its meanings, but no one knows its hidden meanings except Alláh, and those who are firmly grounded in knowledge. Say, ‘we believe in the Book; the whole of it is from our Lord’ and none will grasp the Message except men of understanding.”

(Qur’án, 3:7)

The above-quoted verse proves it, beyond any doubt, that no one had the authority to explain the allegorical statements. Therefore, whoever has tried to do so has erred in this deed. The knowledge of the learned and even the best of the priests is not all-embracing. They can not comprehend the future events and developments. Hence Alláh warns the Muslims:

“Nay, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot compass, even before the elucidation thereof hath reached them; thus did those before them make charges of falsehood; but see what was end of those who did wrong.”

(Qur’án, 10:39)

It seems that, at the time of the revelation of the Qur’án, the people were asking Muḥammad to explain the allegorical statements therefore God had taught Muḥammad not to make haste in this matter. The Muslims were instructed to recite the Holy Verses and wait for the explanation from God:

“Move not thy tongue concerning the (Qur’án) to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it; but when We have promulgated it, follow thou its recital. Nay more, it is for Us to explain it.”

(Qur’án, 75:16–19)

Now, when the appointed hour is come, God has revealed, through His Manifestations for this age, the real meanings and explanations of the allegorical passages of the Qur’án. It is for us to pay heed to these explanations and attain the good pleasure

of our creator. Let us study some of the elucidations and explanations of these Quranic allegories as given by the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in their revealed Books 'The Bayán' and the 'Íqán' respectively, as well as in many other Tablets.

Qiyámah, life and death

The Muslims say that the Qiyámah will entail a complete destruction of the earth and heaven and all the things pertaining to them. However this complete annihilation cannot be proved by any verses concerning Qiyámah. Qiyámah means a new stage in the evolutionary history of mankind, the beginning of a new era of scientific and technological developments:

“One day the earth will be changed to a different earth, and so will be the heavens, and (men) will be marshalled forth, before Alláh, the One, the Irresistible.”

(Qur'án, 14:48)

It should be remembered that just like the physical life and death there is also a spiritual life and death. In the religious Scriptures when the term life or death is used they stand for spiritual life and spiritual death. Love of God, obedience towards Him, righteousness, faithfulness, etc. are the life of the spirit. When these qualities fade away, death occurs to the spirit of Faith. This spiritual death comes to both the individuals and collectively to the nations. In the Qur'án wherever the death of a people or nation is referred to—it is the spiritual death; likewise life stands for spiritual life. Let's meditate upon this verse:

“Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and a light whereby he can walk amongst men be like him who is in the depths of darkness.”

(Qur'án, 6:122)

What is 'Adháb-i-Qabr (chastisement in the grave)?

The term 'Qabr' i.e. 'grave' means the state of heedlessness, ignorance and disobedience to God. In this state the human temple

becomes the grave of a dead soul. When the Bahá'í teachers meet such people and ask them, 'Who is your Lord? What is your religion, what do you say about the Messenger of God for this Age?', those who are bereft of the spirit of faith reply 'we do not accept these words.' However those who become alert and rise up from the grave of heedlessness and recognise the advent of the Truth reply, 'verily this Advent is true'. In this way those who refuse are caught by the wrath of God and those who believe receive His bounties.

What is Pul-i-Şirát (The Bridge on the Path)?

The Laws and Ordinances revealed by the new Manifestation of God is the 'bridge'. The believer attains to the paradise of the good-pleasure of God by crossing it. However the ones who reject it fall down in the fire of the wrath of God. For those who are deprived of the spiritual insight the new Laws of God are sharper than a sword. Some, wonderstruck, stay off the bridge and many fall down. The Jews have been blocked at the bridge of the Old Testament for several thousand years, the Christians are stopped at the bridge of the New Testament and likewise the Muslims are standing at the bridge of the Qur'án—Awestruck.

What is Mízán (The Balance)?

The Word of God is, actually, the Balance of justice which is set on the Day of Qiyámah. The acts which conform to the Word of God become the cause of salvation. The deeds which are not according to that Word invite punishments.

What is Liqá-i-Rabb (Visitation of God)?

God is sanctified from all material existence and He can never be seen by the material eyes. By the promise that the people will see and meet God on the Day of Qiyámah it is meant that they will see and meet a Manifestation of God. A Manifestation of God represents the Godhead and the pure-hearted people see in Him the effulgence of God. Through their inner eyes of wisdom

and perception they see, in His beauty the Beauty of God and feel in His presence the Presence of God. Thus meeting with a Manifestation of God is like meeting God Himself. However the wicked and evil-minded people deprive themselves of this bounty. The Muslims have been told that they will be sure to meet Him on the Day of Judgement (Qiyámah):

“For those whose hopes are in the meeting with Alláh, for the Term by Alláh is surely coming; and He hears and knows.”
(Qur’án, 29:5)

This promise of God has been fulfilled, at the appointed hour, by the Advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

What is Khalq-i-Jadíd (Rebirth)?

Khalq-i-jadíd means a spiritual rebirth, i.e. to be made spiritually alive. A Messenger of God is raised up to guide peoples and nations. Similarly the people are raised up, through the Messenger, for a new spiritual revolution. This is also called revival. It has occurred in the past and has been prophesied for the future. For example, it was said to the children of Israel that they were made alive after their death:

“Then we raised you up after your death; ye had chance to be grateful.”
(Qur’án, 2:56)

The Holy Qur’án states, very clearly, that those who will await destruction of the earth and the heaven will not believe in the new Advent in the day of qiyámah. However those who are endowed with faith and blessed with certitude and divine knowledge will inform others that this very day is the day of rebirth and rising up. On the day of the Advent, the faithful and believers will say to the Muslims that they have lived in the age of Qur’án till the day of rebirth but they did not know it:

“On the day that the Hour will be established, the transgressors will swear that they tarried not but an hour! Thus were they used to being deluded! But those endued with

knowledge and faith will say, indeed ye did tarry, within Alláh's decree, to the day of resurrection, and this is the day of resurrection; but ye were not aware!" (Qur'án, 30:55–56)

Thus it is clear from these verses that the day of the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh is the day of spiritual rebirth i.e. spiritual and intellectual revolutions and progress. But only the faithful can perceive it.

What is Yum-i-Ṭaláq (Day of Separation)?

Yum-i-ṭaláq is the day of separation or parting of the truth from the error through a Manifestation of God. Another term used for this term is 'the day of judgement'. As stated earlier, on the day of judgement, a Manifestation of God appears and settles the disputes of the nations and unites them. Thus the believers are separated from the non-believers. All the Messengers of God, including Muḥammad, have accomplished this. Muḥammad Himself caused a resurrection and had judged between the people:

“But Alláh judges between them on the Day of Judgement as to their differences.” (Qur'án, 16:124)

“Why they are summoned to Alláh and His Apostle, in order that He may judge between them, behold some of them decline.” (Qur'án, 24:48)

“If thou judge, judge in equity between them; for Alláh loveth those who judge in equity.” (Qur'án, 5:5)

What is Yum-id-Dín (Day of Religion)?

When a new Manifestation of God proclaims a new religion, the Kingdom of God is established on the earth. That very day is called 'yum-id-dín' or the day of religion. The Manifestation of God is the Lord of that day of religion. Those who bow down and accept these facts are included among the chosen ones of God. But those who reject are cursed and punished by God. The Qur'án promises that the coming of a new religion will occur:

“Verily that which ye are promised is true; and verily justice (Al-Dín i.e. religion) must indeed come to pass.”
(Qur’án, 51:5–6)

Accordingly a new religion has been promulgated through Bahá’u’lláh in this day which is the ‘yum-id-dín’.

What is Yumu’l-Ákhirah (The Last Day)?

Literarily speaking, compared to the past Messengers of God, the day of the latest Manifestation of God will be called the last day. All the peoples, including the Muslims, were taught to have faith in God and in the last day. Belief in the last day is really the belief in the continuity of the history. It is to believe and accept the consequences of one’s own deeds and to have faith in the future.

What is Yumu’l-Ḥaṣhr (The Day of Gathering)?

Yumu’l-ḥaṣhr means the day on which the people will be gathered together. People get divided into many groups, sects and ideologies. The Manifestation of God removes all misunderstandings from among them and paves the ways for their unification. He collects them under one tent of unity through His spiritual powers and the influence of the Words of God. That very day is called the day of gathering:

“It is He Who got out the unbelievers among the people of the Book from their homes at the first gathering (Ḥaṣhir).”
(Qur’án, 59:2)

Thus it is clear that Muḥammad’s Advent was a day of gathering (Ḥaṣhr) in this world. The term ‘Qiyámah’ and ‘Ḥaṣhr’ are the same. It is mentioned in the Qur’án that one should fear God and have faith that he will be gathered unto God:

“... fear God, and know that ye will surely be gathered unto Him.”
(Qur’án, 2:203)

What Is Yumu'l-Khurúj (The Day of Exodus)?

The day of the Advent of a Manifestation of God is also called the day of exodus. Hence it is mentioned:

“And listen for the Day when the Caller will call out from a place quite near,—The Day when they will hear a (mighty) blast in (very) truth; that will be the day of resurrection (Yumu'l-Khurúj).” (Qur’án, 50:41–42)

How clear it is from the above verses that Yumu'l-Khurúj is the day on which a divine call will be raised from a nearby place and the people will listen to that call of truth. On that day, the spiritually dead will come out of the graves of their ignorance and heedlessness and arise to revivify the world and establish peace on earth. As has already been explained elsewhere in this book, the physical body of man starts decomposing right from the day of its death. However the reality of man is his spirit which takes its flight into its eternal realms towards the kingdom on high. Therefore the belief that physical bodies will come out of their physical graves is neither logical nor can be proved by the verses of the Qur’án. On the contrary the Qur’án proclaims that all the physical things—the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, animals, vegetation and men—will remain safe on the day of Qiyámah. They will not face annihilation. Rather a Manifestation of God will raise His Call from this very earth and that will be the Yumu'l-Khurúj:

“And among His signs is this, that heaven and earth stand by His command; then when He calls you, by a single call, from the earth, behold, ye come forth.”

(Qur’án, 30:25)

What is Nafkha'i-Şúr (Blowing of the Trumpet)?

This term refers to the blowing of a trumpet, proclamation, making widely known. It has been a traditional custom in the army that a trumpet is blown to gather the troops. This term has

also frequently been used in the Old and New Testaments. The blowing of the trumpet is mentioned at several places. It simply means the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh.

A Manifestation of God is His Announcer. His call is the call of God and His voice is God's voice. When the Prophet Muḥammad raised the call of the Oneness of God, it was in fact blowing of a trumpet. By its influence the spiritually dead became alive. Likewise when Bahá'u'lláh sounded the trumpet, the most great resurrection came to pass and a new revival engulfed the whole world.

What are Arḍ wa Samá' (earth and heaven)?

In the context of resurrection, whenever the terms 'earth' and 'heaven' are used in the Holy Books they represent different meanings. 'Earth' means the earth of knowledge and understanding, the earth of new insight etc. 'Heaven' represents the heaven of new teachings and religion. By the shattering of the heaven (sky) on the day of resurrection, it is meant that the heaven of old religion is removed and a new one is raised through the Advent of a new Manifestation of God and the earth of recognition of God is decorated with Faith.

What are Shams wa Qamar (sun and moon)?

By 'sun' and 'moon', when used in context of Qiyámah, is meant the sun and moon of the religious order and system. The sun symbolizes the person of the Manifestation of God who rises from the horizon of the Will of God. The successors and deputies of the Manifestation are called the moons of His dispensation. The priests and scholars of a particular dispensation are the stars of the heaven of that religion. These stars of the heaven of religion no longer give light, due to their rejection of the new Manifestation of God, and fall off the sky of religion. With the Advent of a new Manifestation of God a new heaven is raised, a new earth is

spread, and new moons and stars are made to manifest—actually a new era starts.

What is Yumu'l-Ḥaqq (the day of truth)?

On the day of the advent of the Spirit of Truth i.e. a Messenger of God the holy souls arise in unison. This day is called ‘the day of truth’:

“The day that the spirit and the angels will stand forth in rank, none shall speak except who is permitted by (Alláh) Most Gracious. That day will be the sure reality (yumu'l-Ḥaqq.” (Qur’án, 78:39)

The day of truth is also called ‘the Day of Happening (Váqi‘ih) whose occurrence cannot be denied by anyone. The same day of truth (Yumu'l-Ḥaqq) is called ‘Sat-Yug’ in Hindi. Kalki Avatara was to inaugurate the ‘Sat-yug’. Thus Bahá’u’lláh, who, according to the Hindus is Kalki Avatara, has inaugurated the ‘Sat-yug’ or the ‘yumu'l-Ḥaqq’. The day of Qiyámah is also termed as the day of advent, the day of separation, the day of assemblage, the day of threatening, the day of sorrowfulness, the day of resurrection, the day of judgement, etc. The Qur’án calls all of these days as THE DAY OF GOD’ Yumu’lláh.

We conclude the above explanations by noting that the Holy Qur’án is full of prophecies regarding the Advent of Bahá’u’lláh. It is also clear that the Day of Qiyámah is not the day of destruction and annihilation. Rather it is a Day of a new Manifestation of God, a day of revival of faith. Those imbued with faith will believe in the New Manifestation of God on the Day of Qiyámah and enter the good-pleasure of God. Those who will reject the New Day will have to face the wrath of God which is the real doom.

God has established Qiyámah, in this new era, through the Advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

Why did they deny?

The pages of the Holy Qur’án bear witness that all the Manifestations of God, right from Adam to Muḥammad were rejected by the majority of the people. They also describe that the people always made plots to undo Their Missions by using different excuses and tricks:

“Never did We send an apostle or a prophet before thee, but when he framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) into his desires; but Alláh will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in”. (Qur’án, 22:52)

These episodes have been recorded in the Holy Qur’án as a warning lest the Muslims follow the footsteps of the past nations and reject their Promised Manifestation—Bahá’u’lláh. Otherwise there is no point in mentioning these tales.

Why did they (the people) deny their Messenger? The following are some of the reasons that we have gleaned from the Qur’án:

1. Selfish desires

People always keep some self-made standard for recognizing a Manifestation of God. They fix their minds upon certain rituals and dogmas as well as a certain set of laws and ordinances given in a particular age. They expect that God will always conform to their desires and satisfy their standards.

However, God does things in His own ways. He never consults His creatures nor does He care for the selfish desires of the people. He does what He wills and He ordains whatever He desires. Ours is the duty to forsake all that pertains to our own desires, standards and rituals, and surrender our wills to the Will of God. He abhors the refusal of His Manifestation due to selfish desires:

“Is it that whenever there comes to you an Apostle with what ye yourselves desire not, ye are puffed up with pride? Some ye called Imposters, and others ye slay.”
(Qur’án, 2:87)

“For Alláh guideth not those who reject faith.”
(Qur’án, 5:67)

2. Blind imitation

Another trait of the people is that they become so much attached to their fore-fathers and imitate them so blindly that when they see that the Manifestation of God is teaching new things they simply refuse to accept Him. This blind imitation of the ancestors is very much discouraged in the Holy Qur’án. It teaches that when a new Manifestation makes this appearance, the people should investigate His claims and at no cost should they reject Him only for the reason that He teaches something that contradicts their past beliefs or rituals:

“when it is said to them: ‘Come to what Alláh hath revealed: come to the Apostle’: they say: ‘enough for us are the ways we found our fathers following!’ even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance.”

(Qur’án, 5:107)

“When it is said to them, ‘Follow what Alláh hath revealed’, they say, ‘Nay! we shall follow the ways of our fathers’.”
(Qur’án, 2:170)

3. Jealousy

Jealousy was another reason that a people denied its Manifestation of God. They simply said why should there be a new Messenger while we have already got a Prophet of our own and we follow Him: We have His Book and Laws which are sufficient for us. Why should we be taught a new book? They considered that if they will accept a new Messenger it would go against their established religion, pride and honour. A few of

them showed humbleness before God and accepted His Manifestation, but those blessed souls became the target for the darts of hatred and jealousy of the non-believers. Due to this jealousy they invited the divine wrath:

“... or do they envy mankind for what Alláh hath given them of His bounty? But We had already given the people of Abraham the Book and wisdom and conferred upon them a great kingdom.” (Qur’án, 4:54)

4. Heddliness

Heddliness of the people has been another reason for their denial. Due to it they fail to pay any serious attention to the Call of the Manifestation of God. They do not ponder upon His teachings, and make no effort to accept Him and enter into the struggle of life:

“Ah! Alas for (My) servants! There comes not an apostle to them but they mock him! See they not how many generations before them We destroyed? Not to them will they return.” (Qur’án, 36:30–31)

5. Priests and anchorites

The people become so much attached and faithful to their religious guides (Aḥbár) and spiritual leaders (Ruhbán) that with the passage of time, they raise them to the status of deity. Hence they refuse to accept the Messenger of God because these leaders do not accept Him.

In the time of Prophet Muḥammad this was one of the reasons that people rejected Him. Likewise in this age, again, the priests have rejected Bahá’u’lláh. The people have followed their example. According to the Holy Qur’án, this is the worst type of “Shirk”, i.e. making partners with God:

“They took their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of Alláh.” (Qur’án, 9:31)

6. New Revelation

Following into the footsteps of the past nations, the Muslims have also developed the belief that their religion, their Book, their Laws and Ordinances are the final ones and that there will come no new Manifestation of God as they have accepted the last of the Manifestations. Hence when Bahá'u'lláh appeared, with all the signs and according to all the prophecies given in the past Scriptures, the followers of the Holy Qur'án but a very few rejected Him.

We should ponder upon these verses in order to understand the divine guidance:

“Never comes to them of a renewed Message from their Lord, but they listen to it as in jest.” (Qur'án, 21:2)

“And there comes not to them a newly revealed Message from (Alláh) Most Gracious, but they turn away therefrom.” (Qur'án, 26:5)

7. Blasphemy

Another plea that the people took when rejecting Manifestation of God has been that neither is this man from God nor has he revealed any new book or law of God. The people would say that this man is an imposter, he has made false claims, he is an agent of some other nation and is commissioned for propagating their ideas amongst us, etc. Such blasphemy was heaped upon Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad—in fact upon all the past Messengers. The Holy Qur'án rejects such blaming, by stating a golden rule that no pretender can ever dare to stand in this position. Neither will a blasphemer ever succeed:

“But the misbelievers say, ‘naught is this but a lie which He (Apostle) has forged, and others have helped Him at it’.” (Qur'án, 25:4)

8. Pride and arrogance

Many people have showed arrogance towards the Manifestations of God and had been proud of their own worldly possessions, leadership, authority, accomplishments and knowledge, etc. Due to this they have rejected the Word of God revealed by the Manifestation. The Holy Qur’án stops its adherents from such deeds:

“Woe to each sinful dealer in falsehoods: he hears the verses of Alláh rehearsed to him, yet is obstinate and lofty, as if he had not heard them. Then announce to him a penalty grievous!”
(Qur’án, 45:7–8)

Unfortunately the people of this age have also generally followed the footsteps of the former people in this regard.

9. Misunderstanding

Another shortcoming of the peoples had been that they misunderstood the divine station of a Manifestation of God and treated Him as an ordinary man. Therefore they remained ignorant of the majesty, influence, glory and mystery of His revealed Word. They even claimed that they themselves can write such words:

“When Our verses are rehearsed to them, they say, ‘we have heard this (before). If we wished, we could say (Words) like these, these are nothing but tales of the ancients.’”
(Qur’án, 8:31)

In spite of this clear warning, the Muslims have repeated the same mistake and have treated Bahá’u’lláh as an ordinary man. Thus most of them have remained ignorant of the miraculous eloquence and the penetrating influence of His Words.

10. Renewal of religion

The people have always disliked the idea of the renewal of religion, even by the Manifestation of God, hence they have rejected

Him. The Pharaoh rejected Moses for the same reason:

“Said Pharaoh, ‘leave me to slay Moses; and let Him call on His Lord! What I fear is lest He should change your religion, or lest He should cause mischief to appear in the land.’”
(Qur’án, 40:26)

Bahá’u’lláh has been rejected by the Muslims on the same ground. The majority of the learned Muslims are ready to accept Bahá’u’lláh as a great reformer, scholar and a saint. However they say that He should not have changed the Laws of Islám and renewed the religion. It is not surprising that the people who rejected the Manifestations of God in the past and the people who are now rejecting Bahá’u’lláh are using the same excuse. However, the Qur’án asserts that a Manifestation of God is fully authorised to renew the Laws of God:

“What! have they partners (in Godhead) who have established for them some religion without the permission of Alláh?”
(Qur’án, 42:21)

No liar has as yet been able to establish a religion nor is it possible in the future. Hence God declares that if someone claims that he has revealed a Book of Law which is from God and some people accept Him, there can be no doubt in His truth:

“But those who dispute concerning Alláh after He has been accepted, futile is their dispute in the sight of their Lord; on them is wrath, and for them will be a penalty terrible.”
(Qur’án, 42:16)

Bahá’u’lláh questions the Muslims, referring to the renewal of religion, that if they like the old laws then why did they leave the Laws of the Old and the New Testaments ... and if they considered this (renewal of Laws) an offense committed by Bahá’u’lláh then Muḥammad, the Prophet of God had preceded Him in this offense and even before Muḥammad—Jesus and Moses have also committed similar crimes.

11. Acquisition of power

One of the reasons behind the denial of the people was that they thought that the Manifestation of God was hungry for worldly power and that He will seize their authority, honour and kingdom:

“Said Pharaoh, ‘leave me to slay Moses; and let Him call on His Lord! What I fear is lest He should change your religion, or lest He should cause mischief to appear in the land.” (Qur’án, 40:26)

Bahá’u’lláh was also subjected to similar accusations. However He clearly rejected it. He was a son of a minister of Írán. He could have got His father’s rank and position very easily. In fact, He was offered His father’s post after his death. Bahá’u’lláh refused to accept it.

12. Denial of prophecies

Each of the Manifestations of God has taken a pledge from His followers that they will accept and aid the next Manifestation who will testify to the validity of all the past dispensations. However, in spite of all these pledges and prophecies, the people have always rejected their Promised One. They flatly denied the validity of the prophecies and branded the Manifestations as charmers and magicians. Thus it happened at the time of the appearance of Moses:

“When Moses came to them with Our clear signs, they said, ‘this is nothing but sorcery faked up; never did we hear the like among our fathers of old!’” (Qur’án, 28:36)

Yet in another place it is mentioned that those who refused to accept the Promised One of their Book said that they were the ‘last Ummah’ and that they have never heard that any other prophet will appear after theirs. Therefore the new claim is a wishful statement:

“We never heard (the like) of this among the people of these latter days; this is nothing but a made-up tale! What! Has the message been sent to him (Muḥammad) among us?”
(Qur’án, 38:7–8)

Are not the above statements identical to what the Muslims utter in this age—while denying Bahá’u’lláh? God says, about the people of the Book who preceded the Muslim, these Words:

“And when came to them an Apostle from Alláh, confirming what was with them, a party of the people of the Book threw away the Book of Alláh behind their backs, as if they did not know.”
(Qur’án, 2:101)

Similar is the condition of the followers of Qur’án in this age. They have rejected the Promised One of their Book by saying that no such promise was ever given in the Qur’án.

13. Wrapping of the heart

In the past, whenever a Messenger of God has appeared, the people have rejected Him due to their own self-made ideas, rituals, arrogance, ignorance and prejudices etc. They boasted about these wrong traits and rejected the Messenger of God:

“They said, ‘our hearts are the wrappings (which preserve Alláh’s Word. We need no more)’ Nay, Alláh’s curse is on them for their blasphemy.”
(Qur’án, 2:88)

The above-quoted verse particularly refers to the Jews and the Christians. The priests of these religions used to say that their hearts were in wrappings and that nothing could come out of it nor could anything new enter therein. Thus they justified their rejection of the new teachings.

God mentions four crimes of the Jews in the Holy Qur’án and says that due to their own rejection He had stamped their hearts:

“(The Jews incurred Alláh’s displeasure) In that they broke their Covenant; that they rejected the signs of Alláh; that they slew the Messengers in defiance of right; that they said, ‘our hearts are the wrappings’ Alláh hath set the seal on their hearts for their blasphemy and little is it they believe.”

(Qur’án, 4:155)

Do not the Muslims say the same thing today that they neither need to accept any new thing nor are ready to give up the old? Alas! due to such misunderstandings most of the peoples have failed to recognise the Promised One of all Ages—
Bahá’u’lláh.

Why another Manifestation of God?

When the people are invited to accept the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh, the Muslims as well as the followers of all other religions respond in the similar way. They say, “our religion is complete, Its laws are sufficient. Why should we accept a new Manifestation of God?” As we are addressing the Muslims in this book, let's see what the Holy Qur'án has to say about the need for the coming of a Messenger of God and whether such a need actually exists in this age or not.

Even a very cursory reading of the Qur'án will reveal that God has sent, in the past, His Messengers for the following sixteen reasons:

1. To confer life

God has always sent a Messenger whenever a previous nation had met its spiritual death and moral decay. The Messenger of God revives the dead nation and instils a new life into it. The Qur'án proclaims that God gives life to the dead in this manner and shows the people His signs that they may comprehend:

“Thus Alláh bringeth the dead to life and showeth you His signs: perchance ye may understand.” (Qur'án, 2:73)

In another place the Holy Qur'án says that it is He (God) who gives life and death:

“It is He that giveth both life and death.”
(Qur'án, 7:158)

The Qur'án uses the present tense whenever it mentions the giving of life or death. It says that the teachings of Islám are life-giving:

“O ye who believe! give your response to Alláh and His Apostle when He calleth you to that which will give you life.”
(Qur'án, 8:24)

And it (Qur'án) informs Muḥammad that He could not make those who had turned their backs on Him understand, as they were deaf and dead. Here the term 'dead' has been used to symbolize the ones who rejected Muḥammad.

Are not the peoples of the world in a state of spiritual death in this time? Is not a Manifestation of God needed to revive them?

“Truly thou canst not cause the dead to listen, nor canst thou cause the deaf to hear the Call, when they turn back in retreat.” (Qur'án, 27:80)

2. To judge

Another reason that God sends a Manifestation is to judge between the peoples and resolve their disputes and make justice between them. The Messenger of God appears as an Order (Amr) and a Judge:

“To every people is an Apostle; when their Apostle comes, the matters will be judged between them with justice, and they will not be wronged.” (Qur'án, 10:47)

References have been made regarding the same judgement, in a number of verses of the Qur'án, as the 'final decree' and the 'ultimate explanation'. An ordinary man with limited knowledge, fallible personality and devoid of the spiritual power and influence of a Manifestation of God can never decide upon and pass judgement in such matters.

3. To give glad-tidings and to warn

A Manifestation of God imparts glad tidings of worldly victories and eternal salvation to those who believe and act in accordance with the Laws of God. He also warns the wicked and wrong-doers of their ill-fate:

“We send the Apostles only to give good news and to warn; so those who believe and mend (their lives) upon them

shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (Qur’án, 6:48)

Bahá’u’lláh has accomplished both of the above missions. He gave the righteous and the God-fearing people the assurance of reward and the glad tidings of success in both this world and the world to come. At the same time, He warned the unjust and tyrant kings and rulers of the earth of their imminent doom if they failed to correct themselves. He advised all to take heed and follow the Path of God.

4. To unite man with God

A Manifestation of God unites all the people who had so far forgotten God with their Creator and establishes a close connection between the Creator and His creation. At first He declares His own servitude towards God and then invites all to the servitude of the divine threshold. No one but a Manifestation of God can accomplish this task. No social worker or philanthropist can ever claim this station nor do they really do this:

“O our people, hearken to the One Who invites (you) to Alláh, and believe in Him; He will forgive you your faults, and deliver you from a penalty grievous.” (Qur’án, 46:31)

“And as One Who invites, to Alláh’s (grace) by His leave, and as a Lamp spreading light.” (Qur’án, 33:46)

Only a Manifestation of God can call the people to the True Religion. If someone calls the people towards something else - it is not accepted. Only the call of the Manifestation of God prevails:

“For Him alone is the call for truth; any others that they call upon besides Him hear them no more than if they were to stretch forth their hands for water to reach their mouths but it reaches them not.” (Qur’án, 13:14)

5. To abrogate the old laws

A Manifestation of God is authorised by God to promulgate

such Laws which are necessary for the human society in His Age and also to abrogate such Laws of the past which are no more needed. No one devoid of the authority from God can accomplish this. Nay he can never even dare to produce a single verse:

“None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten but We substitute something better or similar.”
(Qur’án, 2:106)

“And it was never the part of an Apostle to bring a verse except as Alláh permitted. For each period is a Book (revealed):”
(Qur’án, 13:38)

6. To give reward and punishment

A Manifestation of God and His Book is the standard for Justice. The righteous recognise the new Advent and are thus rewarded for their good deeds by God. The rebellious and oblivious fail to accept the new Messenger of God. Due to this negligence they are punished. Without a Manifestation of God truth can not be distinguished from error, nor will there remain any difference between good and bad. However God, in His infinite Justice, never treats a believer equal to a non-believer. Therefore He establishes this standard at every appointed hour:

“Shall We treat those who believe and work deeds of righteousness the same as those who do mischief on earth? Shall We treat those who guard against evil the same as those who turn from the right?”
(Qur’án, 38:28)

7. To establish justice

A Manifestation of God appears to establish moderation, fair-play, and justice in the society. He eliminates atrocities and injustices by calling the people towards the Words of God:

“We sent aforetime Our Apostles with clear signs and sent down with Them the Book and the Balance that men may stand forth in Justice.”
(Qur’án, 57:25)

Thus a Messenger of God sanctifies the society from the defilements of lawlessness, tyranny and disbelief. No philosopher, thinker, reformer, statesman or politician can ever accomplish this sublime purpose.

8. To promote love and affection

A Messenger of God is commissioned by God to promote love and harmony between the people by eliminating all traces of animosity, jealousy, hatred, discord and estrangements. He receives this power from God. All the Messengers of God have accomplished this great task. It is impossible to unite the hearts of the people without the confirmations of the Holy Spirit. No government, howsoever powerful, no knowledge, howsoever profound, and no wealth, howsoever generous, can ever hope to unite the hearts of the people. The Qur’án informs Prophet Muḥammad that if He had spent all the wealth of the heaven and the earth, still He would have failed to unite the people of Arabia and to create love in the different hostile Arabian clans. However God had accomplished this:

“And he hath put affection between their hearts; not if thou hadst spent all that is in the earth, couldst thou have produced that affection but Alláh hath done it ...”

(Qur’án, 8, 63)

Today Bahá’u’lláh has united, through the Words of God, the hearts of the countless number of people from all religious backgrounds, from all the five continents of the globe—representing thousands of diverse ethnic origin. Who else could have accomplished this magnificent task but a Manifestation of God!

9. To establish injunctions

Only a Manifestation of God is authorised to promulgate such injunctions which are binding for all. He in His divine wisdom and according to the need of the age, sets, with the authority

and power of God, the standard for ‘do’ and ‘do not’ (i.e. Ḥalál and Ḥarám)

“(I have come to you) to attest the Law of Torah which was before me and to make lawful to you part of what was (before) forbidden to you.” (Qur’án, 3:50)

“for He (Muḥammad) commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; He allows them as lawful what is good and prohibits them from what is bad.” (Qur’án, 7:157)

“They ask thee what is lawful to them, say; Lawful unto you are things good and pure.” (Qur’án, 5:5)

10. To guide

A Manifestation of God offers, on behalf of God, a code of life and a world order:

“It is He Who hath sent His Apostle with guidance and religion of truth.” (Qur’án, 9:33)

The laws and ordinances, promulgated by the nations and governments, are constituted under the influence of their own selfish designs and corrupt inclinations. Hence they are always incomplete and short-sighted. Only a Messenger of God can give a complete and comprehensive code of life and world-embracing Laws:

“But if they hearken not to Thee, know that they only follow their own lusts, and who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Alláh?” (Qur’án, 28:50)

God has bestowed for this age His guidance and laws, through Bahá’u’lláh, which can alone ensure the progress, prosperity, security and happiness of the peoples both in this world and the world to come.

11. To combat ‘Shirk’

When man forgets his Creator and indulges in ‘Shirk’ i.e. seeking partners with God—a Messenger of God appears to show him the path of the oneness of God:

“No partner hath He; thus am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His Will.” (Qur’án, 6:163)

As the people of this age had made material things—riches and wealth, honour and power, status and position, armies and forces, learning and knowledge as well as all sorts of selfish desires—their cherished goal and adoration, God has made Bahá’u’lláh manifest to teach real values and the pure oneness of God. To release the people from the limited sphere of material attachments, worldly thoughts, beliefs and deeds and to make them able to soar in the sky of unity of God is truly a miracle.

12. To renew love

God has assigned a specific time limit for the beginning, rise and fall of each nation. When a nation reaches its destined end, it loses its freedom of thought, fervour of actions and the spirit of unity. The tenderness of their hearts gives way to butchery. They lose their love and unity and become selfish. At such a time a Messenger of God appears to revive and recreate love, unity and cooperation in human society:

“And that they should not become like those to whom was given Revelation aforetime, but long ages passed over them and their hearts grew hard.” (Qur’án, 57:16)

The Muslims are no exception in this regard. They also had a fixed period—‘an appointed hour’ in the words of Qur’án. When that appointed hour came and their fixed period was over their hearts became hardened like stones. The Holy Qur’án itself confirms that in the time of the new Manifestation of God even those who are apparently friends will actually be foes of each other:

“Friends on that day will be foes, one to another except the righteous.” (Qur’án, 43:67)

Therefore, the purpose of the advent of Bahá’u’lláh was to create love and amity in the hearts.

13. To sanctify and educate the people

Another duty of a Manifestation of God is that He purges the hearts of the people from all defilements of carnal desires and cleans their minds of all lowly thoughts, and instils in them pious desires, high ambitions and lofty feelings as well as beneficial thoughts. This is called ‘Tazkiyyih’ i.e. sanctification:

“Alláh did confer a great favour on the believers when He sent among them an Apostle from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the signs of Alláh, sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and wisdom, while before that they had been in manifest error.” (Qur’án, 3:164)

Like a kind mother, the Manifestation of God trains, through the Power of God and His teachings, each individual, and trains him for the establishment of a heavenly society. He decorates the people with the knowledge of God. He blots out from their minds all traces of doubts, rebellious and mundane thoughts. He teaches them the art of using the experiences gained through sanctification and purification and education for the betterment of the society.

The process of ‘sanctification and purification’ pertains to the inner world of man and education and training refines his mind and the faculty of contemplation and enables him to establish a relation, based on prudence and sanctity, between himself and the society. Bahá’u’lláh has sanctified the souls and trained the minds of millions of the people, throughout the world in such a wonderful way that the world is lost in astonishment.

14. To grant freedom

God has created man free. He wants to see him free from all

material bondage and fetters but a servant of Himself. However, it often happens that this free-creature, man, does not use the faculties of his own free mind and thought and becomes a prey to the ideas of others.

Manifestations of God have been appearing to release the people from the fetters of religious and political leaders:

“He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them.” (Qur’án, 7:157)

Bahá’u’lláh has taught that no one should follow any other person in blind faith. Every individual should independently investigate the truth for himself and is free to choose a religion which appeals to him. In the Bahá’í society and administration there is mutual respect and love, but the affairs are settled through free, frank and loving consultation aimed at investigation of truth.

15. To remove differences

One of the duties of a Manifestation of God is to unite the people by removing the differences between them. In fact God’s teachings are simple, easy and practicable in their original form. People accept them and uphold them in the face of all oppositions and trials. However with the passage of time, the learned, in order to gain name, fame and power, begin to explain the simple teachings of the Messenger of God in such complicated terms that they divide the one single nation into numerous sects and sub-sects. This starts an endless war amongst the followers of different sects of the same religion:

“Nor did the people of Book dissent therefrom except through envy of each other, after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the signs of Alláh, Alláh is swift in calling to account.” (Qur’án, 3:19)

“And they became divided only after knowledge reached them, through selfish envy as between themselves.” (Qur’án, 42:14)

“It was only after knowledge had been granted to them that they fell into schisms, through insolent envy among themselves.” (Qur’án, 45:17)

One of the divine chastisements, according to the Holy Qur’án, is that the people become divided into sects and different sects remain scared of each other. Is not the Muslim world under this chastisement? Are not the Muslims divided into hundreds of religious and political sects?

Whenever such a situation prevailed, in the past, a Messenger of God has appeared and united different peoples:

“Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear signs. For them is a dreadful penalty.” (Qur’án, 3:105)

Bahá’u’lláh has also done the same thing in a very wonderful way. He has united peoples from different religious, social, economic, political and cultural backgrounds into one Faith and one world-embracing community. Who else but a Manifestation of God could have accomplished it? Is not it a miracle? Albeit, it is; because:

“... their Lord is the accomplisher of what He pleaseth.” (Qur’án, 11:107)

Referring to this very unification of the peoples of the world, God promises:

“If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind one people.” (Qur’án, 5:51)

16. To enlighten the people

A Manifestation of God reveals a Book of God which is LIGHT. The understanding, knowledge, desires, ambitions, consultations, experiences, words, writings, speeches, thoughts, ideas, theories, nay each and every thing which pertaineth to men

alone is darkness. While the true light, guidance, salvation, bounty, prosperity, forgiveness, security, happiness, contentment and all other blessings come from God through His Messengers. The Manifestation of God delivers mankind from the darkness and leads it to light:

“He is the One Who sends to His servants manifest signs, that He may lead you from the depths of darkness into the light, and verily Alláh is to you most kind and merciful.”
(Qur’án, 57:9)

In this God-given light men explore themselves, and reveal the mystery of the universe. By the same light man witnesses the attributes of God and recognises the station of His Manifestation. This very light enables him to see the way of life and its ups and downs and appreciate the beauty of goodly deeds and apprehend the wrong. Without this light their condition would be very much similar to those who were as if watching a movie in a hall and suddenly the electricity was cut off.

Today God’s light for the people of the world is the Faith revealed by Bahá’u’lláh.

The criterion

The pages of history bear witness that not a single liar who had made a claim that he has been the recipient of a revelation from God has ever met with success in his evil designs. Had a liar been also successful in his claims then there would have remained no distinction between a blasphemer and a Messenger of God. In such a case truth and falsehood, believer and unbeliever would have acquired the same status. This will give an impression that God is impotent—unimaginable!

The Holy Qur’án has laid down certain universal criteria according to which all the Messengers of God, right from Adam to Bahá’u’lláh, may be judged and proven true. These criteria are such that neither any blasphemer can ever hope to show it nor any true Manifestation of God can escape them.

Some of these criteria are the following:

1. Revelation of a new book of God

“... and is it not enough for them that We have sent down to thee the Book which is rehearsed to them? Verily, in it is mercy and reminder to those who believe ...”
(Qur’án, 29:51)

Albeit the philosophers, scholars and reformers have been writing books. None of them have ever said that their book was the word of God.

2. Fulfilment of the prophecies of the past holy books

The latest Manifestation of God, positively, fulfills the prophecies of the past Scriptures:

“They say: ‘why does he not bring us a sign from his Lord?’ Has not a clear sign come to them of all that was in

the former Books of revelation?"

(Qur'án, 20:133)

3. Followers of a true Manifestation increase day by day

Whatever claims a true Manifestation of God makes, they are widely accepted and the number of His followers increase day by day:

“But those who dispute concerning Alláh after He has been accepted—futile is their dispute in the sight of their Lord: On them is wrath, and for them will be a penalty terrible ...”
(Qur'án, 42:16)

The people do not accept a Manifestation of God due to any fear or temptation or lust, but for the sake of the love of God only. On the contrary those who reject the new Manifestation of God are the followers of their selfish desires:

“But if they hearken not to thee, know that they only follow their own lusts: and who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Alláh?”
(Qur'án, 28:50)

The Holy Qur'án outrightly rejects the idea that a false book can be revealed in the name of Alláh:

“What! have they partners (in Godhead) who have established for them some religion without the permission of Alláh?”
(Qur'án, 42:21)

It also declares that the people cannot believe in a liar:

“For Him is call for truth: any others that they call upon besides Him hear them no more than if they were to stretch forth their hands for water to reach their mouth but it reaches them not.”
(Qur'án, 13:14)

The, validity of the Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh is proved

according to each of the above-mentioned criteria. He revealed a Book of Laws called ‘Al-Aqdas’, He has fulfilled many prophecies given in all the past Scriptures, and His Message has been widely accepted and the number of His followers is increasing day by day in all corners of the earth.

4. God will render Him triumphant in the face of all opposition

God has promised His confirmation and aid to His Messengers and Their followers:

“And every people plotted against their apostle to seize him, and disputed by means of vanities, therewith to condemn the truth, but it was I that seized them! and how (terrible) was My requital!” (Qur’án, 40:5)

God mentions in another place that it is only He and His Messenger Who are triumphant:

“Alláh has declared: ‘It is I and My apostle Who must prevail.’ For Alláh is One full of strength, able to enforce His will.” (Qur’án, 58:21)

And He reassures:

“Already has Our Word been passed before (this) to Our servants sent (by Us) that they would certainly be assisted, and that Our forces—they surely must conquer ...” (Qur’án, 37:171)

Bahá’u’lláh spent His whole life in hardships and prisons—He was chained, bastinadoed, exiled, tortured and wronged. His opponents plotted against Him, spread accusations against Him, tried to kill Him, gave Him poison in His food and did whatever they could to disgrace and defame Him in the face of public opinion. Among His oppressors were two powerful dynasties of His time:- The Persian and Ottoman empires. They left no stone unturned in order to efface Him and His influence. The learned

of His day used all their talents of speech and writing to undo the Mission proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh and the general public was let loose like enraged tigers to shed the blood of His followers. More than twenty thousand people were martyred in His Path. In spite of all this, the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh spread throughout the world! If this is not a miracle then what is a miracle? And if this is not a divine confirmation then what does the term 'confirmation' stand for?

“Then in what exposition will they believe after (rejecting) Alláh and His signs?”
(Qur'án, 45:6)

5. Non-existence of any contradiction in the revealed words

According to the Holy Qur'án, the fifth criterion of a Manifestation of God is that there exists no contradiction in the Words He reveals, in the Laws He promulgates, and in the Teachings He bestows. The presence of contradictions in the Words (Kalám) is a sign of the fact that it is man-made. People forget what they have said earlier, they learn new facts with experience which are sometimes opposite to what they considered as truths earlier and thus their statements vary and contradict each other. Man tends to change with the changing circumstances. Fear or temptations often effect his mood and thoughts. On the contrary, a Manifestation of God is immune to these weaknesses. God confirms that if the Qur'án was not from Him then there would exist contradictions in it:

“Had it (Qur'án) been from other than Alláh, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy.”
(Qur'án, 4:82)

Bahá'u'lláh has revealed more than 100 volumes of Holy Writings in Arabic and Persian. This He has accomplished over a period of forty years. However, one can find no contradiction, defect of 'discrepancy' in His Words, Thoughts and Laws. This is yet another evidence of the validity of His Mission.

6. A true Manifestation of God remains steadfast in His claims

This is the sixth criterion set forth in the Holy Qur’án that a true Messenger of God remains steadfast in His claims. It is rather a challenge to the followers of vain imaginings that if they are true in their claims of Faith then they should long for death and thus prove the validity of their words:

“Say: ‘if the last home, with Alláh, be for you specially, and not for anyone else, then seek ye for death, if ye are sincere.’” (Qur’án, 2:94)

As already mentioned above, the followers of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh have always laid down their lives in the path of their Faith. They have testified with their blood that Bahá’u’lláh is a Manifestation of God.

Bahá’u’lláh Himself testifies to this, in one of His Tablets, that to lay down one’s life in the path of the love for the Merciful is a true witness. Whereas no wise man will sacrifice his life without a proof or reason. If it is said that these people (who have sacrificed their lives in the Path of Bahá’u’lláh) were mad then it is far from reality. It was not a matter of one or two persons. Rather people in great numbers and from all the strata of society, intoxicated with the Kawthar of the knowledge of God, rushed to the altar of martyrdom. If such souls, who had detached themselves from all else but God and had sacrificed their worldly lives and earthly possessions in the path of the Truth, are refuted then how can one prove and establish the truth of any other Messenger of God?

Moreover, the validity of the claim and the station of the Manifestations of God can also be proved by the following logics:

i. He possesses innate knowledge

A true Manifestation of God neither receives any formal education nor is trained in any current arts, crafts or sciences. As

the mirror of His heart is sanctified of all the defilements of acquired knowledge, it reflects the divine Knowledge of God. Thus no trace of any personal desire can be found in His Utterances. His knowledge is a gift from God and His wisdom is infinite.

ii. He appears in a time of need

A Manifestation of God always appears in a time when He is the most needed. He promulgates such laws and principles which are essential for the peoples and nations of the world. He never claims any particular thought, idea or theory to be His own, but rather attributes them to God. He declares that all of His qualities are a bounty and gift of God.

iii. His utterance penetrates the hearts of men

The Words of a Manifestation of God are so powerful and penetrating that they attract the hearts of men and are capable of changing them. He exerts such an influence on the people that they foresake all their past habits and arise with His new programme with such an eagerness, zeal and strength that they, if they are required to do so, sacrifice all their earthly possessions and worldly desires in His love. It is not possible for any follower of a philosopher or thinker to make such sacrifices.

iv. He proclaims a new Faith

A Manifestation of God never introduces a new sect into any other existing religion. He rather proclaims a new Faith, albeit that He also confirms the past Manifestations and Their Books. He is always sanctified from all the worldly things and means. He never propagates His Mission through wealth or fortune, nor does He become victorious by using governmental powers. He is neither aided in His claims by His near and dear ones, His relatives and friends, nor is He dependent on any worldly knowledge. Thus a Manifestation of God is deprived of all the material means for success i.e. wealth, governmental power, and worldly knowledge.

If the success of a Manifestation of God was made conditioned with these material resources then any one possessing these resources could have claimed the station of a Manifestation. But God has made a very distinct standard. God shows He is doing so at the present through Bahá'u'lláh.

v. He imparts new knowledge and enlightenment

A Manifestation of God unseals the secrets and mysteries of past Scriptures. He gives new knowledge of God. He opens the doors of new capacities and learning. He blots off the darkness of doubts and misunderstandings from among the people and helps them increase their faith and certitude. All branches of human knowledge, thinking and intellect are revolutionised by His coming and the hidden potentialities of men are made manifest by His appearance. In fact a new life is released by Him.

vi. He is bold and firm in His claims

A Manifestation of God is bold, generous and kind-hearted. He remains steadfast in His claims throughout His life. Neither can He be threatened or be tempted to surrender. He does not care for any worldly possessions nor does He long for any pomp and show.

vii. He changes the life of people

A Manifestation of God can change the hearts. He turns the wicked into pious people and makes the wrong-doer, one who is good and charitable. He changes and trains people and constructs a better society. He presents solutions for all the problems of life. He installs in the people the fear of God and teaches them how to protect the rights and honours of mankind. He shows them the way to worldly glory as well as the path of eternal salvation.

Thus all the criteria through which the claim of a Manifestation of God is tested have been fulfilled by Bahá'u'lláh.

**PROPHECIES FROM THE HOLY QUR'ÁN
(REGARDING THE ADVENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH)**

Bahá'u'lláh

The advent of Bahá'u'lláh has been very frequently prophesied by the Holy Qur'án. In the previous chapters, we have discussed different Quranic terminologies and explained them in the light of the new divine knowledge brought by Bahá'u'lláh for this glorious age. In this chapter and in those which will follow, we will review such verses of the Holy Qur'án which guide us to recognise this Mightiest of the advents the earth has ever witnessed.

1. A prayer

“Show us the straight way [Şirátu'l-Mustaqím]”

(Qur'án, 1:6)

Now the question arises ‘What is the straight way?’ The Qur'án answers:

“Say: ‘Verily, my Lord hath guided me to a Way that is straight—a religion of right—the Path (trod) by Abraham ...’”

(Qur'án, 6:161)

In the above-mentioned verse ‘the straight way’ is referred to as ‘a religion of God’. Is it not clear that the Muslims are also subject to the same situation of rise and fall which met other nations in the past? All the nations, including the Muslims, were given a fixed period. After that fixed period or appointed hour, another Manifestation of God was to come to guide them. Therefore, this prayer was revealed by God for the Muslims that they might say it until the appointed hour and would not go astray by rejecting the ‘straight way’ laid before them by the next advent. No wonder that this prayer lies in the very beginning of the Holy Qur'án.

Let's review another verse:

“And (Jesus) shall be a sign (for the coming of) the Hour (of judgement): therefore have no doubt about the Hour but

follow ye Me: this is Straight Way.” (Qur’án, 43:61)

In this verse the Christ has been referred to as a ‘sign’ and ‘standard’ for the ‘appointed Hour’, i.e. the time of the Advent of Bahá’u’lláh. And this has been called as the ‘straight way’. In the following verse, God Himself explains the nature of the ‘straight way’:

“The way of those on whom Thou halt bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath (Maghdúb) and who go not astray, (Dállín):” (Qur’án, 1:7)

It is clear that the Muslims are made to pray for guidance towards the ‘way’ of the people on whom God will reveal a new Book. By the term ‘grace’ or ‘favour’, a revelation of God is meant:

“He (Jesus) was no more than a servant; We granted Our favour to Him, and We made Him an example to the Children of Israel.” (Qur’án, 43:59)

The Jews, who had rejected Christ, were called ‘the cursed ones (Maghdúb)’. And the Christians, who rejected Prophet Muḥammad, were termed as ‘those astray (Dállín)’. The Muslims have been warned in this prayer that they should not follow in the footsteps of these people. And they should not remain deprived of the favours from God, i.e. they should not reject Bahá’u’lláh.

2. To believe in the new Book

“... and who believe in the revelation sent to thee, and sent before thy time, and (in their heart) have the assurance of the hereafter (Ákhir).” (Qur’án, 2:4)

In these holy verses the qualities of the pure in heart (Muttaqín) are enumerated. It is stated that the pure in heart are those who believe in the past revelations and in the Qur’án as well as in the fact that after the Qur’án a new revelation of God will also come. Thus, according to this verse, a true Muslim is

bound to believe in all the past revelations, in the revelation brought by Prophet Muḥammad and in the future revelations. Hence it is incumbent upon a Muslim, in the light of this verse, to believe in the advent of Bahá'u'lláh if he is pure in heart.

3. New life for Muslims

“How can ye reject the Faith in Alláh? Seeing that ye were without life, and He gave you life. Then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life, and again to Him will ye return.” (Qur’án, 2:28)

In this verse, God addresses the people present at the time of the revelation of the Qur’án and tells them that they can in no way reject God, i.e. His Manifestation, because He had bestowed upon them, through His Prophet and the Holy Qur’án, a new life after they had become spiritually dead. God also foretells that the Muslims will also die by becoming incredulous in Faith, slack in deeds and divided in their collective life. However He assures that this death will not be a final one. God will, through Bahá'u'lláh, give new life to the Muslims and other people. Then they will worship God and follow His guidance and become a new nation.

Two deaths and two lives have been mentioned in the above-mentioned verse. None of them is a physical one. They are spiritual ‘life’ and ‘death’. The Muslims have met their spiritual death and are now being given a new spiritual life through the advent of Bahá'u'lláh. As mentioned elsewhere in this book whenever life or death is mentioned in a Holy Book it refers to the same spiritual life and death. Thus it has been mentioned:

“And it is He who gave you life, will cause you to die, and will again give you life. Truly man is a most ungrateful creature.” (Qur’án, 22:66)

4. New commandments

“None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten but We substitute better or similar one, knowest

thou not that Alláh hath power over all things?”

(Qur’án, 2:106)

Here God has explained His eternal law of abrogation (Tansikh) and revelation (Tanzíl). When He abrogates His Laws and Ordinances, or when the original meaning and purpose of these Laws is forgotten by the age, God does not leave the people in confusion. He reveals new Laws which may or may not resemble those of the past revelation. Today the situation is this that the believers have forgotten the old order, so that it has become impossible to act according to the laws and ordinances of the past. New laws and principles are therefore required to guide this age. God is able to do anything He likes and reveal whatever He wishes. No one can frustrate His designs. Hence He has given, through Bahá’u’lláh new laws and ordinances for this age. And has proclaimed, through Bahá’u’lláh, new principles for this era. There is no one to question His sovereignty nor any one can give Him any instructions.

5. The middle nation

“Thus have We made you a middle Ummah that ye may be witness over the nations and the Apostle a witness over yourselves.”

(Qur’án, 2:143)

In the verse, preceding the above-quoted verse the famous incident of ‘Taḥvíl-i-Qiblih’, i.e. the change of the point of adoration has been mentioned. The previous ummah considered the Jerusalem as the ‘Qiblih’. The Muslims were given another ‘Qiblih’, i.e. the Ka’bih in Mecca. The Ummah following the Muslims, i.e. the Bahá’ís, have been given a new ‘Qiblih’. The Muslims have been called in this verse, “the middle Ummah”, not the last Ummah. That is to say that there were nations before the Muslims and there will be nations after them. It is also mentioned in this verse that just as the Muslims were made witness over the acts of the past nations, the Apostle, ‘Al-Rasúl’ will be a witness over them. The term ‘the Apostle’ or ‘Al-Rasúl’ is used for Bahá’u’lláh. In Arabic when a common noun is prefixed with ‘Al’ it becomes a proper noun. Thus by ‘Al-Rasúl’ is meant that

Messenger of God whose advent has been promised to the Muslims and whose coming they are eagerly awaiting.

6. Freedom of the Jews

“Behold Alláh said, ‘O Jesus I will take thee and raise thee to myself and clear thee (of the falsehood) of those who blaspheme. I will make those who follow thee above those who reject Faith, to the Day of Resurrection. Then shall ye all return unto Me. And I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute.’” (Qur’án, 3:55)

This verse tells that God had subjugated the Jews, due to their rejection of Jesus, to the Christians. It foretells that this condition will remain as it is until the Day of Resurrection. On the Day of Resurrection, God will decide between those nations and they will be made agreed and united. At the time of the second coming of Christ, they will become one by accepting Him. The term ‘resurrection’ has been discussed elsewhere in this book. Accordingly, when resurrection took place and Bahá’u’lláh appeared with renewed teachings He decided between the Jews and the Christians. The Jews became independent and free of Christian domination and established themselves as a free nation. On the other hand, thousands of Jews and Christians have become united under the banner of Bahá’u’lláh.

7. The Covenant of the Prophets

“Behold Alláh took the covenant of the prophets, saying: ‘I give you a Book and wisdom; then comes to you an apostle confirming what is with you; do ye believe in him and render him help.’” (Qur’án, 3:81)

The period from Adam to Prophet Muḥammad is called ‘Dur-i-Nabuvvat’, i.e. the Prophetic Cycle. God has taken a promise from each of the Prophets of that cycle that when at the end of the Prophetic Cycle the Greatest of the Manifestations of God appears, their nations should believe in Him. By His advent

a new Age will begin and He will confirm the Books of the past. Thus an oath has been taken from all the Prophets to accept Bahá'u'lláh and their followers have been commissioned to believe in Him and teach His Cause and assist Him.

8. Unification of nations

“Alláh there is no God but He; of a surety He will gather you together in the day of judgement, about which there is no doubt and whose word can be truer than Alláh's?”

(Qur'án, 4:87)

The Arabic term ‘Qiyámah’ has been translated here as ‘the day of judgement’. We have explained it earlier that ‘Qiyámah’ is established through the advent of a new Messenger of God. In the past it was not possible to gather all the nations and peoples together due to the obstacles of seas, mountains and deserts. However God has taken an oath, in this verse, by His own Oneness that He will, on the day of judgement, gather all the peoples of the world into one Faith and one Mission. He says this with added emphasis that He will surely gather them together and the oneness of God will be witnessed in the unified nations. This promise of God has come true by the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh. Today people from all religious, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, racial and social backgrounds in all parts of the world are becoming united under the banner of the Bahá'í Faith. Such unity of the diverse elements of the world society was never witnessed in the past nor was it possible. In fact no one can be truer and more faithful than God in His promise.

9. Muslims are called to believe

“O ye who believe! Believe in Alláh and His apostle, and the scripture which He sent to those before (him) and who denieth Alláh, His angels, His books, His apostles, and the Day of judgement, hath gone astray.”

(Qur'án, 4:136)

In this verse the Muslims are addressed. In the Qur'án, the

other inhabitants of Arabia who did not believe in Prophet Muḥammad are called ‘Kuffār’, i.e. infidels. God says in this verse that the people who have believed in Muḥammad and the Holy Qur’án, are also advised to believe in the Books of the past and not to deny the future revelations from God. This is because all the Holy Books are but chapters of the One Mother Book which is with God. God warns the Muslims that if they deny God, His angel-like believers, His Books and His Messengers in the day which is yet to come, i.e. the day of the Advent of Bahá’u’lláh, then they will be of those who have gone astray. Thus the Muslims have been called to believe in the Day of judgement, i.e. the advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

10. Warning of removal

“Thy Lord is self-sufficient, full of mercy, if it were His will, He could destroy you, and in your place appoint whom He Will as your successors, as He raised you up from the posterity of other peoples. All that hath been promised unto you will come to pass; nor can ye frustrate it.”

(Qur’án, 6:133–134)

In this verse God warns the Muslims that they should not think that they are the last nation and that no other nation can succeed them. He confirms that His material as well as spiritual bounties and mercies have always descended upon people and will continue to descend in the future.

God has further clarified that the promise of the raising of a new nation is not a mere warning. He says it with emphasis that a new nation will be raised of a certainty and it will surely take the place of the Muslim nation just as the Muslims have been raised from the posterity of the past nations. He also proclaims that no one can frustrate His Will or Mission. This irrevocable promise of God has been fulfilled by the advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

Let us review the following verse:

“Did not ye see that God hath created heaven and the earth as they ought to be? If He wishes, He will take you away and bring (in your place) a new creation.”

(Qur’án, 14:19)

The law of the succession of the nations is explained here. That God has created the earth and the heaven with a definite purpose—for the establishment of His Kingdom. The Muslims have been told that God will, When He wishes, bring in their place a new creation. And thus nations will be raised after each nation till the Kingdom of God is established on this earth. Further explanation can be drawn from the following verse:

“If He so pleased, He could blot you out and bring in a new creation: nor is that (at all) difficult for Alláh.”

(Qur’án, 35:16–17)

11. Believe in the next Manifestation

“To every people is a term appointed; when their term is reached, not an hour can they cause delay, nor (an hour) can they advance. O ye children of Adam, whenever there come to you apostles from amongst you, rehearsing My signs unto you—those who are righteous and mend (their lives) on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve.”

(Qur’án, 7:34–35)

Before we study the above-quoted verses, let us look at a few preceding verses in the same chapter:

“O Adam! dwell thou and thy wife in the garden, and enjoy it as ye wish; but approach not this tree ...”

(Qur’án 7:19)

Adam and His wife lived in the garden. However when they approached the “forbidden tree’s” fruits, they were cast down and God said to Them:

“(Alláh) said; Get ye down, with enmity between

yourselves.”

(Qur’án, 7:24)

After this the Children of Adam have been addressed at several times and several instructions have been given to them. For instance on one occasion the Children of Adam were reminded that God had bestowed clothes upon them:

“O ye Children of Adam: We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame.”
(Qur’án, 7:26)

On another occasion, God advised the Children of Adam that they should guard themselves lest the Satan lead them astray;

“O Children of Adam! let not Satan seduce you, in the same manner as he got your parents out of the garden.”
(Qur’án, 7:27)

On yet another occasion the Children of Adam were advised to enter the mosques in good clothes;

“O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every mosque.”
(Qur’án, 7:31)

In all the above-quoted verse, the term ‘Children of Adam’ is used for the Muslims. Mosque is the house of worship for the Muslims and they have been ordered to enter it in their beautiful dresses. Likewise before the advent of Islám, the people of Arabia used to circle around the Ka’bih in Mecca in a nude condition. Hence the Muslims have been asked to engage in worship in beautiful clothes.

Similarly the term ‘Children of Adam’ is used in the above-quoted verse (7:34–35), for the Muslims. There is another promise made with Adam Himself. This should not be mixed up and confused with the above-mentioned verses. The promise with Adam is:

“He said, get ye down, both of you all together, from the garden, with enmity one to another, but if, as is sure, there

comes to you guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance will not lose his way, nor fall into misery.”

(Qur’án, 20:123)

However, verse 34 of chapter 7 of the Holy Qur’án declares a universal law that every nation has a beginning and an end. Its period is preordained by God Himself. The Muslims are no exception in this regard. In another place it is mentioned that for every nation there is an Apostle:

“To every people is an Apostle, when their apostle comes, the matter will be judged between them with justice, and they will not be wronged.” (Qur’án, 10:47)

Likewise for every nation a period is preordained:

“To every people is a term appointed, when their term is reached, not an hour can they cause delay, nor (an hour) can they advance.” (Qur’án, 10:49)

Thus it is proved that God appoints for each nation a Manifestation and a fixed period. When the appointed hour is come and a Manifestation of God appears, He reveals a new Book of God:

“And it was never the part of an Apostle to bring a sign except as Alláh permitted. For each period is a Book (revealed).” (Qur’án, 13:38)

It is not surprising that in spite of the following declaration of the Holy Qur’án, the Muslims believe that they are the last nation!

“O ye Children of Adam! whenever there comes to you Apostle from amongst you, rehearsing My signs unto you, those who are righteous and mend (their lives) on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (Qur’án, 7:35)

In this verse the Muslims are advised to accept the next

Messenger of God when He makes His appearance and reveals new laws of God. According to Arabic literature, added emphasis has been given to the coming of the New Messenger. It means that the advent is a sure and certain promise.

12. The revelation of words of God according to human need

“And there is not a thing but its treasures are with Us, but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures.” (Qur’án, 15:21)

In this verse it is mentioned that the source and inexhaustible treasure of all things—all progress, inventions, discoveries, revelation, the Word of God, the commandments of Alláh, His laws and ordinances—is with God Himself. He gradually reveals these things in accordance with the needs of the age and the capacity and understanding of the people, and will continue to do so in the future.

Accordingly, our kind Lord has revealed, through Bahá’u’lláh, new words and laws for this age. The Mother Book of all the divine books is still with God and it will give birth to thousands of books in the future. What a blunder have they made who claim that God has exhausted the stock of His Words, Revelation, Guidance and Laws! God forbid!

13. The vicinity of the al-Aqşá Mosque

“Glory to (Alláh) who did take His servant for a journey by night from the sacred mosque (Masjid-i-Ḥarám) to the far off mosque (Masjid-i-Aqşá), whose precincts we did bless”. (Qur’án, 17:1)

Bahá’u’lláh, the Promised One of all religions, was exiled to ‘Akká in 1868. He lived there till His Ascension in 1892. His Shrine is in ‘Akká.

This region has been called in the Bible as ‘Rabavátu’l-

Quds' i.e. 'The Holy Mountains' and 'The Promised Land'. The region of Mount Carmel and 'Akká lie in the vicinity of the Al-Aqṣá mosque. This vicinity has been blessed by God. God had taken Prophet Muḥammad to the Al-Aqṣá and had shown Him the precincts of that mosque i.e. the regions of 'Akká and Haifa. Thus in this verse of the Holy Qur'án, God says that how He had shown to Prophet Muḥammad the places where Bahá'u'lláh lived the last twenty-five years of His earthly life. The Shrine of the Báb is also situated in this very region: on Mount Carmel. The resting place of the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the seat of the Universal House of Justice and other international Bahá'í Institutions are also situated in this very Holy Spot. The Spiritual as well as the Administrative world centres of the promised nation is established on Mount Carmel. Prophet Muḥammad was shown all these signs.

14. The advent of Universal Manifestation of God

“One day We shall call together all human beings with their Messenger. Those who are given their Book in their right hand will read it (with pleasure) and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least.” (Qur'án, 17:71)

By 'Messenger' a Manifestation of God is meant. Another word used for 'Messenger' is 'Imám' (leader):

“And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord, with certain commands, which He fulfilled; He said; 'I will make thee as Imám to the nations.’ (Qur'án, 2:124)

In the above-quoted verse 17:71 the word Imám' or 'Messenger' has been used as a common noun. This shows His greatness, universality and uniqueness.

Today is that 'promised day' mentioned by God. Today God has called all nations and peoples of the world towards one Universal Manifestation—Bahá'u'lláh. Peoples from all corners of the world have recognised Bahá'u'lláh as the Supreme

Manifestation of God, the Promised One of All Ages. The pure-hearted people, were free from any blind imitations and prejudices, received the Words of God, revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, in their right hands and read it, as well as starting to practice it. With such fortunate people no injustice was done.

In the past ages, the knowledge of science and technology and means of communication was very much restricted. Hence none of the Manifestations of God in the past could have achieved the universality which the Message of Bahá'u'lláh has achieved in 150 years. However, God declares:

“But those who were blind in this world, will be blind in the hereafter, and most astray from the Path.”

(Qur'án, 17:22)

It is mentioned in this verse that the people who will be pious, do goodly deeds and possess seeing eyes during the Islamic period will readily recognise the Promised One of all ages at the time of His advent. However, those who will remain blind during the period of Islám will be the same even during the Bahá'í Era. Neither will they be able to see the truth nor can they perceive its signs from the living things or in the universe. They will remain far from the path of the truth. Most of the translators of the Holy Qur'án have done a great mistake. They have translated the singular term 'Imám' into a plural one i.e. 'Imáms'. The plural of 'Imám', in Arabic, is 'A'imma'. The learned translators did not even care to think that God could have used the plural term if He had desired so. This is how the people change the Holy Text to suit their own wishes and beliefs.

15. The Qur'án will be taken away

“If it were Our Will, We could take away that which We have sent thee by inspiration, then wouldst thou find none to plead the affairs in that matter as against Us.”

(Qur'án, 17:86)

A Law or Ordinance is called 'the spirit of divine laws'. Thus it has been explained:

“They ask thee concerning the Spirit. Say; ‘The Spirit is by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you.’”
(Qur’án, 17:85)

In this verse it is mentioned that people asked from Prophet Muḥammad questions regarding the soul. He replied that the soul is the Order of My God “Amr-i-Rabbí”. He further explained to them that as they knew not much about the ‘Order of God’ it was of no worth that they asked questions regarding it.

There is a mistake in the translation of the above-quoted verse 17:86 of the Holy Qur’án. It starts with ‘If it were our will ...’ The correct translation will be—‘When it were Our Will ...’ The style used in this place shows that there is no doubt or condition. Rather an added stress is given. It means that “when the Promised Day is come and a new universal Age is begun, then, O Muḥammad, We will lift up that which We have sent to you (i.e. the Holy Qur’án). There is no doubt in it”. In fact when God addresses a Prophet, He addresses Him as the representative of His followers. Hence the last part of the verse under review means—O Muslims! at that time you will not be in a position to do anything against Us. It is further promised that Laws and Ordinances have been sent by God through ‘inspiration’ (Vaḥy) and they will continue to come. Inspiration is actually a blessing from God.

16. The assemblage of the Jews

“And We said thereafter to the children of Israel, dwell securely in the land when the second of the promises come to pass We shall gather you together in a mingled crowd.”
(Qur’án, 17:104)

The Children of Israel were twice ousted from the Holy Land. Once they were ousted when they had rejected Christ and His Message.

They were scattered throughout the countries in the east and

in the west. They were forced to live a life full of disgrace and humility. This episode has been recorded by the Holy Qur’án in the following verses:

“And We gave warning to the children of Israel in the Book, that twice would they do mischief on the earth and be elated, with mighty arrogance. When the first of the warnings came to pass, We sent against you Our servants given to terrible warfare. They entered the very inmost parts of your homes, and it was a warning fulfilled. Then did We grant you (the children of Israel) return as against them. We gave you increase in resources and sons, and made you the more numerous in man-power. If ye did evil, (ye did it) against yourselves. So when the second of the warnings came to pass (We permitted your enemies) to disfigure your faces, and to enter your temple as they had entered it before, and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power.”

(Qur’án, 17:4–7)

In these verses the Jews have been given a glad tidings that when the second promise will come to pass (i.e. the promise of the advent of a Messenger of God) they will be gathered in the Land of Israel in huge numbers:

“And We said thereafter to the children of Israel ‘dwell securely in the land but when the second of the warnings came to pass, We shall gather you together in a mingled crowd.’”

(Qur’án, 17:104)

It is a historic fact that before 1844 no Jew could enter the Holy Land. In the year 1844 the Turkish Government signed an edict of toleration. According to that edict the Jews were permitted to enter the Holy Land. Thus God changed the condition of the Jews and started showing them mercy and finally gathered them in the Holy Land in 1948. God’s promise of bringing the Jews to the ‘promised land’ was thus fulfilled.

With the advent of Bahá’u’lláh—the Lord of the Hosts and the Deliverer of the nations, the yoke of humility was taken off

the neck of the Jews—the children of Israel. Thus the prophecies of the Qur’án and the Bible were fulfilled.

17. The sallying forth of ‘Ya’júj wa Ma’júj’ (Gog and Magog)

“On that day We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another, then the trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together.” (Qur’án 18:99)

The rebellious tribes of Russia and northern China, the Tatars and the Mongols were called the ‘Huns’ or the ‘Gogs’ and the ‘Magogs’. They used to infiltrate the regions of Adhírbáyján and Armenia and engage in plundering. The borders of Persia and Turkey had become unsafe due to their attacks. King Dara I, in order to stop their attacks, constructed a fifty miles long wall at Darband in the province of Dághístán on the western banks of Caspian Sea. This wall was 10 feet wide and 29 feet high. Thus he had stopped the northern tribes of the mountains from attacking Írán.

God has made the release of these tribes as one of the signs of the advent of the promised Day—the Day when the trumpet will be sounded. In the Holy Qur’án the term ‘trumpet’ has been used to mention the advent of a Manifestation of God. Thus it is mentioned here that when Bahá’u’lláh will appear, these tribes will unite and attack Asia and Europe. This was a true promise of God which came to pass in the following way:

- Alexander I, the ruler of Russia, fought against France in 1806;
- The Russians waged a war against Sweden in 1809;
- The Russians attacked Turkey in 1812;
- When Nicholas, the brother of Alexander I, came to power, he again made war against Turkey and this war lasted for three years from 1837;
- Napoleon, the military ruler of France, attacked Russia in 1812 and in 1848 the Russians entered into a war against Hungary.

The above list can be expanded by adding to it the details of Russian expansions in the Caucasus and its war with Írán.

Let it be remembered that the Báb blew the first trumpet, in 1844. He was the forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'u'lláh Himself blew the second trumpet in 1863 as the Deliverer of the world. It has been mentioned in the Qur'án:

“Until the (tribes of) Gog and Magog are let through (their barrier) and they swiftly swarm from every hill. Then will the true promise draw nigh. Then behold! the eyes of the unbelievers will fixedly stare in horror: “Ah! woe to us! we were indeed heedless of this; Nay we truly did wrong!”

(Qur'án, 21, 96–97)

In the above verses of the Holy Qur'án it is prophesied that when the ‘Gog and Magog’ will be freed and they will come down from the mountains—that will be the sign of the fact that the promised advent has come close. And it will be announced that this is that very Day of the advent which was promised to you:

“But the angels will meet them (and say) ‘this is your Day that ye were promised.” (Qur'án, 21:103)

In 1806 the Russians started their attacks on Europe and thus the wall was removed. Just after thirty-eight years of this happening, in 1844, the Báb announced His Mission. Thus the promise regarding blowing of the trumpet was fulfilled in such a short period after the removal of the wall.

18. The words of God will not be exhausted

“Say, ‘if the ocean were ink (wherewith to write out) for the words of my Lord, verily would the ocean be consumed, before the words of my Lord were consumed, even though we brought the like thereof to help.’” (Qur'án, 18:109)

God Himself testifies that if an ocean is turned into ink and

another ocean is also added to it, this ink will become exhausted, but the words of God will not be consumed. Similarly God says:

“And if all the trees of the world were pens and the Ocean (were ink), with seven oceans behind it to add to it, yet would the word of Alláh not be exhausted; for Alláh is Exalted in power, full of wisdom.” (Qur’án, 31:27)

Hence it is proved, in the light of the above-quoted verses, that the words of God is inexhaustible and that they will continue to be revealed according to the needs of the time. Even if all the trees of the world become pens and they used all the seven seas of the world as ink, still they would be exhausted before recording the words of God as these are inexhaustible. Someone may say that by these verses it is meant that the words, with which we praise God, will not be exhausted, but this is a mistake. In these verses the term ‘words of Alláh’ is used which is quite different from the words with which we praise Him. Our words of praises are not the ‘Words of Alláh’ but the ‘words of His servants’.

The ‘words’ are the verses of God revealed to the Manifestation of God through inspiration. This term is also used for the religion of God and the divine Laws. For example:

“Then learnt Adam from His Lord words of inspiration and His Lord turned towards Him.” (Qur’án, 2:37)

“But Alláh wished to justify the truth according to His words and to cut off the roots of the unbelievers.” (Qur’án, 8:7)

Here it is mentioned that God wishes to prove the truth through His words.

The question arises that whether it is the ‘words’ revealed in the past or those which will be revealed in the future which are referred to in the above-quoted verse? If we collect all the revealed Books and Words of God sent in the past, their volume is certainly not so much that they cannot be written down by ordinary means

and we will have to make pens of all the trees and ink from seven seas!

Hence it is proved that the above-quoted verse refers to those words of God which are to be revealed during the coming billions of years through the chosen Manifestations of God.

The society is subject to evolution. There is no end to this evolution nor is there any end to problems. At every stage of the evolutionary process, new problems will arise. God will show us the Path through His words revealed by His Manifestation at each of the succeeding stages. There is no end for the Words of God and His Messengers.

19. There will be nothing awry in his teachings

“On that day will they follow the caller (Ad-dá‘iya), there is no crookedness in him, all sounds shall humble themselves in the presence of most gracious; nothing shalt thou hear but the tramp of their feet.”
(Qur’án, 20:108)

Before discussing the above verse let’s ponder upon the following verses;

“The day when the trumpet will be sounded; that day, We shall gather the sinful, blear-eyed. In whispers will they consult each other; ‘ye tarried not longer than ten (days)’. We know best what they will say, when their leader most eminent in conduct will say; ye tarried not longer than a day!”
(Qur’án, 20:102–104)

These verses prophesy that when the trumpet will be sounded and the sinners will be gathered, they will talk to each other that they remained alive only for ten (centuries).

But He Who will be aware of the word of God will tell them that they remained alive for only one day i.e. one thousand years:

“He rules all affairs (Al-Amr, means Law of God) from the heavens to the earth; In the end will (affairs) go up to Him, on a day the space whereof will be as thousand years of your reckoning.” (Qur’án, 32:5)

Thus it is clearly mentioned that after 260 years of ruling the affairs from the heaven plus 1,000 years of going up of the affairs, God will remove, from among the peoples and nations, the obstacles of dictatorial and totalitarian systems and mountains of prejudices and will make the earth as one country and there will remain no crookedness therein.

Now let’s consider the first quotation under this section. It prophesies that on that day people will follow such a Messenger of God Who will give them clear instructions. There will be no crookedness in His teachings. His teachings will conform to human nature and answer to the needs of the time. That Messenger of God has been called as the ‘most gracious’. It is further prophesied that in front of the Glory and Teachings of the ‘Most Gracious’ the sounds of all the philosophers, reformers and learned will become seized. Nobody will pay any attention to their writings and thoughts. A caravan of a new race of men will press forward, in dignity, peace and order, towards the goal of establishing the oneness of mankind. Only the tramp of their feet will be heard. This prophecy has come true and the personality of Bahá’u’lláh, His teachings and their effects testify to its truth.

20. The old order will be rolled up

“The Day when We shall roll up the heavens as a recorder rolleth up a written scroll. As We began the first creation, We shall repeat it, a promise We have undertaken; truly shall We fulfill it.” (Qur’án, 21:104)

The above verse prophesies the collapse of old spiritual, religious and administrative systems. It has also been prophesied that the day of the advent of Bahá’u’lláh will be a day of perplexity and struggle among the peoples. But the ones who will believe in His advent will not be at all sorrowful. They will be given the

glad tidings that this is the very day about which you were promised. On that day the old world will be rolled up just like scroll is being rolled up and kept aside. It is, in fact, an allegory which means that there will be new teachings, a new sky and a new age. New potentialities for progress will be released and new laws and system will be given. God explains that just as He had initiated a new creation through Muḥammad, He will again initiate a new nation through another of His manifestations, Bahá'u'lláh. God Himself clarifies that it was not a mere admonition either. Rather it is a promise of God which He Himself would fulfill. God reassures us that He will not fail but fulfill His promise of giving new laws and proclaiming new order of life. This promise of God has come true with the advent of Bahá'u'lláh.

“Those who believe (in the Qur’án), those who follow the Jewish (scriptures) and the Sabeans, Christians, Magians and Ploytheists—Alláh will judge between them on the day of judgement.” (Qur’án, 22:17)

The Holy Qur’án has divided the people, according to their belief and religion, into six major categories—Muslims, Jews, Sabeans, Christians, Zoroastrians and the Polytheists (Hindus, Buddhists etc.). Throughout the centuries the followers of these religions and ideologies have been fighting amongst themselves. Their religious leaders have created and nourished such a bigotry and narrow-mindedness that each one of them calls the others as infidels.

God has promised that He will settle their disputes, on the day of the advent of His next Manifestation, through His teachings of peace, love, unity and amity. And these peoples will become one people.

The Kind God has fulfilled His promise. He has revealed the Bahá'í Faith. Today the people from all corners of the world and from each of the above-mentioned categories as well as even those who did not believe in God are becoming united, in spirit and as a new people, after accepting the Bahá'í Faith. The followers of Bahá'u'lláh are uniting all the peoples of the world into one

universal religion. Who could have united such a diverse people except a Manifestation of God?

21. The gardens of Bahjí

“Who has created the heaven and the earth, and who sends down rain from the sky?, then with it, We cause to grow well-planted orchards full of beauty and delight (Bahjah).” (Qur’án, 27:60)

This verse testifies the oneness of God and that He has got no partners. God is the creator of the heavens and the earth. He causes the rain to fall and the gardens to grow. However if we take its meaning as an allegory it will mean that—It is God Who raises up the sky of religion and creates the earth of Faith. It is He Who sends down from the heaven of His Will the rain of His Revelation and from it He causes the garden of the ‘Bahjí’ (Beauty and delight) to grow.

‘Bahjí’ is the place, about three miles from ‘Akká, where Bahá’u’lláh lived as a prisoner. His holy Soul took His eternal flight from this very place and He is buried at this holy spot which is now surrounded by a beautiful, enchanting and fragrant garden. In the above-quoted verse the same garden has been referred to and is being praised.

The atmosphere and climate of ‘Akká was so much polluted and poisonous, before Bahá’u’lláh had arrived there, that a proverb says: “If a bird flies over ‘Akká, it will die before it passes the town.” But when Bahá’u’lláh arrived in ‘Akká its climate and atmosphere got transformed. The city became alive and vibrant. The wilderness became a paradise with beautiful flowers. The atmosphere became fragrant and sweet.

22. Return to the primal point

“Verily He Who ordained the Qur’án for thee, will bring thee back to the place of return, say: ‘my Lord knows best who it is that brings true guidance, and who is in manifest

error.”

(Qur’án, 28:85)

Every nation has a point of beginning and that of an end. The point of the end is called ‘the point of return’. This point is also called the ‘resurrection’. The term “resurrection” has been discussed in detail, somewhere else in this book. Briefly speaking whoever believes in the new Word of God, at this point, is considered as the guided one and those who reject His signs lose the Path. In the above-quoted verse it is foretold that the Muslims will reach their point of return. If they will accept and believe in the Promised One they will be guided. Otherwise, they will live as those who are in manifest error.

This same law of the beginning and the end is also explained in this verse:

“It is Alláh Who begins creation; then repeats it; then shall ye be brought back to Him.” (Qur’án, 30:11)

23. The period of Islám-1,260 years

“He directeth the ordinances from heaven to the earth, in the end it ascendeth unto Him in a Day, whereof the measure is a thousand years of your reckoning.” (Qur’án, 32:5)

The Arabic term “Tadvín-Al’amr?” means “directing of the ordinances.” It refers to the Revelation of the Holy Qur’án. By heaven is meant “the heaven of the Will of God”. The period of directing of the ordinances from the heaven to the earth is 260 years. During this period the Holy Qur’án was revealed, its verses collected and classified, Islamic Jurisprudence were made and the traditions (sayings) of Prophet Muḥammad were gathered and recorded. After that comes the period of Islám and that of the decline of the Muslim nation which is, according to this verse, one thousand years. Thus the total period of Islám is 1,260 years. Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad’, the Báb, declared His Mission as the Promised One, the Mihdí and the Lord of the Age, on the fifth day of Jamádiyu’l-Avval in the year 1260 (Islamic). Thus, God has fulfilled another of His promises.

24. Covenant from the Prophets

“And remember We took from the prophets their covenant, as (We did) from thee, from Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, the son of Mary, We took from them a solemn covenant.” (Qur’án, 33:7)

God had taken a solemn covenant from the people, through their respective Prophets, that they should not hesitate to accept Bahá’u’lláh. Rather they should believe in Him and arise to assist Him. This covenant was taken, without any exception, from each and every Prophet including Muḥammad. There cannot be any misunderstanding regarding this covenant because the Holy Qur’án has clearly mentioned in the above verse: ‘as (We did) from thee (O Muḥammad)’. This is the same covenant mentioned in another verse of the Qur’án:

“Behold! Alláh took the covenant of the Prophets, saying: I give you a Book and Wisdom; then comes to you an apostle confirming what is with you; do ye believe in him and render him help. Alláh said, ‘do ye agree, and take this my covenant as binding on you?’ They said, ‘we agree.’ He said, ‘then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses.” (Qur’án, 3:81)

25. Muḥammad is not the last Apostle (Rasúl)

“Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but (He is) the Apostle of Alláh (Rasúl Alláh) and the seal of the prophets (Khátamu’n-Nabíyyín) (Qur’án, 33:40)

The background of the above verse is that Prophet Muḥammad had adopted an African slave, Zaid, as His son. In the past the son of the Prophet used to become His successor. As the people considered Zaid as the son of Muḥammad they thought that he will also be the successor of Him—a Prophet. God has clarified this position in this, above-mentioned, verse that:

- a. Muḥammad is not a father of any of the men;

- b. He is an Apostle (Messenger) of God;
- c. He is the seal of the prophets.

All the Prophets of God (Nabí) have prophesied the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. Muḥammad was the last of those Prophets. God declares that no more 'Nabí' will appear after Muḥammad as He is the 'Seal' of them. But now the 'great news' (Naba'i-'Azím) will be made manifest. Muḥammad was the last 'Nabí' to give the glad tidings of 'a Message Supreme ...':

“Say, that is a Message Supreme ...” (Qur’án, 38:67)

There is no difference of opinion, among the Muslim scholars, that an Apostle of God (Rasúl) and a Prophet (Nabí) are two different ranks. A 'Rasúl' is one Who reveals the Word of God, gives divine Laws and Ordinances and initiates a religion. He is always independent of any other of the Apostles. Whereas a 'Nabí' is always a follower of some other Apostle (Rasúl) and does not reveal any Book of God nor He promulgates any new divine laws and ordinances. The Muslim scholars also agree on this point that all the prophets (Nabí) were not 'Apostles' (Rasúl); but an Apostle is, generally, a prophet also. This was the case with Muḥammad. He had two stations—one that of an Apostle and another that of a Prophet. He revealed a new Book as well as prophesied the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.

Now, in the verse under review, Muḥammad has been designated with two stations:

- a. He is the Apostle of God;
- b. He is the Seal of the Prophets.

If the station of an 'Apostle' and that of a 'Prophet' was same then God would have said either 'the apostle and the seal of the apostles' or 'prophet and the seal of the prophets'. However God has mentioned both of the stations separately and clearly. This proves the Bahá'í belief that Muḥammad was not the last of the 'Apostles' but the last of the 'Prophets'.

26. Blowing of the trumpet

“The trumpet will be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on the earth will swoon except such as it will please Alláh (to exempt) then will a second one be sounded, when behold, they will be standing and looking.”

(Qur’án, 39:68)

The declaration of a Manifestation of God is called the ‘sounding of the trumpet’. By this declaration the old age comes to an end and a new one begins. Reckoning of the nations takes place. Through the ‘call’ (Da‘vá) of the Manifestation of God a new world comes into being and a new civilization is born. The Holy Qur’án describes this spiritual and intellectual revolution as ‘Qiyámah’ i.e. resurrection. The above-quoted verse prophesies the advent of two Manifestations of God, after Muḥammad. It says that when the first Manifestation of God will raise His call everyone will faint but those whom God will grant faith in the new call. Those who will accept the new Manifestation of God will neither faint nor will they be surprised. Then the second Manifestation of God will blow the trumpet i.e. raise His call. The people will rise and behold the new Manifestation. They will accept Him and will witness new teachings, new life and many changes.

How clearly this verse foretells, that when the trumpet will be blown, everything will remain as it is. Neither earth nor the sky or any other of the creatures will be least effected by it. Only the people who will not accept the new Message will faint for a moment because they will not be expecting a new Revelation. However some pious people, who will believe in the new Manifestation, will not even swoon.

Accordingly the first trumpet was sounded by the Báb in the evening of 22 May, 1844 in Shiráz. And the second trumpet was blown on the 21st April, 1863 at Dáru’s-Salám (Baghdád) by Bahá’u’lláh. By the first trumpet the past beliefs and traditions were changed. And through the second trumpet new beliefs, values, teachings and laws were promulgated and the foundation of a

new divine world order was laid down through the revelation of a unique administrative system. Men and women, in all the corners of the globe, have arisen to establish that divine civilization on the earth.

“... the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand; ...”
(Qur’án 39:67)

In this verse it is told that in the time of the advent of Bahá’u’lláh the earth will be rolled up and the sky will be folded. Scientific inventions and modern technology have accomplished this. Thus God has fulfilled another of His promises:

“... Praise be to Alláh, who hath fulfilled His promise unto us and hath made us inherit the land, sojourning in the garden where we will! ...”
(Qur’án, 39:74)

27. The earth will be filled with the light of God (Bahá’u’lláh)

“And the earth will shine with the glory of its Lord, and the book will be set up, and the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward and a just decision pronounced between them, and they will not be wronged.”
(Qur’án, 39:69)

In this verse, the advent of Bahá’u’lláh (Glory of Lord), the revelation of a new Book, presence of witnesses and pronouncement of the judgement, have been foretold.

Therefore today the world is shining by the light of the advent of Bahá’u’lláh. He has revealed more than hundred volumes of Words of God including His Book of Laws, The Most Holy Book—Kitáb-i-Aqdas. All the former Prophets bear witness to the validity of the Mission of Bahá’u’lláh. He has judged between all the nations and removed the causes of differences between them. Today, all the nations are being gathered together under one single tent of unity.

28. Two lives

“They will say: ‘Our Lord twice hast Thou made us without life, and twice hast Thou given us life. Now have we recognised our sins, is there any way out (Of this).’”

(Qur’án, 40:11)

It signifies that the people were dead at the time of the advent of Muḥammad. Islám had made them alive. When they died again Bahá’u’lláh restored them to life, for the second time, through His revelation. Thus they received two deaths and two lives. This verse does not relate to physical death or life.

29. Muḥammad is a deliverer of glad-tidings (Mubashshir)

“We have truly sent thee as a witness, as a bringer of glad tidings, and as a warner in order that ye (O men) may believe in Alláh and His Apostle, that ye may assist and honour Him, and celebrate His praises morning and evening.”

(Qur’án, 48:8–9)

According to the above-quoted verse Prophet Muḥammad was ‘A Witness’, ‘A bringer of glad-tidings’, and a ‘Warner’. He was “a witness” for the deeds and character of His followers; “a bringer of glad tidings” of the advent of Bahá’u’lláh, and a “Warner” for those who will reject the Promised One of Islám. The reason, for which He was appointed ‘a deliverer of glad-tidings’, is explained in these verses that O Muslims you may believe in Alláh and His Apostle (Bahá’u’lláh), assist Him, honour Him and celebrate His praises morning and evening. In this verse the term ‘Apostle’ is used for Bahá’u’lláh, for Muḥammad could not have given glad tidings of His own advent, nor that of the former Manifestations. Thus God has meant an “Apostle” other than Muḥammad Himself.

Another proof of the fact that by the term “Apostle”, Bahá’u’lláh is meant is this that this verse explains the meaning of the verse regarding the covenant of the Prophets in which it is

said when an “Apostle”, confirming your Book, appears you should believe in His Mission:

“Behold! Alláh took the covenant of the Prophets, saying; ‘I give you a book and wisdom; then comes to you an Apostle confirming what is with you; do ye believe Him and render Him help’. Alláh said; ‘do ye agree and take this My covenant as binding on you?’ They said ‘we agree.’ He said; ‘then bear witness and I am with you among the witnesses.’”

(Qur’án, 3:81)

30. Baghdád—The place of advent

“And listen for the day when the caller will call out from a place quite near—the day when they will hear the cry of truth. That will be the day of coming forth.”

(Qur’án, 50:41–42)

The Muslims have been asked to be alert and listen carefully for the day when a Manifestation of God will raise His call from a nearby place. On that day the people will listen to the voice of the truth and that will be the day of rising up of the people from the graves of ignorance and heedlessness.

The nearest, important, place to Mecca is Baghdád. Its other names are ‘Dáru’s-Salám’ (Abode of peace) and ‘Ummu’l-‘Iráq’ (mother of Iraq). God has always chosen a central city for the advent of His Messengers. Hence He says:

“Nor was the Lord to destroy a population until He had sent to its centre an Apostle, rehearsing to them Our verses”.

(Qur’án, 28:59)

Thus He sent Muḥammad to the mother of the cities’, Mecca:

“Thus We have Sent by inspiration to thee an Arabic Qur’án; that thou mayest warn the Mother of Cities and all around her?”

(Qur’án, 42:7)

Similarly God has chosen Baghdád, the ‘mother of Iraq’, which is the central city of Arabia, Persia, Turkey and Egypt and the metropolis of Islamic art, culture, and religion, for the advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

In 1863 Bahá’u’lláh proclaimed His Mission in the city of Baghdád. He claimed that He was the Promised One of all religions. Thus 21st April, 1863 (the day of the declaration of Bahá’u’lláh) is the day of exodus for all the nations. On that very day Bahá’u’lláh came out of Baghdád for His journey to Constantinople. On that very day the earth and heaven of the past religions, beliefs and old systems were rent asunder. Since that day new treasures of knowledge and actions were opened and new revolutions began to shake the earth, and resurrection of the nations took place. The Holy Qur’án terms the life of the vegetable kingdom as ‘spring’ and that of men as ‘Exodus’:

“And we give life therewith to land that is dead; thus will be the resurrection (exodus).” (Qur’án, 50:11)

The Holy Qur’án uses the term ‘caller’ (Munádi) to denote a Messenger of God:

“Our Lord! we have heard the call of one calling to faith, believe ye in the Lord; and we have believed.” (Qur’án, 3:193)

In the following verse God says that He knows it well that the Muslims will not understand this prophecy and they will not accept that by this verse appearance of a new Messenger of God is foretold. They will think that exodus is something else. God asks His Prophet, Muḥammad, to warn the people, through the Holy Qur’án, about the promise of God, that when Bahá’u’lláh appears they may be able to accept Him and receive salvation (Naját):

“Let not the strutting about of the unbelievers through the land deceive thee;” (Qur’án, 3:196)

31. New religion will be revealed

“Verily that which ye are promised is true; and verily judgement (Al-Dín) must indeed come to pass (i.e. religion will be revealed).” (Qur’án, 51:5–6)

Whenever there is a suffocation in the weather, life becomes stagnant, environment becomes heavy with sorrow and depression, there is no rain, lush green gardens and fields become dry, and all signs of life disappear from amongst the people,—in such a situation God causes the winds to blow, raises up the clouds laden with water and sends down the rain of mercy to clean the atmosphere and enchant the minds of the people. This phenomenon has got a counterpart also in the spiritual realms.

Hence God has assured the Muslims, by taking oath of four qualities of the wind, that the promise of a new Manifestation of God and a new Book will be kept because it is a true promise. New religion will certainly be revealed. Accordingly the Bahá’í Faith has been revealed and Bahá’u’lláh, from His throne of justice, has taken into account the deeds of all the nations of the world.

In the following verse it is mentioned that people ask that when will the day of Revelation of a new Book dawn?

“They ask; when will be the day of judgement and. justice (Yumu’d-dín)?” (Qur’án, 51:12)

In reply God says:

“(It will be) a Day when they will be tried (and tested) over the fire!” (Qur’án, 51:13)

It signifies, that the people will be thrown into the fire of wars; that the fire of hatred will reign amongst the nations; that the fire of animosity will increase; that the fire of prejudices will spread; that the followers of different religions and sects will start considering each other as impure; that the fire of differences and

discord will be ignited in the name of nationalism, sex, colour and religion. In such a time a new revelation of peace and love, security and amity, will be revealed by God. The conditions, in the last half of the nineteenth century were the same as it was foretold. In such a condition God revealed a new religion through Bahá'u'lláh. This new religion of God is uniting all the diverse nations of the world and its followers are working for establishment of a lasting peace on earth.

32. Surging sea of 'Akká

“By the Mount [Túr] (or Revelation); By a Decree Inscribed; in a Scroll unfolded; By the much-frequented fane; By the Canopy Raised High; and by the Ocean filled with swell;—Verily, the Doom of thy Lord will indeed come to pass;—there is none can avert it;—”
(Qur'án, 52:1-8)

In these verses by the 'Mount of Revelation' reference has been made to the 'Mount Sinai', the 'decree' refers to the Old Testament; the 'much-frequented fane' means the 'Solomon's Temple'; 'the Canopy Raised High' denotes Ka'bih in Mecca and the 'ocean' is the Mediterranean sea. 'Akká is situated on the banks of this sea. Thus God swears by a Holy Mountain, a Holy Book, a Holy Temple, a Holy Point of Adoration and a Holy Sea.

By mentioning these God has shown that there is a link and continuity in His guidance. At the end He makes a promise on oath by the ocean which touches 'Akká—the spot where Bahá'u'lláh was exiled and where He lived, as a prisoner, from 1868 to 1892.

The most holy Book of this Dispensation was revealed in this very city—'Akká. Following these oaths, this promise is being made that wrath of God is sure to descend and that no one can stop it.

The history is a witness that whenever a Messenger of God has appeared most of the people have rejected Him. Due to this disobedience, God had punished them. God Himself testifies to

the fact that He never punishes a people without giving a warning through a Messenger:

“... nor would We visit with Our wrath until We had sent an Apostle (to give warning)”. (Qur’án, 17:15)

Therefore since the coming of Bahá’u’lláh, all the nations of the world are being punished by God due to their rejection of His Mission. Some of the wraths of God are terrorism, pestilence, famine, restlessness, cruelties, and wars etc. These wraths and many more of them have turned the world into a hell. The only way open for coming out of these agonies is to accept Bahá’u’lláh.

33. He will call to accept new teachings

“Therefore (O Prophet) turn away from them, the day that the caller (Dá’iya) will call (them) to a terrible affair.” (Qur’án, 54:6)

According to this verse the Promised Day is the day on which a universal Manifestation of God (Dá’iya) will call the nations of the world towards a new and difficult task. In the preceding verse it is said:

“There have already come to them Recitals wherein there is (enough) to check (them). Mature wisdom;—but (the preaching of) Warners profits them not.” (Qur’án, 54:4–5)

Here it is said that the people know the event of the former Prophets but still they do not benefit from those warnings. Then the Muslims have been advised that at the time of the next advent they should not be among those people who reject the Manifestation of God. By the term ‘Caller’ (Dá’iya) a Manifestation of God is meant:

“O Our people! hearken to the One Who invites you to Alláh and believe in Him.” (Qur’án, 46:31)

“And as One Who invites to Alláh by His leave.”

(Qur’án, 33:46)

Thus by the term “Dá’iya” (the One Who invites), in these verses, no one else but Bahá’u’lláh is intended. He has called the nations towards a wonderful and difficult task. The difficult task is the establishment of world peace. In the past different peoples and nations have been fighting on such a scale that establishment of peace, love and harmony between them is a wonderful but difficult task.

34. Rise of a new nation

“We have decreed death to be your common lot, and We are not to be frustrated from changing your forms and creating you in that ye know not.”

(Qur’án, 56:60–61)

God affirms here that He has destined a time of death for each nation. And that He revives the dead nations through the teachings of a new Manifestation. After revival, the dead nations turn into a new nation. God also confirms that He is never tired of creating a new nation, and says that the Muslims know nothing about the new creation.

Accordingly God has raised the Bahá’í nation in place of the Muslims. The Muslims were quite unaware about this advent and its mission. This very promise is repeated in the chapter Muḥammad of the Holy Qur’án that, when the Muslims will turn away from the path, God will raise another nation in their place who will be different from them:

“... if ye turn back (from the path), He will substitute in your stead another people; then they would not be like you!”

(Qur’án, 47:38)

35. Advent of a great tiding

“... whereof do they question one another (it is) the great tiding”.

(Qur’án, 78:1–2)

It says that the people will ask each other, on that day, questions regarding the advent of the ‘great tiding’. But soon they will realise that the time of Manifestation is the day of recognition and distinction. It is further explained:

“The day that the trumpet shall be sounded, and ye shall come forth in crowds; and the heavens shall be opened ...”
(Qur’án, 78:18–19)

It says that the day of judgement is the day when the trumpet will be sounded and people will accept it in troops. Hence the day of separation of the believers from the unbelievers began when Bahá’u’lláh announced His Mission and raised the Call of God and proclaimed that He, Himself, was the ‘Great Tiding’. The people started to believe in Him and enter His Cause in troops.

More details regarding the day of separation is found in these verses:

“Truly hell is a place of ambush, for the transgressors a place of destination.”
(Qur’án, 78:21–22)

“Verily for the righteous there will be a fulfilment of desire. Gardens enclosed and grape-vines.”
(Qur’án, 78:31–32)

The above verses describe that the destination of the transgressors is hell while that of the believers is the fulfilment of their desires and gardens.

36. The trumpet will be sounded twice

“By those who drag forth to destruction, by those who gently draw out, by those who glide along, by those who hasten, by those who arrange the commands on that day when first trumpet soundeth and second followeth it.”
(Qur’án, 79:1–7)

In the first five verses an oath has been taken by such explicit

and hidden powers which break stagnancy. Then a promise is given that a day will surely dawn when a trumpet will be blown and then the second trumpet will follow it.

Exactly according to this promise of the Holy Qur'án the Báb blew the first trumpet, in Shiráz, in 1844. Then followed the second trumpet, blown by Bahá'u'lláh, in accordance with the prophecies of all the past divine Books as well as those of the Báb. The second trumpet was sounded in Baghdád in 1863.

The believers have been promised paradise and the ones who reject are warned by hell.

37. Twelve signs of the Advent

“When the sun is covered; when the stars fall; when the mountains vanish; when the she-camels are left untended; when the wild beasts are herded together; when the oceans boil over with swell; when souls are sorted out; when the female buried alive, is questioned for what crime she was killed; when the books are spread; and when the heaven has its covering removed; when the blazing fire is kindled to fierce heat; and when the garden is brought near; ...”
(Qur'án, 81:1–13)

In the above-quoted verses twelve signs of the Promised Advent are given. Bahá'u'lláh has fulfilled all these conditions. Let's see them one by one:

- i. *When the sun is covered*: 19th May 1780 was a dark day. The records of that day say: It was not due to solar eclipse. The sun had suddenly turned dark and the moon became red like blood. This darkness remained till one o'clock. The people thought it was a sign of resurrection. (for details see the book 'Thief in the Night' by William Sears, George Ronald Publishers, UK).
- ii. *When the stars fall*: 12th November 1833 was the day when countless stars fell from the sky. The sky seemed

full of illumined lines. This fall of the stars was witnessed for the first time in the history.

Again in 1866, when Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in Adrianople, the earth faced the Leo assemblage of the meteors. In those days fall of the stars was witnessed in abundance.

iii. *When the mountains vanish*: This has got several implications. One is that the mountain-like institutions of kingship and monarchies were vanished and democracy took their place. Another example of this is that—due to invention of things like dynamite, stone-crushers and cement mills the mountains are blown away like cotton. Dynamite was invented in 1866 and the cement mill was invented in 1824. Moreover due to the invention of the modern communication medias like wireless, air-planes, etc., the obstacles of high mountains have been rent asunder. All this has happened in this age of Bahá'u'lláh.

iv. *When the she-camels are left untended*: Due to the invention and progress in the field of transport such as trains, motor-cars, aeroplanes and buses, etc., the camels were, quite naturally, discarded as a means of transportation. The modern means of travelling and logistics have changed the world. Let's remember that the railway engine was invented in 1825, car was invented in 1876, motorcycle was invented in 1885 and aeroplanes in 1903.

v. *When the wild beasts are herded together*: It is a prophecy fulfilled when zoological gardens were established throughout the world. It is interesting to note that the Zoo of London was constructed in 1826; that of Denmark was set up in 1859; the Zoo of Paris was built in 1899; and the zoo of Berlin was completed in 1844; the zoo of Australia was established in 1857 and that of Calcutta was built in 1875. Not to mention the wild-life sanctuaries which are kept in different lands.

Another implication of this is that the savage and fighting nations of the world will come together in unity and all the

differences, amongst them, will be removed. The tribes and people, who have accepted Bahá'u'lláh, have become spiritually united. On the other hand those who have not yet accepted Bahá'u'lláh are being forced by the circumstances to recognise the importance of peace, unity and international brotherhood—whether they like it or not.

The Holy Qur'án has, at several occasions, prophesied that on the appointed Day the people will be gathered together. Those verses of God have been proved and promises of God have been fulfilled by the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh.

vi. *When the oceans boil over with a swell:* This boiling up of the sea can certainly not be due to the heat of the sun. It is a natural phenomenon that the sun shines over the sea as it shines over all other things. It is happening since time immemorial. However before the invention of the steamship there had never been heat of fire on the surface of the sea. The first steamer was invented in 1802 and since then the sea began to boil up. The first steamer which crossed the Pacific Ocean in 1826 was named 'CORCO' and it was made by Spain. Since then thousands after thousands of the steam-ships have been floated in the oceans. All of them burn fuel causing the ocean to boil day and night.

vii. *When the souls are sorted out:* This sorting out is done by a Manifestation of God. This has happened in all the Advents. Today the same phenomenon is being repeated by Bahá'u'lláh. Many people—the Jews, the Buddhists, the Zoroastrians, the Christians, the Hindus, the Muslims, and even those who did not believe in any religion—who so far hated each other and were divided into countless sects which considered each other as unclean, are now being united under the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Unitedly and tirelessly, the followers of Bahá'u'lláh are working for the unification of mankind and for the establishment of peace on this earth.

viii. *When the female buried alive is questioned:*

In the past a woman was deprived of many of her very basic rights. She was practically confined, as if buried, within the boundaries of the house. Thus half of the human population was made deprived of the full benefits of social life and activities.

This verse prophesies that at the time of the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh the women folk will be granted equality of rights and status. They will participate in all sectors of life and progress. This prophecy has also come true. The Bahá'í Faith has emancipated the women and has proclaimed the equality of men and women as one of its basic laws.

ix. *When books (Ṣuḥuf) are spread:* The Arabic term 'Ṣuḥuf denotes all sorts of books—newspapers, journals, religious and other books etc. In the past the books were hand-written on medias like leather, etc. The paper mill was invented in 1844. The invention of paper and printing press revolutionised the world of knowledge. Books, of all sorts and in all languages, began to spread in all corners of the world on an unprecedented scale.

x. *When the heaven has its covering removed:* Heaven or sky means the outer space. This verse says that on the 'promised day' the secrets of the outer space and the stars will be fathomed and made known. Accordingly, after the advent of Bahá'u'lláh, people have started discovering the secrets of the outer space. Man has stepped on the moon and traversed in the space and even in the outer space. Man knew very little about the outer space before this.

xi. *When the blazing fire is kindled to fierce heat:* The Manifestation of God teaches unity, love, harmony and amity. But most of the people, treading the old path, do not believe in Him. Rather they arise against Him. Due to this rebellion God punishes them with fire. Those who believe in Him are awarded paradise. They live in peace and harmony. This is the day of judgement or separation. This is the day when the believers are separated from the non-believers. Otherwise before the advent of the Manifestation of God there seems no difference

between the true and a false one, and there remains no distinction between a believer and an unbeliever.

Today it is witnessed that the nations, heedless of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, are busy in manufacturing of fire-arms and war materials. Thus the fire of war is ignited everywhere.

xii. *When the garden (jannah) is brought*

near: As explained above, they who recognise the new Manifestation of God live in peace and paradise.

The followers of Bahá'u'lláh in more than one hundred and sixteen thousand localities, spread all over the world, are working tirelessly for the establishment of the oneness of mankind and world peace. They believe that this very world will become a paradise by the will of God. The stage of the establishment of paradise on earth is drawing nigh day by day.

Similar prophecy is recorded in the following verses:

“When the sky is cleft asunder; when the stars are scattered; when the oceans are suffered to burst forth; And when the Graves are turned upside down; ...”

(Qur'án, 82:1–4)

By the excavation of the graves it is meant that the ruins will be excavated, research will be made of the happenings of the past and due to expansion. in cities and towns, graveyards will be excavated and removed.

All of these events have taken place in this Day of days.

38. Earth will show forth its treasures

“When the sky is rent asunder, and hearkens to its Lord, and it must needs; and when the earth is flattened out, and casts forth what is within it and becomes empty and hearkens to its Lord, and it must needs; O thou man, verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord, painfully toiling-but thou

shalt meet Him.”

(Qur’án, 84:1–6)

These verses give a glad tiding that the clouds of superstitions and doubts will disappear and the Call of God will be made to ring in their place as it will be its need. And then the earth of religion and knowledge of God will be spread and it will, due to the revelation from God, bring out its secrets and treasures and will listen to the Orders of God as it will be in need of it. Then the people have been assured of meeting with God.

Accordingly, after the advent of Bahá’u’lláh the earth and the heaven have become illumined by the Word of God. Those who have believed in Him have actually seen God. Recognition and belief in the Manifestation of God is, in fact, meeting with God.

39. The crookedness of the nations will be

rectified

“By the fig and the olive and the Mount Sinai, and the city of security, We have indeed created man in the best of moulds.”
(Qur’án, 95:1–4)

These verses establish a relation, in symbolic way, between three of the Major Manifestations of God and show the continuity of their advent and prophesy the advent of Bahá’u’lláh. The ‘fig’ and ‘olive’ refers to Christ; Mount of Sinai is the place of the advent of Moses; and the ‘city of security’ is the Holy City of Mecca that was the dawning point of the rise of the Sun of Muḥammad. They are three of the great Apostles of Semitic lineage, Who have raised three mighty nations. In the verse four it has been promised that, in the time of Bahá’u’lláh, the crookedness of the nations will be banished and after that they will progress in a moderate and balanced way. Mankind will become good after being moulded into the mould of a new divine world order. Due to the Bahá’í teachings of peace, unity and consultation, the crookedness of the nations are getting diminished. And the Bahá’ís are, after being moulded into the best of the moulds of the Bahá’í Laws and administration, trying to establish

world peace. They do not have any crookedness of enmity, hatred, prejudices or differences among them. Intellectually, morally and by thought as well as actions the Bahá'ís are a new race of people.

We have translated the fourth verse in the above-quoted verses in future tense, instead of the past, according to the established principle that when translating a promise, a warning, a tiding or a habit, past tense, is generally, - changed into the future. Let's see the following verses for example:

“By no means, for it is indeed a message of instruction, therefore let whoso will keep it in remembrance.”

(Qur'án, 80:11–12)

“Then do We abase him to be) the lowest of the low.”

(Qur'án, 95:5)

41. The nations will remain separated till the Advent

“Those who disbelieve among the people of the Book and among the polytheists, are not going to depart (from their ways) until there should come to them clear evidence—an Apostle from Alláh, reading purified tablets wherein are laws right and straight.”

(Qur'án, 98:1–3)

“Nor did the people of the Book make schisms, until after there came to them Clear Evidence.”

(Qur'án, 98:4)

In these verses God foretells that the people, either from among those who have received any Revelation in the past or those who are polytheists (Hindus, Buddhists, etc.), who have rejected the advent of Prophet Muḥammad have become such that they will remain separated from each other till the ‘Clear Evidence’ (Al-Bayyinah) comes to them and explains to all the truth and realities in a new way. God has also explained that the meaning of ‘Clear Evidence’ is a new Manifestation of God who will appear with Holy Tablets and firm Commandments.

Accordingly Bahá'u'lláh has appeared with new Tablets and Commandments. For example one of His Commandments is the abrogation of the old Law regarding uncleanness of certain objects and people. He has declared, in His Tablets, that one should consort with all the peoples in utmost love and friendliness. After the promulgation of this Law, people from different backgrounds and all the nations of the world which were separated from each other since hundreds of the centuries and have been considering each other as unclean and untouchables, are coming closer and are being united under the banner of the Laws and Principles revealed by Bahá'u'lláh who is the promised 'Al-Bayyinah' (Clear Evidence). In the above-quoted verse (98:4) it is mentioned that even when the 'Clear Evidence' came, as Muḥammad, the people of the Book had made differences.

It is a fact that Prophet Muḥammad had come in a tribal age. God had wished to keep the nations separated till this time. Now, this age is the age of the unification of mankind. God has willed for this age that all the peoples, be they the people of the Books or polytheists, should gather together under one faith and religion. Hence He in His divine wisdom had announced in the Holy Qur'án that when Bahá'u'lláh will appear, with new Tablets and Teachings, all the people will become one. Today the Bahá'í Teachings have united the whole earth. Praise be to God Who has kept His promise:

“They will say ‘Praise be to Alláh, Who has truly fulfilled His promise to us.’”
(Qur'án, 39:74)

42. Three signs of the Advent

“When the earth is shaken to her (utmost) and the earth throws up her burdens and man cries: ‘what is the matter with her?’ On that Day will she declare her tidings; for that thy Lord will have given her inspiration. (Qur'án, 99:1–5)

It is another of the glad tidings of the advent of Bahá'u'lláh. No one can deny Him after witnessing such clear signs fulfilled.

Similar prophecies are also found in the Holy Bible that when these signs will be seen, the people will witness the advent of the Son of Man.

The first of the above-quoted verses prophesies that the earth will throb. Since the advent of Bahá'u'lláh new powers of life and activities of the nations and new movements have virtually shaken up the world. The other physical evidence of the fulfilment of this prophecy is the abnormal rate of earthquakes which have visited the earth when the time of the advent drew nigh. The records show that although earthquakes have visited the earth, on small scales, throughout the annals of the history but those which shook the world in this age are unprecedented. They, in fact, have caused the world to throb. The magnitude of these earthquakes may be guessed from the following statistics:

- From 1800 to 1965; 35 earth-quakes took place in regions of the ancient Roman Empire;
- From 1700 to 1850; 224 earth-quakes have throbbed the earth of Scandinavia and Iceland, 178 earth-quakes visited the land of Spain and Portugal, and 600 times earth-quakes shook the regions of France, Belgium and Holland;
- From 1800 to 1850; 800 times the earth-quakes visited the land of Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean sea;
- From 1902 to 1981; hundreds of millions of people have died during earth-quakes in the various parts of the globe.

For example:

- In May 1902; 40,000 people died in the West-Indies
- In December 1908; 85,000 people died in the Seychelles
- In December 1920; 100,000 died in China;
- In September 1923; 95,000 died in Japan;
- In May 1935; 50,000 died in Quetta, Pakistan;
- In January 1939; 30,000 died in Chile;
- In December 1939; 100,000 died in Turkey;
- In September 1962; 12,000 people died in Irán;
- In September 1968; 18–20,000 people died in Irán;

- In May 1970; 70,000 people died in Peru;
- In February 1976; 23,000 people died in Guatemala;
- In June 1976.; 8,000 people died in Indonesia;
- In August 1976; 8,000 people died in the Philippines;
- In September 1978; 25,000 people died in Iran;
- In November 1980; 45,000 people died in Italy;
- In July 1981; 8,000 people died in the earth-quake in Írán;

Not to mention the most recent ones which have cost thousands of lives.

The second prophecy recorded in the above-quoted verses is that the earth will issue forth its hidden treasures. This prophecy has also come true as most of the world's mineral resources have been discovered during 1800 to 1892. During the same period such machines were also invented which made digging of the minerals much more easier than it was in the past. Thus the earth started issuing forth such of its wealth which were hitherto unknown to any one. The following statistics will make this fact very clearly understood:

- *Petroleum*: The first commercial oil-well was drilled in USA in 1859 (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 17; p. 656.)
- *Gas*: Gas lighting was introduced in Bristol in 1823; Gas companies are recorded as innumerable in 1860 (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 10; p. 6.)
- *Mineralogy*: Scientific studies of minerals had scarcely begun before the 19th century. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 15, p. 502.)
- Reliable quantitative chemical analysis of mineral was begun in about 1800. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 15, p. 502.)
- Henry Bessemer's process announced in 1856 for making of steel from pig-iron in a pneumatic converter, began the steel-epoch. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 12, p. 604.)

- *Gold*: During the second era of intensive gold production, the twenty-five years following 1850, more gold was produced in the world than in the 350 years immediately previous. A third mark of increase in the world gold recovery was noted during the period from 1890–1915. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 10, p. 535.)
- *Coal*: The US geological survey records that coal was first discovered near Frost Burg, Md., in 1804. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 5, p. 963.)
- In 1852 or 53 the first commercial shipment of coal were made. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 5, p. 963.)

The third prophecy in these verses is that the earth will give news. This promise of God was fulfilled in the following manner:

- Cable Telegraph was invented in 1853;
- Telephone was invented in 1876;
- Television was invented in 1926;
- Photo-phone was invented in 1985;

All other inventions in the field of communication media are but the signs of fulfilment of this promise of God. These inventions have made it possible that any information can be circulated throughout the world in, almost, no time.

However, the question arises that what is the cause of this sudden developments? The Holy Qur’án tells us that this is due to the opening of the doors of divine Inspiration i.e. New Revelation.

Albeit, God has increased, through Bahá’u’lláh, all sorts of knowledge, wisdom, understanding as well as He has released the potentials of all created things to such an extent that knowledge of God has now flooded the whole earth.

43. Time of the Advent is afternoon (‘AŞR)

“By the declining day, verily man is in loss.”

(Qur’án, 103:1–2)

The Arabic word ‘Aṣr has got two meanings—one is ‘the declining day’ and the other is ‘age’ of an ‘era’. Both of these meanings signify the advent of Bahá’u’lláh. The first meaning of the ‘declining day’ is the period of afternoon till the sunset. God has taken oath of this time. On the 21st April 1863, at the time of declining day, Bahá’u’lláh has announced, in the Garden of Riḍván, Baghdád, that He is the Promised One of all Ages. While He was making this declaration a call for ‘Aṣr Prayer was raised from a nearby mosque—God is Great, God is Great!

God takes oath of that historic ‘Aṣr (declining day), when a wonderful happening was going to happen in the annals of the religious history and the promise given by all the Prophets of God was going to be fulfilled on that blessed ‘declining day’, and makes it a witness that if man does not believe in the Manifestation of God and fails to correct his conduct according to His Teachings then he (man) is in loss.

As to the other meaning of ‘Aṣr—time is the greatest of the factors and the basic cause for the progress and decline, rise and fall, and life and death, of individuals as well as those of a nation. God’s revealed Laws and Ordinances are always according to the needs of the time. They always match the spirit of the era. If man fails to derive full benefits from the time, he is, surely, the loser. Those, who believe in the Manifestation of God for their age, practice His teachings, call others towards the Truth, show constancy and steadfastness in the time of opposition and withstand tests with courage and forbearance, are the ones who conquer the time. And those who fail to do so, become a lesson of warning for the posterity.

Thus today those who have believed in Bahá’u’lláh have come together. They act upon His revealed Teachings and are steadfast in His Cause. They are patient in trials and are calling all the nations of the world towards the Teachings of the Lord of the Age—Bahá’u’lláh.

The Báb

Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad, the Báb, was the forerunner of Bahá’u’lláh and a Manifestation of God in His own right. His advent has also been prophesied in the Holy Qur’án. We will discuss some of those prophecies in this chapter.

1. The Báb is the Witness

“Can they be (like) those who accept a clear (sign) from their Lord and whom a witness from Himself doth teach, as did the Book of Moses before it—a guide and a mercy?”

(Qur’án, 11:17)

The meaning of the term ‘Clear Sign’ (Bayyinah) is the verses of God, His Signs, His warnings and His Apostles. In the verse quoted above, this term is used to describe Prophet Muḥammad. By the term ‘a witness from himself’ (sháhíidun minhu), Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad, the Báb, is intended. Because the Báb had appeared after Muḥammad and had testified that Muḥammad was a Prophet of God. He (The Báb) was a descendant of Muḥammad. It is further stated in the same verse that those who will disbelieve in the promised “Witness” will find their abode in fire. In this way God, assures the Muslims that they should have no doubt in the advent of the ‘Witness’ as this is preordained by God—but most of the people do not believe in this.

2. Appearance of “a creature from the earth (Dábbatu’l-Arḍ)”

“And when the word shall pass against them, We shall bring forth for them a creature from the earth (Dábbah) that shall speak to them, for that mankind has not believed in our revelation.” (Qur’án, 27:82)

The Holy Qur’án has announced an appointed Day on which the happening (Váqi‘ah)—of the advent of a Manifestation of

God, was to happen. That very day has been referred to in the above-quoted verse as the Day of the appearance of ‘Dábbah’. The same day has been mentioned in the following verse as the Day when ‘the trumpet will be sounded’:

“And the Day that the trumpet will be sounded—then will be smitten with terror those who are on earth, except such as Alláh will please (to exempt).” (Qur’án, 27:87)

Ten signs of the dawning of the promised “Day” and the approaching of the appointed “Hour” have been given in the Holy Traditions. Different people have interpreted them in different ways. We can explain them, according to the Bahá’í point of view: that the sun of knowledge and civilisation will rise from the west; the sky of religion and spirituality will be clouded by the smoke of doubts and superstitions; the Russian nations—called ‘Gog and Magog’ will attack the countries in the low-land; the promised Christ will appear; religious scholars, governments and general public will arise to attack Him; the people of the west, of the east and of the Arabian countries will sink into materialism due to fortunes and wealth, lust and greed; and then ‘a creature from the earth’ will appear.

Let’s see what is “a creature from the earth?” This term has been used at several places in the Holy Qur’án. For example:

“(Behold) in the beasts of all kinds (Kull-i-Dábbah) that He scatters through the earth; ...” (Qur’án, 2:164)

Here the term ‘kull-i-dábbah’ denotes beasts of all kinds i.e. all creatures.

“There is not an animal (that lives) on earth (Dábbatin-fil-ard, Nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you.” (Qur’án, 6:38)

In the above-quoted verse ‘Dábbah’ represents animals.

“There is no moving creature (Dábbatin-fil-ard) on earth

but its sustenance dependeth on Alláh.” (Qur’án, 11:6)

In this instance the term ‘Dábbah’ signifies all living creatures.

“There is not a moving creature (Dábbah) but He hath grasp of its forelock.” (Qur’án, 11:56)

It is clear that in this verse the term ‘Dábbah’ is used for a man. Because it is only man who is accountable for his deeds and receives reward or punishment. Hence it is said here that God has grasp of his forelock i.e. no man can escape God’s punishment.

Man is the noblest of all creatures. And the most perfect of the men are the Manifestations of God. Therefore we understand that the term ‘Dábbah’ represents a Messenger of God. Imám ‘Alí has said “I am the Dábbatu’l-arq”. It means that the name of the promised ‘creature’ (Dábbah) will be ‘Alí. So was the name of the Báb—‘Alí Muḥammad. The following verse of the Qur’án is very interesting:

“Then, when We decreed (Solomon’s) death, nothing showed them His death except the Dábbatu’l-arq which was gnawing away at his staff.” (Qur’án, 34:14)

In this verse it is mentioned that after the death of Solomon his kingdom met with downfall and his nation was caught in divine chastisement, but the common man was unaware of this happening. At that stage the Prophet warned them of the coming catastrophe. However, the people paid no heed. At last the complete destruction fell upon them and they lost their kingdom and faced humiliation. The savage nation (Jinns) became sorrowful at this chastisement and said that only if they knew what was going to happen they would have escaped it.

Now coming back to the verse 27:82—God says that when the ‘word is fulfilled’ and the ‘promised day is come and the day allocated for the Muslims is completed—a Perfect Man will be made to appear amongst the nations, Who will address them

according to the revelation from God. This-will-happen in a time when the people will have lost their belief in God, religion, revelation and life after death. The nineteenth century was a century of similar disbelief and doubtfulness. Therefore the Báb announced His Mission. He foretold that the coming of the Promised Christ was well nigh.

3. **Aḥṣanu’l-Qaṣaṣ—The second Qur’án**

“Alláh has revealed the most beautiful Message (Aḥṣana’l-Ḥadīth) in the form of a Book, consistent with itself, repeating; The skins of those who fear their Lord tremble thereat, then their skins and their hearts do soften to Alláh’s reminder.”

(Qur’án, 39–23)

In this verse a prophecy, regarding the advent of the Báb and revelation of His Book ‘Aḥṣana’l-Qaṣaṣ’ (Qayyumu’l-Asmá), is found. Qur’án uses the term (Aḥṣana’l-Ḥadīth) for the Book. ‘Ḥadīth’ and ‘Qaṣaṣ’ both have the same meaning. The Báb has revealed a Book called ‘Aḥṣana’l-Qaṣaṣ’. This Book resembles the Qur’án in style as well as in matter. The Báb has confirmed that this Book (Aḥṣana’l-Qaṣaṣ) was the same Qur’án revealed a second time. This verse further declares that those who fear God and read His Book will turn towards the reminder (Al-Dhikr) of God and they will consequently accept His Faith. “Al-Dhikr” is one of the Titles of the Báb).

The Báb, Himself, testifies to this in these words:

“O people of the earth, verily, the ‘Dhikr’ is come to you from God.”
(Aḥṣanu’l-Qaṣaṣ)

4. **The Advent of ‘al-Insán’ and revelation of ‘al-Bayán’**

“(Alláh) Most Gracious!
It is He Who has taught the Qur’án.
He has created the Man (Al-Insán).
He has taught him speech (Al-Bayán).

(Qur’án, 55:1–4)

In these four verses mention has been made of two advents and two Books of God. It says that God—the Gracious and Merciful, has always trained mankind through His Messengers and will continue to do so. Out of His abounding grace He sent Prophet Muḥammad and revealed the Qur’án to Him. It further declares that, in fullness of time, He will create “that Man” (Al-Insán) i.e. a perfect man and reveal to Him a new divine Book “Al-Bayán”. That Man ‘Al-Insán’ is Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad, the Báb, Who proclaimed His Mission in 1844. When He was imprisoned in the fort of Máh-Kú the Book ‘Al-Bayán’ was revealed to Him by God.

5. The door of benevolence

“So a wall will be put up betwixt them, with a gate (Báb) therein, within it will be mercy throughout and without it all alongside will be punishment.” (Qur’án, 57:13)

In this verse the Muslims have been asked to watch for the day when a wall will be erected between the believers and the unbelievers i.e. they will be separated from each other. This wall will have one door (Báb) and inside it will be the mercy of God while outside it will be His wrath. The Báb is the divine Title of Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad Who was the door for the recognition of God and gate for the city of divine knowledge and wisdom. One who does not recognize the Báb cannot believe in Bahá’u’lláh either. Those who believe in the Báb are the rightful recipients of the mercy of God and those who have failed to do so and remained out of the door of true knowledge are surrounded by the wrath of God.

6. Al-Dhikr (Reminder) is a title of the Báb

“Has not the time arrived for the believers to submit to Alláh’s reminder Dhikr’i’lláh) and to the truth which is revealed.” (Qur’án, 57:16)

As already mentioned somewhere else in this chapter that one of the Titles of the Báb was ‘Al-Dhikr’ and His seal bore this very Title. In the Quranic terminology the term ‘Dhikr’ (reminder)

has been used to denote a Book, remembrance of God and a Manifestation of God. The Qur’án foretells that on the day of the advent of the Truth the unbelievers and those who reject the Truth will not be spared and excused. But those who will have Faith in Islám will incline their hearts towards Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad—Al-Dhikr, and they will believe in the Books revealed by Al-Dhikr.

7. The eight pillars of the most holy spot

“And eight will that day bear the throne of thy Lord above them.” (Qur’án, 69:17)

This chapter (69) of the Qur’án begins with the mention of the advent of a new Manifestation of God. Then the story of the nations who have met their doom, due to their rejection of the Prophets, is related. The Muslims have been warned that they should take lesson from such stories and should not follow into the footsteps of the past nations—by rejecting their Promised One. Then it is prophesied:

“Then, when one blast is sounded on the trumpet. And the earth is moved, and its mountains, and they are crushed to powder at one stroke—on that Day shall the (great) event come to pass ...” (Qur’án, 69:13–15)

Therefore, Bahá’u’lláh sounded the trumpet (announced His Mission) in 1863 which was a great event. The earth was shaken (due to the invention of the machines for crushing, stones and making cement). The sky of generosity opened its doors and poured forth, from the clouds of inspiration and revelation, such rain that revived and revived the dead soil of human mind and heart. The verse (17) which is quoted above says that on such a Day the throne of ‘Al-Rabb’—the trainer (God) will be borne by eight. One of the Titles of the Báb is ‘Rabb-i-A’lá (great trainer). His Shrine, called ‘Maqám-i-A’lá (the Most Exalted Spot) is situated on the slopes of Mount Carmel. The crown of this Shrine is supported by eight pillars.

Another meaning of the ‘throne of God’ is the Person of the Manifestation of God. Thus the personalities of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh are supported by the pillars of eight religions—Hinduism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islám, Bábí and the Bahá’í Faith.

People from all these eight religious backgrounds have accepted the Báb and thus the throne of God is being supported by eight pillars. Another example is that the edifice of the Bahá’í Faith rests upon the pillars of eight religions.

8. The nineteen guards who will save people from the hell

“Soon will I cast him into hell-fire! And what will explain to thee what hell-fire is? Naught doth it permit to endure, and naught doth it leave alone!—Darkening and changing the colour of man! Over it are Nineteen.” (Qur’án, 74:26–30)

It is said in this verse that God will cast the rebellious—those who reject the Manifestation of God, who show pride towards Him and do not pay attention to His Words, into the hell-fire. It further declares that God has arranged to save the people from hell-fire by appointing nineteen upon it who will protect the nations from the wrath of hell, i.e. destruction, warfare and hatred. When the Báb declared His Mission eighteen enlightened souls accepted Him at first. The Báb called them the ‘Letters of the Living’. The eighteen letters of the living including the Báb Himself, Who was the Nineteenth Letter, constitute the nineteen who were, according to the Qur’án, to save the nations from destruction. Hence it is said in the very next verse:

“And We have set none but angels as guardians of the fire; and We have fixed their number only as a trial for unbelievers,—in order that the people of the Book may arrive at certainty, and the believers may increase in Faith—and that no doubts may be left for the people of the Book and the believers, and that those in whose hearts is a disease and the

unbelievers may say, ‘what symbol doth Alláh intend by this?’
Thus doth Alláh leave to stray whom He pleaseth, and guide
whom He pleaseth: and none can know the forces of the
Lord” (Qur’án, 74:31)

This verse clearly says that God has fixed this number as a test. Those who will believe in the Book will progress in Faith and certitude and the unbelievers will be puzzled with the example of nineteen and will receive punishment. Thus God will reward and punish the people.

9. The Báb is the moon

“Nay, verily: by the Moon, and by the Night as it retreateth, and by the Dawn as it shineth forth,—this is but one of the mighty (events), a warning to mankind,—to any of you that chooses to press forward, or to follow behind.”
(Qur’án, 74:32–37)

In the above-quoted verses God swears by three things, namely:

- i. by the Moon: It means the Báb as metaphorically He was the One (Moon) Who derived His light from the Sun of Bahá!
- ii. by the night as it retreateth: This is the night when the Báb declared His Mission to Mullá Ḥusayn of Bushrúyih, i.e. the night between 22nd and 23rd May 1844. This night has another significance—‘Abdu’l-Bahá son of Bahá’u’lláh, was born in that very night.
- iii. by the Dawn as it shineth forth: This is the ‘Dawn’ of 23rd May, 1844 when Mullá Ḥusayn, having believed in the Báb, returned to his companions.

The Qur’án refers to that momentous and great night as a ‘warning’ (Nadhír) for mankind. ‘Nadhír’ is a term used for Manifestations of God. This shows the greatness of that night which is called ‘Nadhír’. The Muslims have been told that if

they wanted to advance they should press forward by accepting the Báb or stay back by rejecting Him.

10. Progressive revelation

“So I do call to witness the ruddy glow of Sunset; The Night and its Homing (Vasaq); And the Moon in her fullness; ye shall surely travel from stage to stage.”

(Qur’án, 84:16–19)

Here God swears by four things and promises that the evolution of mankind will continue for ever. Through the advent of the Manifestations of God man will progress stage to stage both materially and spiritually. Those four things or events are as follows:

- i. The ruddy glow of Sunset: It is the time when Mullá Ḥusayn first met the Báb in Shíráz. It was about the time of sunset.
- ii. The Night: It is the night of 23rd May 1844 when the Báb declared His Mission to Mullá Ḥusayn;
- iii. The Vasaq: “Vasaq” is an Arabic name of the dove which is trained to return home in the evening. In this case this term has been used for Mullá Ḥusayn who was a wayfarer of the path of search and who at last reached the Presence of his Best Beloved—the Báb.

Another meaning of ‘Vasaq’ is pregnancy and fruit. If we consider this meaning then God swears by the Night of pregnancy and fruit i.e. revelation of God and announcement of a religion. That very night has, really, given birth to a new era and a child—new laws of God.

- iv. The moon in her fullness: By Moon the Holy Person of the Báb is meant. He was at the zenith of His Youth at the time of His declaration—25 years old. These Holy verses depict that when the evening of the Muslims will reach, the Moon (the Báb)

will appear to guide and enlighten the world. As mentioned earlier this Moon receives its light from the Sun of Bahá!

As the days and the nights follow each other and the caravans of life march forward, revelations from God also follow each other to guide the successive generations of mankind. Nations rise and fall one after another and thus mankind marches forward towards its destiny.

11. Advent of witness (sháhid) and the one who is being witnessed (mashhud)

“By the Sky, the Zodiacal Signs; By the promised Day;
By one that witnesses, and the subject of the witness;—Woe
to the makers of the pit.” (Qur’án, 85:1–4)

God promises by four things that those who will remain in the pit of heedlessness will be punished. These four things are as follows:

- i. The Sky, the Zodiacal Signs: As the sun changes its points of rising and setting—different seasons are caused. Similarly the Day Star of Truth also rises from different horizons but they shed the same light. The Sun of Moses rose from the horizon of Sinai, the Sun of Jesus shined forth from the horizon of Jerusalem, the Sun of Muḥammad rose in Fárán and today the Sun of Bahá’u’lláh has manifested itself in Írán.
- ii. The Promised Day: According to Qur’án and other Sacred Scriptures, the Promised Day is 23rd May 1844. Hence in /this verse oath has been taken of the Promised Day i.e. the day of the advent of a new Manifestation—the Báb.
- iii. The Witness: By the term ‘witness’ a Messenger of God is meant. Prophet Muḥammad has been addressed, in two places in the Qur’án, as witness:

“O Prophet! Truly We have sent thee as a Witness, a Bearer of Glad-Tidings, and a Warner—” (Qur’án, 33:45)

“We have truly sent thee as a witness, ... “(Qur’án, 48:8)

In the verse under review, the term ‘witness’ denotes the Báb, who gave the glad tidings of the coming of Bahá’u’lláh.

- iv. The subject of the witness: Bahá’u’lláh is the subject of the witness. He is the Promised One of all the Holy Books. All the past Scriptures bear witness to Him.

In the light of these explanations, the verses under review (85:1–3) may be explained as in this way: in the last Day the Sun of Truth will shine forth from a new horizon, on that appointed Day God will send a witness (the Báb) and then He will send Him who has been witnessed (Bahá’u’lláh). Those who will fathom the meaning of Faith, good deeds and good thoughts and soar into the heights of certitude will readily believe in Him. But those who will be in the pit of petty-mindedness, blind-following, heedlessness, ignorance and disunity, will be punished for their rejection of the Manifestation of God. The believers will make a new nation:

“It is He Who creates from the very beginning, and He can restore (life).” (Qur’án, 85:13)

12. The prophecy of 1260 years

“By the Break of Day. By the ten Nights; and by the Even and Odd and by the Night when it passeth away ...” (Qur’án, 89:1–4)

- i. *The Break of Day*: it signifies the morning of the advent of Islám.
- ii. *The ten Nights*: it means the ten centuries after the advent of Islám;
- iii. *The Even and Odd*: it means three centuries (even is two centuries and odd is one century).
- iv. *The Night*: it means the night of the declaration of the Báb (23rd May 1844).

Thus by ‘ten nights and the even and odd’ is meant 1,260 years. 260 years is the period of the establishment of the Faith of Islám and 1,000 years after that. Thus it has been mentioned in another verse:

“He rules affairs (Amr) from the heavens to the earth: in the end will (affairs) go up to Him, on a Day, the space whereof will be a thousand years of your reckoning.” (Qur’án, 32:5)

13. The night which is better than a thousand months

“We have indeed revealed this in the Night of Power (Laylati’l-Qadr): And what will explain to thee what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months (Alf-i-Shahr). Therein come down the angels (Malá’ikah) and the Spirit (Rúh) by Alláh’s permission, on every errand, (Amr), Peace! ... This until the rise of Morn!” (Qur’án, 97:1–5)

These verses are full of prophecies regarding the advent of the Báb. However before going into explanations let’s review some basic terms used in these verses:

- i. *The Night of Power (Laylati’l-Qadr)*: The Arabic word ‘QADR’ means power, capacity, respect, value etc. This word has been used at seven different places in the Holy Qur’án;
- ii. *A Thousand Months (Alf-i-Shahr)*: Let’s ponder that why God has used this term ‘a thousand months’. There must be some very special significance of ‘a thousand months’. God does not use a word nay even a letter without any reason or significance. I could not find any explanation of this in any book. Upon meditation on this point, I reached to a certain conclusion that explains the significance of this ‘one thousand months’. One thousand months make eighty three years and four months. It is the period during which Shaykh Aḥmad of Aḥsá and his successor Siyyid Kázim of Rasht and his pupils were preparing the Muslims for the advent of the Promised One.

According to “A Basic Bahá’í Dictionary” Shaykh Ahmad was born in 1743 and died in 1828 at the age of 85. We deduct the early 17 years of his age, from this 85 years, which was the period of his childhood and that of receiving education. Thus the Shaykh spent 68 years (1760–1828) in preparing the people for the coming advent. After his death one of his pupils, Siyyid Kázim of Rasht, succeeded him.

For fifteen years Siyyid Kázim continued, like his great teacher, to educate the people regarding the coming advent and to prepare them for the reception of the Promised One. During these 15 years he made a large number of his students ready for accepting the coming Manifestation of God. Siyyid Kázim died in 1843 (31 December). His distinguished pupil Mullá H̄usayn, who was on a mission to Işfahán, returned to Karbilá on the 22 January, 1844 and organised the pupils of the late Siyyid to scatter in all directions in the search of the Best Beloved. Mullá H̄usayn, himself, reached Shíráz in the evening of 22nd May 1844. In the night between 22nd and 23rd May 1844 he became the first to believe in the Promised One. The whole period of the ministries of Shaykh Ahmad, Siyyid Kázim and Mullá H̄usayn, before the advent, sums up to 83 years and four months as follows:

- The period during which Shaykh Ahmad prepared the people: 68 years.
- The period during which Siyyid Kázim taught: 15 years
- The period during which the disciples of Siyyid Kázim travelled and searched their Best Beloved (22 January to 22 May 1844): 4 months
- Total 83 years & 4 months

The Qur’án calls this period as Alf-i-Shahr (a thousand months). The outcome and result of all the pains taken and efforts rendered during those thousand months was the advent of Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad, The Báb, in the night of power (Laylati’l-Qadr).

iii. Angels: Angels are unseen creatures which possess the

faculties of human thought and deeds and believe in the advent of the Truth—the believers.

The descent of angels and spirit signifies the coming of a new Revelation and Word of God. Hence it is mentioned in the Qur’án:

“And thus have We, by Our command, sent Inspiration (Rúh) to thee: thou knewest not what was Revelation and what was Faith ...” (Qur’án, 42:52)

Here, the term, ‘Rúh’ (inspiration or spirit) is used to mean Revelation from God.

It has been mentioned in the Qur’án, regarding the advent of Bahá’u’lláh, that on that day the angels and the spirit will stand in rows and no one will speak a word but he who will have the permission of God—and he will speak the truth:

“The Day that the Spirit and the angels will stand forth in ranks, none shall speak except any who is permitted by Most Gracious, and he will say what is right.” (Qur’án, 78:38)

Therefore, the verses under review can be explained in this way: God will send down His Laws in the Night of Power (Laylati’l-Qadr). O Muslims you do not know what night of power, glory and value is? That night of power is the result of one thousand months. In that night will descend angels and spirit (Revelation of God) by the order of God. This revelation from God will continue till the dawn breaks.

It has been explained earlier, that the famous Muslim Scholar and teacher Shaykh Aḥmad, His successor Siyyid Kázim and his pupil Mullá Ḥusayn taught and prepared the people, to receive the coming Advent, for one thousand months (i.e. 83 years and four months). Finally Mullá Ḥusayn attained the Presence of the Bib and accepted His claim in the night of 23 May 1844—two hours and eleven minutes after the sunset—that He was the

Promised “Mihdí” Whose advent was awaited since one thousand years. It is the same night when the Báb received His first Revelation and the Book ‘Aḥsana’l-Qasas’ was revealed. The Báb continued His conversation with Mullá Ḥusayn and revealed verses for him throughout that night. He allowed Mullá Ḥusayn to return to his friends when the call for dawn prayer was being raised atop a nearby mosque. One can himself judge that how clearly the advent of the Báb has been prophesied in these verses of Qur’án.

14. The revelation of Qur’án in Persian

“Had We sent this as a Qur’án (in a language) other than Arabic (‘Ajamí), they would have said: “Why are not Its verses explained in detail? What (a Book) in foreign tongue (‘Ajamí) and Arabic?” (Qur’án, 41:44)

Let’s first review the translation. As in many other places this translation is also faulty. The verse begins with these words in Arabic: “Va lu Ja-‘alnáhu Qur’ánan ‘Ajamíyyan ...” ‘Va’ means ‘and’; ‘lu’ means ‘when’; “Ja-‘alnáhu” means ‘we will make’; “‘Ajamí” means belonging to “‘Ajam” (i.e. generally speaking Persia). Hence the translation will be—‘And when we will make this Qur’án (a) Persian (one) ...’ The translation ‘Had We sent this as a Qur’án (in a language) other than Arabic’ is not correct. In this translation the Arabic Word “‘Ajamí” which means ‘Persian’ has been translated as ‘a language other than Arabic’. Thus the sentence ‘What (a Book) in foreign tongue and Arabic’ should be read as ‘What (a Book) in Persian and Arabic (mixed)?’

How clearly God foretells that when He will make this Arabic Qur’án a Persian one, the people will object and ask why a Book in two languages? Therefore when God, according to His prophecy, changed the Arabic Qur’án into Persian and named it Al-Bayán, the same objection was made. The people raised the objection “what kind of a Book is it, in which, Persian is also mixed into the Arabic text?” Another objection was that why the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh, who themselves were Persians, revealed Arabic verses.

It is worth pondering that the verses of God, irrespective of the place of revelation, language used or the time when they were revealed, are one in their objective, truth and spirit. As there is no difference between the Manifestations of God, therefore their Revelation is also one. The Holy Qur’án itself testifies to this fact:

“And it (the Qur’án) is in the Books of the former.”
(Qur’án, 26:196)

“This (Qur’án) is that which is written in the former Books.”
(Qur’án, 87:18)

All the Books, revealed before the commencement of the Bahá’í Era, were revealed in only one language of a nation. However, the Bahá’í Revelation has used the media of two languages-Arabic and Persian. This was foretold in the verse 44 of chapter 41 (above-quoted) of the Holy Qur’án. And the general reaction of the people is also the same as foretold in this verse—(a Book) in foreign tongue (Persian) and Arabic?” The other objection is “why are not its verses explained in detail?”

As to the second objection that this new Book is not in detail we will have to consider the style of the Books revealed by the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh. It is worth noting that ‘Al-Bayán’ has been revealed in both Arabic and Persian. Even in the Persian ‘Al-Bayán’ there are many verses in Arabic. The people of Arabia were not accustomed to read such bi-lingual Books and it was hard for them to understand it.

Another reason for this objection stems from this deeply rooted prejudice of the Arabs that no book, except that in the Arabic language, can ever be in detail and complete. Due to this prejudice the Arabs (and other Muslims) say that the Persian Qur’án (Al-Bayán) is not in detail and fully explained. Otherwise the Al-Bayán is the most elaborate and eloquent Book.

The third reason for this objection is that in the Book ‘Al-Bayán’ and in the Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh Laws, Ordinances and

advices have been recorded in a direct way. Unlike the Qur’án they have not been supported by past histories and episodes. For the Arabs nothing is detailed or eloquent if it is not decorated by stories of the past and appropriate examples. Hence they object that the new Revelation is not detailed and explained.

Another reason for this rejection is that the style of the Bahá’í Revelation is such that one has to pause for meditation and think deeply to understand it. Most of the people do not like this style. Therefore, they say that this Book is not explained and detailed.

However, God had warned us in the Holy Qur’án that such objections will not be entertained:

“Say: ‘It is a guide and a healing to those who believe; and for those who believe not, there is a deafness in their ears, and it is blindness in their (eyes): ...’” (Qur’án, 41:44)

A just reader will not fail to apprehend, from the numerous verses quoted and explained in this chapter, that how clearly the Qur’án foretells the coming of the Báb and the events and phenomena that will accompany it. The Holy Qur’án tells the name of the Promised One, time of His advent, the events preceding it, and languages of new revelation as well as the objections of the people. No wonder more than 20,000 people offered their lives in such a short period of a decade, to testify to the validity of the claims of the Báb and for preparing of the way for the advent of Bahá’u’lláh.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

“I swear by this city, and thou art as indweller of this city, and (by) the father and son ... Verily we have created man into toil and struggle.” (Qur’án, 90:1–4)

It has been said in the fourth verse that man is alive by his movement and efforts. He has to work hard and struggle in order to keep himself, both physically and spiritually, fit, active and alive. The Manifestations of God bestow the people with new zeal and ardour of life, and give them a purpose of life. From Adam till Muḥammad was a Prophetic Cycle.

The holy city of Mecca had a central importance during that Cycle because of the Ka‘bih which was a centre of all activities. Muḥammad was the last One in the series of the Prophets in this Cycle. Therefore oath has been taken by Mecca and by Prophet Muḥammad.

By father, in this verse, is meant Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is referred to as ‘Son’.

Bahá’u’lláh has inaugurated a new cycle of God and opened a new era of the history. He is the Promised One of all religions and the One Who has been testified by all the Prophets of God. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is the appointed Expounder and the Centre of the Covenant of the Bahá’í Faith. Therefore the Qur’án brings both of Them as Witnesses and promises the coming of a New Manifestation. Thus it has been mentioned that movement, struggle and progress is an in-built characteristic of man—his very nature.

Just as the man has traversed many stages of evolution during the Prophetic Cycle, he will have to, similarly, go through many stages of evolution and will have to struggle in all these material as well as spiritual worlds till he reaches that final stage which is the stage of the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

The centre and pivot of all these efforts and accomplishments is the Covenant of God which has been established through ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The following passage will show the station of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to a just reader and he will readily accept that the ‘Son’ mentioned in the above-quoted verse, is this very Son of Bahá’u’lláh:

‘Abdu’l-Bahá fulfills a function different from that of any other figure in religious history. Bahá’u’lláh emphasised this fact by calling him ‘The Mystery of God’, a designation that Shoghi Effendi has said is particularly appropriate ‘to One Who, though essentially human and holding a station radically and fundamentally different from that occupied by Bahá’u’lláh and His Forerunner, could still claim to be the perfect Exemplar of His Faith, to be endowed with superhuman knowledge, and to be regarded as the stainless mirror reflecting His light’.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá has been endowed with a contingent infallibility that is beyond the understanding of man. All His Words, His actions, His judgements and His interpretations are infallibly right, but only because Bahá’u’lláh Has Willed it so. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá revealed nothing new; He had not the direct intercourse with God of a Divine manifestation; nevertheless, His every act reflected the Light of God and His every word bore witness to His superhuman knowledge.

Bahá’u’lláh praised Him in many Tablets. One ran: “We have made Thee a shelter for all mankind, a shield unto all who are in heaven and on earth, a stronghold for whosoever hath believed in God, the Incomparable, the all-Knowing. God grant that through Thee He may protect them, may enrich and sustain them, that He may inspire Thee with that which shall be a wellspring of wealth unto all created things, an ocean of bounty unto all men, and the dayspring of mercy unto all peoples”.

In the Tablet of the branch, Bahá’u’lláh describes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s station as follows: ‘Render thanks unto God, O people, for His appearance; for verily He is the most great Favour unto you, the most perfect bounty upon you; and through Him every

mouldering bone is quickened ... Whoso turneth away from Him hath turned away from My Beauty, hath repudiated My Proof, and transgressed against Me. He is the Trust of God amongst you, His charge within you, His manifestation unto you, and His appearance among His favoured servants.”

(All Things Made New, pp. 224–225)

Shoghi Effendi

“And for him who fears the station of his lord, there will be two gardens—then which of the favours of your lord will ye deny, (these gardens) are of Afnáns.” (Qur’án, 55:46–48)

God has promised in these verses that He will give them, who believe in the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh, two gardens. These gardens will be of the Afnáns. Two springs will flow through them and all the fruits will be of two types.

This prophecy is regarding the two Bahá’í gardens on Mount Carmel. One of them is in the vicinity of the Shrine of the Báb and the other is adjacent to the International Bahá’í Archives. One of the titles of the Báb is the “Supreme Lord” and the Bahá’ís call His Shrine by the name of ‘The Most Exalted Place’. In the Qur’án the term ‘Place of Lord’ has been used which means the Shrine of the Báb, His station and title.

In the Bahá’í terminology the male descendants of Bahá’u’lláh are called the ‘Aghṣán’ and the relatives of the Báb are called as ‘Afnán’. The Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, Shoghi Effendi, is an ‘Afnán’ because His father Mírzá Hádí Afnán was among the kins of the Báb and His mother Dīyá’íyyih Khánum was the daughter of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Both the Bahá’í gardens on Mount Carmel were planned and grown by the tireless labours of Shoghi Effendi. Therefore the Qur’án names them as the ‘gardens of Afnáns’.

Mount Carmel is the Spiritual as well as the Administrative World Centre of the Bahá’í Faith. This is why God says that two springs flow from these gardens. The Holy Bible prophesies the similar events that the divine laws and ordinances of God will flow from here:

“It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the highest of

the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it.” (Isaiah, 2:2)

This prophecy is also regarding the establishment of the Universal House of Justice. From this very Institution divine laws are scattered throughout the world:

“Rejoice, for God hath in this Day established upon thee His throne, hath made thee the dawning-place of His signs and the dayspring of the evidences of His revelation”
(From Tablet of Carmel, Bahá’u’lláh)

“Ere-long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the book of names.” (Ibid)

It has been told that another characteristic of these gardens is this that all the fruits of these gardens are of two varieties. Accordingly there are two shrines—the Shrines of the Báb and that of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, in those gardens.

The resting places of one of the sons of Bahá’u’lláh, Ghuṣṣi-Aṭṭhar, and His daughter, Bahíyyih Khánúm, are also in these gardens. Likewise Mount Carmel is the Spiritual as well as the Administrative Centre of the Bahá’í Faith.

The seat of the Supreme Body of the Bahá’í Faith, the Universal House of Justice, and the secretariat of the Hands of the Cause of God and the International Teaching Centre is also situated here. Thus these gardens are the Centres of both the elected and appointed institutions of the Bahá’í Faith. Thus in these gardens are present two varieties of each fruit.

“... The fruit of the gardens will be near.” (Qur’án, 55:54)

Accordingly, it is so. The spiritual and administrative centres are close by. It is further stated in the same chapter of the Holy Qur’án that there are two more gardens besides these two:

“And besides these two, there are two other gardens ...
Dark green in colour ... in them will be two springs pouring
forth water in continuous abundance ... In them will be fruits
and dates and pomegranates.” Qur’án, 55:62–68)

By these two gardens are meant—the garden surrounding the Mansion of Mazra‘ih which is lush green and beautiful, the other is the Garden of Riḍván near Bahjí. In these, also two springs of love of God and Faith do originate. These prophecies of the Holy Qur’án, regarding the Ministry of Shoghi Effendi, the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, and the Bahá’í gardens in Haifa and ‘Akká, are very explicit.

Our Muslim friends may raise one objection regarding these prophecies that ‘Afnán’ means branches. Therefore it means that those gardens will be with branches. The answer is that which tree or garden is without branches? Therefore this objection is not valid.

Second objection may be this that by two gardens is meant the gardens of paradise. Our answer is this that the word ‘paradise’ itself means ‘garden’. Therefore it can not mean any imaginary garden. It is also worth thinking that if it be true that pious people will get gardens after death then why only two—why not more or less? Thus it becomes clear that the gardens of the Afnán are the same ones raised by Shoghi Effendi the Guardian of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh.

In concluding we can hope that the aforementioned proofs from the Holy Qur’án will establish beyond any doubt the validity of the claim of Bahá’u’lláh that He is the Promised One of Islám—the Naba’al-‘Azím. The points raised and clarified in this book will surely open new vistas of spiritual conscience before a keen reader and will create in him a fresh zeal to investigate the Holy life and marvelous accomplishments of Bahá’u’lláh Who is “... the Supreme Manifestation, the Unifier and Redeemer of all mankind, the Fountainhead of Justice, the immortal Beloved.”

Suffice it to quote:

“Whereby Alláh guideth him who seeketh His good pleasure unto paths of peace. He bringeth them out of darkness unto light by His decree, and guideth them unto Straight Path.”
(Qur’án, 5:16)

Bibliography

1. *Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufahris* (Arabic); Compiled by Muḥammad Fuád Abu'l-Báqí, Cairo, 1364 (Hijrah).
2. *All Things Made New* by John Ferraby, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, New Delhi (India), 1977.
3. *Bible, The Holy; King John's Version* (revised edition);
4. *Dawn Breakers, The*. Translated by Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1953.
5. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, London, Vols 5, 10, 12, 15, 17.
6. *Qur'án, The Holy*, Translated by 'Abdu'lláh Yúsuf 'Alí
7. Riḍván Message of the Universal House of Justice (1992).
8. *Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, India, 1986.