

THE BIBLE AND THE BAHA`I FAITH



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By Hedi Moani

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THE BIBLE AND THE BAHÀ'Ì FAITH

By Hedi Moani

1 - INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet is written for those Christians who wish to explore the relationship between the Biblical prophecies and the the Bahà'ì Faith. The Bab and Bahá'u'llah, the twin Founders of the Bahà'ì Revelation, uphold with unreserved reverence, the Gospel and Author of the Christian Faith, acknowledge His Sonship, and the mystery of the immaculacy of the Virgin Birth, and fully recognize the Divine origin of the Holy Bible. The Bahà'ì Writings seek to clarify the Christian doctrines and announce the fulfilment of the long awaited prophecies of the Old and the New Testaments.

2 - It is hoped that the Bahà'ì and Christian communities will engage in an open-minded and amicable dialogue to further investigate this relationship; and mindful of history, avoid the errors of the Israelites of the 1st Century AD, who mocked, rejected, and crucified their Messiah, by clinging to the fallible interpretations of the religious leaders of their time!

3 - "The Revelation which from time immemorial, hath been acclaimed as the Purpose and Promise of all the Prophets of God, and the most cherished Desire of His Messengers, hath now, by the virtue of the pervasive Will of the Almighty and His irresistible bidding, been revealed unto men. The advent of such a revelation hath been heralded in all the sacred Scriptures." (Gleanings of Baha'u'llah, p5)

4 - BIBLE PROPHECIES AND THE BAHAI FAITH

In the mid 19th century the expectation for the return of Christ was at an all time peak. Throughout the world, individuals of great spiritual insight, having consulted their Holy Scriptures, had come to a similar conclusion: that the time for the return of the promised Messiah was near. From the Millerites in America, to the German Templers who settled at the foot of Mount Carmel in the Holy Land, the religious fervour for the fulfilment of Biblical prophecies and the coming of the 'kingdom of God on earth' was a recognized phenomenon.

5 - CHRIST FORETOLD THE SIGNS OF HIS RETURN

The rationale behind these movements, was the Old and New Testament prophecies pointing to certain historical events that were coming to fruition around the middle of the 19th century, - including some specific guidelines given by Christ Himself regarding His return. When asked by His disciples; "*what will be the signs of your coming?*" (Matt., 24:3)

Jesus described the troubled social and spiritual conditions of the time, and then gave three conditions that must be fulfilled before the coming of the Son of Man! He foretold of many “*false Christs and false prophets*” (Matt., 24:24), of wars and rumours of wars, of famine and earthquakes, of lack of love and an increase in hatred and animosity (Matt., 24:6-12), and then prophesied the following events:

A- “*that this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.*” (Matt., 24:14)

B- “*when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place.*” (Matt., 24:15)

C- “*for just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*” (Matt., 24:27)

6 - THE MEANING OF RETURN

The Baha'i scriptures explain the ‘return of the Son of Man’, as the reappearance of the powers and authority of the Holy Spirit, - once possessed by the person Jesus the Christ,- in another Divinely appointed Individual, chosen to be God's Manifestation for a New Age. What is meant, therefore, is not the return of the physical person of Jesus, or His self same personality, but rather the reappearance of His spiritual qualities and influence embodied in a new Revealer of the Word of God.

7 - This view is supported by Christ's own interpretation of how John the Baptist fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies regarding the return of Elijah. The return of Elijah, was destined to clear the way and prepare the hearts for the advent of the Messiah; (Isa., 40:3-5), (Mal., 4:5-6). In Luke 1:12-17, the birth and mission of John the Baptist are defined, indicating that; "*it is he (John) who will go as a forerunner before Him (Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elijah*".

8 - Here, by the coming of Elijah, the intention is clearly the reappearance of his 'spirit and power', and not his physical body. Jesus further illuminated this point when the disciples asked him; "*Why is that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?*" He answered; "*Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him.*" (Mark 9:11-13) "*Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.*" (Matt., 17:10-13) The same principle of the return of the spiritual essence, rather than the physical and outward reality, is applicable to the promised return of Christ or the Son of Man. (Matt., 24:3)

9 - TWIN MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD FULFIL BIBLICAL PROPHECIES

Baha'is believe that with the advent of Baha'u'llah, (the Glory of God) and the Founder of the Baha'i Faith, came the fulfilment of the Old and New Testament prophecies concerning the reappearance of the promised Messiah. Baha'u'llah's advent was preceded by the appearance of the Bab, in much the same way as John the Baptist prepared the way for the coming of Jesus. The Bab (the Gate), however, was the Revealer of a distinct and potent revelation, known as the Bab'i religion. He was the first of the twin trumpet blasts, destined to reawaken the human race to the dawn of a New Era . (Isa., 27:13)

10 - Together with Baha'u'llah, He is the Co-Founder of the Baha'i movement. His advent was foretold as the Gate through which Baha'u'llah, the King of Glory and the Lord of Hosts is promised to come; (Psalms 24:7-9, Isa., 26:2). By the time of the Bab's declaration in 1844, the Gospel of Christ had reached all nations; Aotearoa/NZ being among the last to receive the Good News of the Lord Jesus. This fulfilled the 1st prophecy given in Matt., 24:14.

11 - A TIME FORETOLD BY DANIEL THE PROPHET

"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."

(Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p12)

12 - The second sign given by Jesus, referred to the time foreseen in the vision of Daniel the prophet (Matt., 24:15). This prophecy is significant for a number of reasons; it makes reference to both the first appearance of Christ, and His return. As part of Daniel's vision is already fulfilled by the birth and crucifixion of Jesus, we are given an historic benchmark from which to calculate the time of His return. This indisputable clarity, made Daniel's the only Old Testament prophecy quoted by Jesus in reference to the time of the end!

13 - Daniel speaks of two separate occasions when the sanctuary of the temple of God, (i.e., the purity of God's religion on earth), will be restored. The first prophecy speaks of a period of 70 weeks, appointed to "bring everlasting righteousness", and "making an end of sin" (Dan., 9:24). This was fulfilled through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Daniel foretold that from the issue of the edict to rebuild Jerusalem, 70 weeks have been decreed to the end of transgression and sin.

14 - There are three edicts issued by the Persian kings to rebuild Jerusalem: Cyrus in 536 BC (Ezra 1:1-4), Darius in 19 BC (Ezra 6:1-12), and Artaxerxes in 456 BC (Neh., 2:18-20). This last edict is the date referred to by Daniel, as it corresponds to the year of Christ's crucifixion. 70 weeks x 7 days = 490 days. Each day in prophecy equals a year (Ezek 4:6), i.e., 490 years - 456 BC = 34 AD.

15 - Jesus was crucified in 33rd year AD Following this sacrifice, in 34 AD, the sanctuary was cleansed and sin and transgression came to an end. (For a more detailed explanation of this prophecy, refer to Some Answered Questions of Abdul-Baha, pp36-44). The time spoken of by Jesus (Matt., 24:15) concerning His return, however, refers to the second and "*proper restoration of the Holy place*", foretold by Daniel to take place 2300 days after the issue of the edict to rebuild Jerusalem. (Dan., 8:13-14)
2300 years - 456BC = 1844 AD.

16 - This is the year of the manifestation of the Bab, and the commencement of the Baha'i Era, and the fulfillment of the second sign given by Christ. The Baha'i Faith, appeared in the land of Elam, where Daniel received his vision, (Dan., 8:2). He was told that the book is sealed, and its meaning will be revealed only at the time of the end, (Dan., 12:4). This unmistakable prophecy strongly influenced the formation of a number of Christian movements around the middle of the 19th Century.

*456 BC (3rd Edict) to *AD 34

←———— 490 yrs —→ (1st Manifestation of Christ)

AD1 AD34

←———— *JESUS *————→

←456BC———— 2300 yrs———— AD1844 ⇒

AD 1844 is the birth of the Baha'i Revelation and the fulfilment of Christ's promised Return.

17 - HE WILL COME FROM THE EAST

"The Best-Beloved is come. In His right hand is the sealed Wine of His name. Happy is the man that turneth unto Him and drinketh his fill, and exclaimeth: 'praise be to Thee, O Revealer of the signs of God!'"

(Gleanings of Baha'u'llah, p33-XIV)

18 - Baha'u'llah was born in Persia, situated to the east of Israel; the 'east country' to which were sent the sons Abraham and Keturah; Baha'u'llah's maternal ancestors (Gen., 25:6). He was exiled to the Holy Land, and was imprisoned in the fortress city of Akka, mentioned in the Old Testament as "*the gate facing east*", (Ezek 43:1-3) and the "*gate of hope*" (Hosea 2:15).

19 - This remote and desolate spot was to be His final destination at the end of a long and tortuous journey. His powerful enemies hoped to curb His influence through isolation, and shorten His life by hardship, and the foul climate of Akka. Inadvertently, they became instrumental in the fulfillment of the words of Christ; that even as lightning He will come from the East, and will shed His radiance upon the West (Matt., 24:27), and helped realize the prophecies of Isaiah; "*the majesty of Carmel and Sharon will see the Glory of the Lord*" (Isa., 35:2).

20 - The shrines of the Bab and Baha'u'llah are situated on Mt Carmel and the plane of Sharon respectively (see House of the Lord, 33). The desert, too, blossomed abundantly, as seen by the development of farming and agriculture in the state of Israel, and the world renowned Baha'i gardens in Haifa and Bahji (Isa., 35:1-2). Since late 19th C, the Bahai Faith has become firmly established throughout the West, and is today, geographically, the second most widespread religion of the globe. The third sign given by Jesus was thus fulfilled through the banishment of Baha'u'llah from the East to Israel, the homeland of God's prophets.

21 - OTHER PROPHECIES:

"THROUGH YOUR SEED I WILL BLESS ALL NATIONS"

Both Founders of the Baha'i Revelation were of the seed of Abraham. Baha'u'llah through Abraham's third wife Keturah (Gen., 25:1-6), and the Bab from the line of Hagar and

Ishmael. God established an everlasting covenant with Abraham (Gen., 17:7), that through His descendants He will bless all nations. (Gen., 22:18) This covenant has been repeatedly fulfilled through the Revelations of the Semitic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

22 - Today, once again, the blessings of God have come to us through the Bab and Baha'u'llah, both of the lineage of Abraham. Christ informed His disciples of the existence of other Faiths, revealed to guide the diverse and kindred of man: "*In My Father's house there are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you, for I go to prepare a place for you.*" (John 14:2)

23 - THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD; AFTER CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION: GOD'S REVELATION IS GIVEN TO THE CHILDREN OF ISHMAEL

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, God established His Covenant with Abraham and his sons. To Isaac God promised the gift of revelation, so through his seed Israel is led to salvation. (Gen., 17:19) To Ishmael, God promised a great nation and twelve princes (Gen., 21:13,18). The covenant with Isaac was fulfilled by the revelations sent through the Old and New Testament prophets and Manifestations of God, who for millennia, guided the Israelites in the paths of righteousness.

24 - These Messengers were often poorly treated, and suffered all manner of persecution in the hand of their own people. Finally when the Israelites rejected and crucified His Holiness Christ, the Son of God, they broke the covenant made with

Abraham. As a result, the priceless mantle of revelation, fell upon the shoulders of the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's first born;

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." (Gen., 17:20)

25 - The Nation of Islam and its twelve princes (the 12 Imams, or Leaders, descendants of the Prophet, who lived c., 7th-10th C.) fulfilled this promise. This dramatic change in the religious history of the Israelites, and the world, was foretold by Christ in the parable of the vine-growers, (Mark 12:11-12).

26 - *"A man planted a vineyard, ... and let it out... When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants , to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty handed. Again he sent another servant, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed; and so with many others, some they beat, and some they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son; finally he sent him to them, saying "they will respect my son". But those tenants said to one another ~this is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' And they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants, and give the vineyard to others."*

27 - Here the vineyard represents God's revelation, and the unfaithful tenants, the Israelites. After they crucify the Son of the Owner of the vineyard, (Christ, the Son of God), they are thrown out, and the vineyard of God's revelation is given to another people, (the children of Ishmael). This is consistent with God's general promise to bless all nations through the descendants of Abraham, and His specific blessings given to Ishmael.

28 - History itself confirms this point beyond any argument. Since Christ's crucifixion, no prophetic figure, or new revealer of God's Word, has appeared among the children of Israel. On the contrary, the religion of Islam born to the line of Ishmael, has encircled the globe and produced a brilliant civilization, which in the Dark Ages, for over a thousand years enlightened the lives of a significant portion of the human race. Since the time of Christ, Islam, the Bab'i and the Baha'i Faiths, are the only world religions to claim direct revelations from God, and to continue in the Biblical traditions of Abraham, Moses and Christ, Jesus. Their Founders,- all of the seed of Abraham through Sarah, Hagar and Keturah respectively, confirm the prophetic truth of the parable of the vineyard-growers.

31 - THE KING OF GLORY PRESENTED AND PLEASED

29 - Genealogy of God's Manifestations through the seed of Abraham THE FATHER OF NATIONS

(Gen., 17:4-9) **3 wives of Abraham**

SARAH (Gen., 11:29)	HAGAR (Gen., 16:1)	K ETURAH (Gen., 25:1)
ISAAC (Gen., 17:19-21)	ISHMAEL (Gen., 16:3-15)	6 SONS (Gen., 25:6)

ISRAELITES	ARABS	PERSIANS
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MOSES 1300 BC

JESUS AD 1

MOHAMMAD

AD 622 = 1 A.H.

(DEUT., 18:17-18)

12 IMAMS OF ISLAM

(12 PRINCES, GEN., 17:20)

(12 STARS, REV., 12:1)

THE BAB (The GATE)

(Matt., 24:14) AD 1844

(THE GLORY OF GOD - Isa., 35:2) BAHĀ'U'LĀH

AD 1863, (SHOOT FROM THE STEM OF JESSE)

HIS SON ABDUL-BAHA = THE BRANCH, (Isa., 11:1)

30 - HE WILL GLORIFY CHRIST

“Know thou that when the Son of Man yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh capacity was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed in all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee. The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning that any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but the manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive, and resplendent Spirit.” Baha’u’llah
(GOB XXXVI, p85)

31 - In His teachings, Baha’u’llah glorified the revelation of Christ (John 16:14), and taught us the knowledge that was promised by Jesus when He said to His disciples;

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:12-13).

Christ foresaw a time when the spirit of Christianity will be dimmed by centuries of disagreement, fragmentation and warfare. He, therefore, promised the coming of such a Comforter, as Baha’u’llah, Who, by the power of the Holy Spirit, will teach us all things, and will bring to our remembrance the sayings of Christ. (John 14:26)

32 - THE KING OF GLORY PROMISED BY ISAIAS

Isaiah foretold that with the advent of the Messiah, the children of Israel will once again be gathered in the Holy Land. This significant prophecy was fulfilled with the signing of the Edict of Toleration by the Ottoman Emperor in 1451, shortly before the Sultán's declaration. This allowed the return of the Jewish people, albeit in small numbers, to their ancestral homeland. And commenced the historic process of the regathering of the Israelites for the first time since the crucifixion of Christ. Some 2500 years earlier Isaiah wrote, "Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with his hand the remnant of his people..." (Isa., 11:11-12).

33 - THE HOUSE OF THE LORD WILL BE ESTABLISHED ON MOUNT CARMEL.

"The prophecies ordained unto the people and kindred of the earth are 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 hill and land thereof, are filled with the glory of His Revelation." (COS p13)

The words of Isaiah foretold of the destiny of Mt Carmel, "The measure of the House of the Lord will be established on the crest of the mountain, and the law will go forth from Zion." (Isa., 2:2-3).

34 - “*the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this House with Glory.*” (Hag., 2:7) The shrine of the Bab, as well as the spiritual and administrative centres of the Baha’i Faith, are all situated on Mt Carmel, the mountain of God.

Baha’u’llah, the Lord of Hosts, revealed the book of God’s laws, (the Most Holy Aqdas), while at the fortress city of Akka in the land of Zion. God’s guidance to humankind continues through the Divine Institution of the Universal House of Justice, ordained by the pen of Baha’u’llah. Its seat is established on God’s Mountain! (Micah 4:1-4)

35 - The ever present stream of pilgrims to the Bahai World Centre, and the gathering of the representatives of all nations for the election of the Universal House of Justice, bring to mind the vision of Isaiah;

“*Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*” .(Isa., 2:3)

36 - THE PRINCE OF PEACE

“*God’s purpose in sending His prophets unto men is two-fold. The first is to liberate the children of men from the darkness of ignorance, and guide them to the light of true understanding. The second is to ensure the peace and tranquility of mankind, and provide all the means by which they can be established.*” (COB p42)

37 - The expressed purpose of Baha'u'llah's revelation is the establishment of peace and unity among the nations of the world. Isaiah referred to Him as "*Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*", "*and the government shall be upon His shoulder*"(Isa., 9:6-7). This passage refers to Christ's second manifestation in the person of Baha'u'llah. Jesus clearly stated "*Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace but a sword*" (Matt., 10:34). Neither did His teachings embody the model of a new World Order, as found in the Baha'i revelation. Indeed He separated the affairs of God from those of the Government, saying; "*Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's*"! (Mark, 12:17).

38 - PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD RULERS

"O, Son of Spirit! The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour." Baha'u'llah (AHW, 2)

39 - In His tablets to the kings and rulers of His time, (Mic., 4:3) Baha'u'llah promulgated the principles of universal peace, and set in motion the spiritual forces that will ultimately fulfill the vision expressed by Isaiah;

"they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

(Isa., 2:4)

40 - Baha'u'llah warned rulers of His day to heed the call of God, and lay aside excessive taxation and expenditure on weapons of war. He advised them to take council together, to resolve their differences, and establish a permanent and universal peace. He drew their attention to the primary principle of justice; a prerequisite to unity and lasting peace - conditions which in turn leads to the well-being and prosperity of the entire community.

41 - Except for Queen Victoria who replied; "if this is of God it will endure, if not it can do no harm", the other sovereign recipients of Baha'u'llah's call did not heed His message. Subsequently, one by one they fell victims of God's promised judgement. (Isa., 2:4,10-12,17) - For a detailed account see 'Proclamation of Baha'u'llah to Kings and Rulers'. Their spiritual blindness prolonged the sufferings of humanity, and the task of building the new world order passed from kings and clergy to the hands of the common people!

42 - "He, in truth, hath come unto the world in His most great glory and all that hath been mentioned in the Gospel hath been fulfilled. The land of Syria hath been honored by the footsteps of its Lord, the Lord of all men, and North and South are both inebriated with the wine of His presence. Blessed is the man that inhaled the fragrance of the Most Merciful, and turned unto the Dawning place of His Beauty, in this resplendent Dawn."

(Baha'u'llah's Tablet addressed to Queen Victoria.)

43 - Having failed to grasp His spiritual vision of unity, Baha'u'llah offered the world leaders of His time the opportunity for creating a political peace. This "Lesser Peace", so called, is initiated by the gathering of the heads of states in a world convocation, in order to resolve their disagreements, and establish a sacred treaty of permanent and universal peace; an irrevocable and binding covenant encompassing the entire human race.

44 - This would entail such institutions as a world court, an international tribunal, and a peace enforcement agency guarding the provisions of its charter. Similar principles that govern the relationship between the states of a federation, such as Australia or the U.S. A., will regulate the affairs of the federation of nations. The internal affairs of each nation will remain its own national prerogative, needing only a small police force to maintain order within its boundaries. No nation, however, will be permitted to infringe upon the inalienable and universal human rights of the individual, or

any group within its population. It must cater for the protection of the world's environment, integral to the survival and well being of the human family.

45 - The establishment of such a treaty, expected to occur by the turn of the 20th century, will signal the entry of the human race into an age of maturity. It will eliminate the need for excessive and crippling expenditures on defence, and redirects such resources towards the betterment of human conditions. Feeding the hungry, succouring the poor, training the individual to his/her full potential, caring for the earth, and education of the children for a life of service to humanity; these in a peaceful world, will be among the governments' highest priorities.

46 - "*the world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System - the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed.*"
(GOB LXX-p.135)

47-BY THEIR FRUIT YE SHALL KNOW THEM

"The potentialities inherent in the station of man, the full measure of his destiny on earth, the innate excellence of his reality, must all be manifested in this promised Day of God."
(COB p44) Jesus warned His disciples regarding the appearance of many false prophets, and advised His followers how to differentiate them from the true bearer of God's revelation.

"beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits... A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."(Matt., 7:15-20)

The truth of the Baha'i Revelation, and its Founders the Bab and Baha'u'llah, can be examined by the fruits of their lives, their teachings, and the example of the Bahai community.

48 - A DIVERSE BUT UNITED COMMUNITY

In some 150 years, in spite of the constant imposition of threats and persecutions, by both the government and people of the land of its birth, the Baha'i Faith has created a world wide community of remarkable geographical spread and cultural diversity. Free from prejudices of colour, class or creed, rejecting the use of alcohol and habit forming drugs, and opposed to violence and war, the Baha'is actively promote inter-cultural fellowship and the eradication of ethnic and gender inequalities. Of highest priority, is the moral and spiritual education of children and youth.

49 - The Baha'i Faith aspires to the creation of a model community that celebrates diversity, and demonstrates the benefits of a life guided by the principle of moderation; a life dedicated to the betterment of the individual and the entire human family. *"It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his who loveth the world."* (COB p46)

50 - NOT BY BREAD ALONE

"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every 'word' that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."
(Deut., 8;3) (Matt., 4:4)

The 'word' here refers to the Manifestations of God and their revelations, nourishing the human spirit, and sustaining the life of the soul. Jesus said; "*I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger.*" (John, 6:35) and again; "*I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*" (John, 10:10).

God's most precious gift to man is the human soul, its worth is greater than all that the world can offer;

"what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, but to lose his own soul?" (Matt., 16:26).

Today, the Divine Physician Baha'u'llah, has prescribed the remedy for the social and economic ills afflicting the human race. The unity of humankind under the banner of a living and universal religion, He asserts, is the unfailing solution to humanity's deep rooted, bewildering and urgent problems;

"that which the Lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith."

Baha'u'llah's Tablet to Queen Victoria (GOB, CXX-p.254)

51 - PRINCIPLES FOR A UNITED WORLD

Baha'u'llah has revealed many volumes outlining the principles required for the creation of a united world community. The three fundamental beliefs of the faith are; The oneness of God, the unity of all the great religions of the world, and the oneness of the entire human race!

"The tabernacle of unity hath been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers. Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch." (GOB, CXII-p.217)

"The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens"

Baha'u'llah (GOB CXVII-p.249)

52 - Baha'is teach that God is an unknowable essence, beyond the ken of men and angels; motivated by love for humanity, He sends His prophets and messengers to communicate His purpose, and guide us along the paths of social and spiritual advancement.

"O son of man! I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life." Baha'u'llah (AHW 4)

The entire human race is but one creation; God's plan is that they should unite and be as one family; and live in peace and harmony on this beautiful planet, they all call home!

"This handful of dust, the earth, is but one home; let it be in unity" Baha'u'llah.

53 - All other Baha'i teachings revolve around this cardinal principle of unity in diversity, and include;

- Equality of men and women,
- Elimination of all forms of prejudice,
- Universal and compulsory education,
- Spiritual solutions to the economic problems,
- World peace is not only possible, but inevitable,
- Abolishing extremes of wealth and poverty,
- The search for truth is the responsibility of each individual, (Baha'is have no priests or clergy),
- Resolution of conflicts through frank and loving consultation based on spiritual principles,
- The highest station of man is that of service to humanity,
- An auxiliary international language, in addition to our mother tongue, for ease of global communication,
- No idle rich, no idle poor (work performed in spirit of service is elevated to the rank of worship)

54 - “O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of thy servants, and reveal to them thy great purpose. May they follow Thy commandments and abide in Thy law. Help them O God, in their endeavour, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God! Leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of thy knowledge, and cheer their hearts by thy love. Verily, thou art their Helper and their Lord.” -Baha'u'llah



